

## EXAMINE YOURSELVES

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5).

Few of us would have any real trouble understanding the implications inherent in the words examine and prove, as used by the apostle Paul above. If we really examined and proved ourselves, by the Holy Scriptures, we would be facing everything which constitutes us, whether good or bad. The composite findings would show whether we are "in the faith" or really just "reprobates."

Does attending all worship services seem to be a "bit much" to you? Does participating in Bible study, work days, business meetings, and promoting gospel meetings or other church activities seem to be more burdensome than joyous and desirable? If you compared your weekly contribution to your weekly outlay for hunting, fishing, sports, or other pleasurable pursuits, how would it stack up?

Remember! You are examining yourself, and remember also that "God is not mocked" (Gal. 6:7). Are your associations away from regular church functions mainly with people of the world, as opposed to being mainly with faithful Christians? Remember, "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33).

Does your "day to day" conversation indicate that Christ lives within you? Remember, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34). And, Remember, "For by thy words thou shall be justified, and by thy words thou shall be condemned" (Matt 12:37).

Do the places that you choose to go tend to prove your love for Christ? Or, do they conversely, show that you are not too much concerned? Remember, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22).

Do you spend as much time organizing and promoting Christian activities as you expend on planning and executing personal pleasures which take you away from God and His people? Remember, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24).

What takes the biggest bite out of your Sundays? Is it NASCAR, NBA, World Series, or Outdoor World activities, as opposed to things which would spiritually enrich you?

Remember, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24).

What gets you out of bed on Sunday mornings? Is it—Joy of Worship, or— Compulsion?

Does it appear from your answers to these questions that you are "in the faith," or does it seem that you are just fooling yourself? If not in the faith, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:5).

No man has a right to lead such a life of contemplation as to forget in his own ease the service due to his neighbor; nor has any man a right to be so immersed in active life as to neglect the contemplation of God.

**Bob Howton** *from Eastside Edifier*

---

## ARE YOU GROWING IN FAITH?

In 2 Thessalonians 1:3, Paul commended the church for its growing faith. He said, "Your faith groweth exceedingly and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." Even in the midst of trouble and trials, these newborn babes were making spiritual progress. Wouldn't it be great if this could be said of you and me? Growing in faith is necessary and vital to our salvation. But, what does it mean to grow in faith? Growing in faith involves at least three basic elements.

First, growing in faith demands that we listen to the will of God. Paul wrote that faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17), and so to grow in faith one must study the pages of Holy Writ. We will never possess assurance or confident trust in God if we do not participate in a proper and diligent study of the Bible. We will never grow if we do not desire to be fed with the Word. As milk is essential to the growth of a baby, so is the milk and meat of the Word essential to the growth of a Christian (1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14). Saving, active, and growing faith cannot be sustained without a steady diet of Bible study. The Christian who is growing in faith has abundantly filled his life with the words of Christ (Col. 3:16). The weak Christian lacks the strength to quench the fiery darts of the wicked because he has neglected to take up the shield of faith (Eph. 6:16). Faith is the victory that overcomes the world (1 Jn. 5:4), but it is only victorious when it

grows (2 Pet. 3:18); and it grows by the means of the knowledge of God's Will.

Second, growing in faith demands that we live the will of God. Faith apart from works is barren, useless, and dead (Jas. 2:14-26). It will never save. If you want to make your calling and election sure, then your faith must grow by adding to it the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:5-7). You must acquire knowledge and learn to use it wisely and with all patience, godliness, and brotherly kindness. A growing faith is active, doing, and responsive. Only the man who believes and obeys can be blessed in his deeds (Jas. 1:25). Only the man who exercises his faith can be said to possess a growing faith (1 Tim. 4:7-8). Only when one acts upon what he reads can it be said that he possesses a growing faith.

Third, growing in faith demands that we love the will of God. "Perfect love casteth out fear" (1 Jn. 4:18), and each of us should grow in faith enough to serve God because we love Him, instead of being entirely motivated out of a fear of going to hell. A Christian who has grown in faith does not view the commandments of God as grievous or burdensome, but as an honor and a privilege (1 Jn. 5:3). He keeps the commandments because he loves God and seeks to please Him (2 Tim. 2:4). Those who keep the commandments of God out of convenience or for the favor of man (e.g., an individual who attends worship merely to please his spouse or parents) or simply to avoid hell, do not possess a faith that groweth exceedingly. Growing faith learns the joy and happiness of serving God. It loves the will of God and will hunger and thirst for its precepts (Matt. 5:6). It yearns for its decrees and finds solace in its instruction. A growing faith discovers peace and strength inexplicable to the world (Phil. 4:7). A growing faith is manifested by the one who can, like the psalmist, say, "Oh, how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day"(Psa. 119:97).

Have you progressed in your faith enough to say that you listen to, live, and love the will of God? Has your faith grown exceedingly? If not, why not begin today to awaken your dormant faith. Study again the Word of God that it might cut to the thoughts and intents of your heart and

motivate you to experience, once again, the graciousness of God (1 Pet. 2:3). May your faith grow exceedingly. May you then “continue in the faith, grounded and settled...not moved away,” so on that great and final day, Christ may present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable before our grand and glorious Judge (Col. 1:23).

**John Moore** from *Eastside Edifier*

### **BIRTHDAY**

Tom Tucker, 08-22.

### **ILL**

**Sunday:** Charles Tullis (AM), Lynda Cole (PM).

**Wednesday:** Janice Carter, Sarah Marcum. Allen Scott is in Room 222 at Olathe Medical Center. Meredith Greer was scheduled to be released to the nursing home. Lula James was released from Olathe Medical Center to the nursing home. Please remember these in your prayers.

**Those battling cancer:** Diane Cannon, Ledgia Campbell and Ron Wood. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Janice Carter, Lynda Cole, Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

### **HOME BOUND**

Bob Adams is in Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

### **OUT OF TOWN**

George Thomas was in Iowa on business last week. Debra Gragg was in Colorado. Trent Thrasher returned to college at Rolla, MO.

### **LADIES DAY**

There will be a Ladies Day at Chipman Road in Lee’s Summit on August 26. See the flyer in the foyer for the details.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Sunday AM, 51; Sunday PM, 43; Wednesday PM, 39.

## **Those To Serve**

August 20, 2006

**BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Parish**

### **MORNING WORSHIP**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS..... George Thomas**  
**SONG LEADER..... Joel Nelson**  
**OPENING PRAYER ..... John Cody Carter**  
**PRESIDE..... John Carter**  
**ASSIST..... David Adams**  
**ASSIST..... Jared Nelson**  
**CLOSING PRAYER..... Charles Tullis**

### **EVENING WORSHIP**

**OPENING PRAYER ..... Gary Cole**  
**CLOSING PRAYER..... John Dodson**  
**LORD’S SUPPER..... John Carter**

### **WEDNESDAY 23rd**

**SONG LEADER..... John Cody Carter**  
**INVITATION ..... Ted Thrasher**

### **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

#### **Sunday**

Bible Study ..... 9:30 AM  
Morning Worship ..... 10:30 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

#### **Wednesday**

Ladies Bible Study ..... 10:00 AM  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

**Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher**  
**Phone: (913) 764-2325**  
**E-mail: olathecoc@sbcglobal.net**

**CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**515 WEST PARK**

**P.O. BOX 482**

**OLATHE, KANSAS 66051**

**[www.kc-cofc.org/olathe.htm](http://www.kc-cofc.org/olathe.htm)**

**[www.oabs.org/olathe.asp](http://www.oabs.org/olathe.asp)**