“TEST YOURSELVES”
II Corinthians 13: 5, 6

5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

6 And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.

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INTRODUCTION

Life is full of “tests.”

-Of course when we think of “tests”, we think of SCHOOL. Remember the good old days of “pop quizzes” “mid-term exams” and “final exams?”

If you were like me, the day you took your last “final exam” in school, you brushed your forehead and said, “Shew-w-w-w..... I’ll never have to take another test again as long as I live!

But we soon discovered just how wrong we were.

-For example........every time you go to renew your Driver’s License, what do you have to do? You have to take a computerized tests on the traffic signs........as well as an eye examination.
Some people have to take “tests” in order to get into a certain profession: **Lawyers have to pass the Bar Exam.**  
**Doctors have to pass the Medical Exam.**  
**Plumbers and electricians have to pass the State Boards.**  
**Civil Servants have to pass the “Civil Service Exam.”**  

I know since I have been here some of you have had to go through various kinds of medical tests to determine if you had some serious health issues.  

And those of you who come to Bible Study on Wednesday nights have been “thrilled” to take some tests over some of the material we have covered in our studies.  

**Life is full of “tests!”**  
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This evening I want all of you to take a TEST.  Don’t worry, this isn’t a “pop quiz” or “the kind of test you should have stayed up all night studying for.”  This is a “self-test” concerning your the authenticity of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.  

In verse 5, Paul admonished the Christians in the Church at Corinth to:  

**VERSE 5** Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize Christ Jesus is in you---unless, of course, you fail the test?
Perhaps some of you didn’t even realize this verse was in the Bible and you are hearing it for the very first time. Perhaps others of you have read it before, but just skimmed right over it without taking time to reflect on its importance.

Notice first of all, Paul says, “EXAMINE YOURSELVES.”

-He doesn’t say, “Examine the person next to you.”
-He doesn’t say, “Examine the person in front of you.”
-He doesn’t say, “Examine the person sitting across the aisle from you.”

HE SAYS.......”EXAMINE YOURSELVES.”

Ask yourself, “When was the last time I took a good, long, hard, honest look at my life?”

ILLUSTRATION: Have you ever looked at one of those mirrors that DISTORTS your IMAGE? It either makes you much taller than you really are or much wider. WE laugh at that distorted image of ourselves because we know its not what we really look like. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A CHRISTIAN TO HAVE A DISTORTED VIEW OF THEMSELVES? ABSOLUTELY! The scriptures warn us over and over again about the DANGERS of “SELF DECEPTION.”

A true believer will “examine” his or her life every day in order to maintain the right relationship with God and with people.

And we know I CORINTHIANS 11:28 commands each of us to: “examine himself” before partaking of the Lord’s Supper. And if we don’t examine ourselves, we are eating and drinking God’s judgment upon ourselves.
ILLUSTRATION: When I was in Bible College I heard Dr. Floyd Clark say on several occasions, that “many christians live un-examined lives.

At that time I didn’t understand what Dr. Clark meant by an un-examined life. But the longer I’ve been in the ministry I have come to realize the tremendous difference between a christian who lives an examined life........and a christian who lives an un-examined life.

The christian who lives an examined life.....is CAUTIOUS in their habits, their friendships, their speech, their priorities and their lifestyle. It is very evident the authority that governs their life is the Word of God.

The christian who lives an un-examined life......on the other hand is CARELESS in their habits, their friendships, their speech, their priorities and their lifestyle. It is very evident the authority that governs their life is their own sinful desires and personal opinions, rather than the Word of God.

Would you say you are living an examined life or an un-examined life?

Paul goes on in verse 5 to tell us WHY each of us should exam ourselves.

VERSE 5  “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith;..........”
You may say, “Well I go to Church every Sunday. And I give a tenth of my income to the Lord. And I partake of the Lord’s Supper. And I do a lot of work in my Church and do a lot of good deeds for others. That’s pretty good evidence that I am truly in the faith, wouldn’t you say?”

Well not necessarily! Jesus gives us a very stern warning in Matthew 7: 21-23 that there will be a lot of people who will go out of this life believing they were “in the faith” only to find out too late, they weren’t.

MATTHEW 7: 21-23 “Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?” Then I will tell them plainly, “I never knew you. Away from me you evildoers.”

Is Jesus saying that it is possible for someone to be very religious and still be lost? Absolutely!

So how can we know for sure we are truly in the faith?

Paul says, “test yourselves.”

How do we do that? We test ourselves with the Word of God.

Using the Word of God as our gauge, let’s examine ourselves in three key areas of our spiritual life.
Here’s the first question........

I. DO I TRULY LOVE GOD?

MATTHEW 22: 35- 38

35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:

36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?”

37 Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind.”

38 This is the first and greatest commandment.

1. Perhaps some of you have already marked “yes” on your test and you’re ready to move on to the second question.

2. That is probably how Peter felt when Jesus was questioning him in JOHN 21......

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you truly love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

16 Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “take care of my sheep.”

17 The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me.” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.”

After answering “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you” the first time, Peter was probably thinking, “Ok, let’s move on to the next question.”
3. I believe this “test” Jesus gave to Peter indicates to us that just because someone says, “I love God” doesn’t necessarily mean they truly love God. Loving God involves a responsibility to demonstrate one’s love for God.

4. Let’s take the Scripture Test on this issue of Loving God.

I JOHN 2: 5  But if anyone obeys his word, God’s love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him:

   Ask yourself, DO I OBEY GOD’S COMMANDS? OR.......DO I LIVE BY MY OWN RULES?

I JOHN 2:15  Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

   Ask yourself, DO I LOVE GOD MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THIS WORLD.......OR.......DO I LOVE WORLDLY TREASURES AND PLEASURES MORE THAN GOD?

I JOHN 2:9   No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.

   Ask yourself, HAVE I DEMONSTRATED MY LOVE FOR GOD BY WALKING AWAY FROM MY LIFE OF SIN? OR........DO I STILL ENJOY LIVING IN SIN?

GALATIANS 1: 10  Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

   Ask yourself, DO I LIVE MY LIFE TO PLEASE GOD? OR DO I LIVE MY LIFE TO MYSELF AND MAN?
MATTHEW 6: 33  But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be give to you as well.  
Ask yourself, IS GOD MY GREATEST PRIORITY......OR DO I PUT WORLDLY THINGS AHEAD OF GOD?

Examine yourself to see whether you are in the faith.

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Here is the second question on our TEST.......  

II.  DO I TRULY LOVE PEOPLE?

Matthew 22: 37-39  Jesus replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

1. Jesus is revealing to us that LOVING GOD and LOVING PEOPLE are the “two hinges” upon which all of God’s law hang. You can’t have one without the other. You can’t LOVE GOD......and NOT LOVE PEOPLE.
2. Let’s take the scripture test on this issue of LOVING PEOPLE.

PHILIPPIANS 2:4  Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Ask yourself: Which is more important to me, THE GOOD OF OTHERS, or what’s GOOD FOR ME, MYSELF and I?
EPHESIANS 4:32  Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ask yourself:  Do I forgive others who have wronged me or do I hold grudges, resentment and bitterness?

EPHESIANS 4:15 (that we studied last Lord’s day, says.....)   Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Ask yourself:  Do I speak the truth in love to others or Do I always speak words of “flattery” and tell people what they want to hear?

I JOHN 3: 17-19   If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?   Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and truth.  This then is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence.

Ask yourself:  Do I look at someone who is truly in need as MY responsibility......OR.....Do I look at that individual as someone else’s responsibility?

JAMES 2: 8, 9   If you really keep the royal law found in the Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

Ask yourself: Do I try to show love to all people impartially OR......Do I play favorites?

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves:

Question 1:  Do I Truly Love God?
Question 2:  Do I Truly Love People?
Here is our third and final question on the test:

III. DO I TRULY LOVE THE LORD’S CHURCH?

1. Let’s take the scripture test:

HEBREWS 10: 25  Let us not give up meeting together, as some
are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage
one another ----and all the more as you see
the Day approaching.

Ask yourself: Do I show my true love for the Lord’s Church
by supporting her with my attendance each
and every Lord’s Day......OR.......Do I attend
when I don’t have other things to tend to?

I CORINTHIANS 16: 1, 2  Now about the collection for God’s
people: Do what I told the Galatian
churches to do. On the first day of
every week, each one of you should
set aside a sum of money in keeping
with his income, so that when I come
no collections will have to be made.

MATTHEW 6:21  For where your treasure is, there your
heart will be also.

Ask Yourself: Does my giving to the church reflect this is
where my heart is......OR......does it reveal
there are more important things in my life?

EPHESIANS 4: 2, 3  Be completely humble and gentle; be
patient, bearing with one another in love.
Make every effort to keep the unity of the
Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ask Yourself: Am I a peacemaker or a troublemaker?
Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves: Do I Truly Love God? Do I Truly Love People? Do I Truly Love the Lord’s Church?

CONCLUSION

One day I looked at myself, at the self that Christ can see; I saw the person I am today and the one I ought to be. I saw how little I really pray and how little I really do; I saw the influence of my life, and how little of it was true!

I saw the bundle of my faults and fears, I ought to lay on the shelf. I had given a little bit to God, but I hadn’t really given him myself.

I came from seeing myself, with my mind made up to be....... The kind of person Christ can use, with a clean heart He may always see.

EXAMINE YOURSELVES TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE IN THE FAITH; TEST YOURSELVES!