

WOULD YOU TEST YOURSELF?

2 Corinthians 13:5 says, “It is imperative that you all test yourselves to see whether you are in ‘the faith’; you all must prove yourselves. Do you not understand that, unless Jesus Christ is in you, you are disapproved?”

EXAMINING IS REQUIRED

The above word “test” is imperative and means they are commanded by Jesus and must obey Him. I Thessalonians 5:21 also commands, “...must test everything...”, and 1 Corinthians 11:28 shows that, “...a person must examine himself...”, and 1 John 4:1 told christians to, “...you must test them, to see if they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” So, examining ourselves and what we believe is commanded by God for complete and truthful understanding about what He has said and revealed.

DON'T ASSUME TOO MUCH

The most important thing on earth is a person's relationship to the living GOD! Therefore, each person has to be extremely careful about his soul, much more so, than to other things. Somehow religious folks become very careless about what they are taught and gullible in what they believe is “Truth”. Acts 17:11 says that the Jews in Berea heard Paul teaching, and they examined the Scriptures he taught to see if what he taught was true. They were not basing their belief upon what he or they thought, but upon what the Scriptures of God said. We must check and know our Bible, to determine what is in agreement with what God has revealed in His God breathed Word.

WHY SO CAREFUL ABOUT OTHER THINGS

When Jesus visited two sisters, Mary and Martha, He told Martha that she was worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed (Lk.10:47). Martha was too concerned about serving food to Jesus, while Mary was totally engrossed in serving Jesus with her life. Why is it that people will be very careful about the tires on their cars, about their cholesterol, or about their children's teeth, but give little time and effort, or thought to a spiritual check-up or review? Is not risking your soul far more important to see too, than these other things?

EXAMINE YOURSELF, NOT OTHERS

Paul commanded the Corinthians to examine themselves and not him. It seems most of us have little trouble criticizing others, determining where they ought to be better or do better, forgetting that Jesus said, “Why do you peer at the speck in your brother's eye, and overlook a log in yours?” (Mt.7:3) This is the way many people ‘pay no attention’ to examining themselves. 2 Corinthians 10:12 and 18 says that the Corinthian christians were commending themselves and measuring themselves with themselves, but the ones commending are not approved. Only the Lord commends each of us. I must examine

myself before God for His approval, instead of my self approval or approval of others. And be careful to not over examine others for my gain or their hurt.

ARE YOU IN 'THE FAITH'?

Paul doubts that many in Corinth are "in 'the Faith'" He fears that they cannot pass the test of "the Truth", meaning the Truth of God's Word, as their only Source/Standard. This reveals today that folks can believe and feel they are in 'the Faith', when in reality they are not. Sadly, they do not understand this, as they are not willing to take the test from God's Truth and only genuine Standard. They have an assumed relationship with God not based upon His facts in His Word. They/we all assume that we are in 'the Faith', but a self-test will reveal to each of us, as to if we are or not. Would you take God's test to see if you are or not?

WHAT IS IT TO BE 'IN THE FAITH'?

Ephesians 4:5 says that there is "One Faith", but 1 Timothy 4:1-5 predicts that people would 'abandon 'the Faith' and follow different teachings. This shows that 'the Faith' is the faith message or the Good News of Jesus Message that produces our faith. In Galatians 1:23 'the Faith' is what Paul preaches when he preaches (and teaches) the Good News of Jesus. In 1 Timothy 4:6 the 'precious' Teaching which Paul followed is called "the Words of 'the Faith'", 1 Timothy 5:8 says one can "deny 'the Faith'". Being "in 'the Faith'" is being (staying) within 'the Faith's' Message.

"BUT I FEEL SAVED!"

No one would argue that he has no cancer because he feels free of cancer. It would be foolish to depend upon how we feel as to high cholesterol. But many sincere people believe that they are in 'the Faith' because of their feelings. Jeremiah 17:9 tells us, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" Proverbs 14:12 warns us, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." Everyone has been on a wrong road while sincerely feeling that it was the right road, but sincere feeling did not make it the right road. Feeling right can be wrong.

LOST PEOPLE CAN FEEL SAVED

Chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus (later Jesus named him Paul), said he was fully convinced by his conscience to believe assuredly that he must oppose christians, (Acts 22:3, Galatians 1:14) and said that he was fully convicted by his conscience to believe assuredly that he should physically oppose christians (Acts 22:1-10 and 26:1-23). While murdering Steven (Acts 7:58-8:1) and many other christians in Jerusalem and Judea, Saul was zealously trusting the traditions of his fathers, which made him believe he was saved, until Jesus corrected him. He often used his own conversion to give evidence of their error and lost. Jesus told the Jews that they thought they had eternal life, but were very mistaken (John 5:39). These examples are in the New Covenant to

warn us not to trust our eternal soul to our deceitful feelings. Lost people can feel saved today.

HOW CAN I KNOW?

Only from the Bible (God's breathed eternal Word), written by the Holy Spirit through chosen guided and directed men in the 1st century A.D. and preserved by Him in koine Greek until time ends, can you and I know "the certainty" of our soul's eternal salvation (Luke 1:4). The words of inspired prophets have been made 'more certain' by being verified by the eye witness testimony of Jesus' inspired Apostles and Prophets (2 Peter 1:16- 21). Only by certain and specific New Covenant proof can I make my calling and selection assured' (2 Peter 1:10). When I 'hear' and 'do' the Words of Jesus (and the Holy Spirit), I am building on the solid rock foundation, but if not, I am building on sinking sand and my life will fall 'with a great fall' (Matthew 7:24-27). Would you question everything but the Bible so as to be safe and secure that you are in 'the Faith'? Only by the Bible's certainty can you and I know we are saved.

MANY WILL BE MISLED

In Matthew 7:13-14 Jesus warns His Jewish countrymen that the road to eternal destruction is broad and has a wide gate through which many are lost. "But the gate is narrow and the road is restricted that leads into life, and few find it". The reason this is true is given in verses 15-23, saying that they must be alert for false teachers, whom will cause many on the last day (Jesus' judgement for all souls) to argue, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, and in your name have we not cast out demons, and in your name have we not done many miracles?" Then I will say to them, "I have never acknowledged you. You must depart, workers of iniquity!" This great revelation is in my Bible, so that I can be warned. I may think that I am saved by following the ways of men, but yet be lost on the last day. Jesus said that most people would be lost, though thinking that they are saved.

A CHANGED (ERRING) 'GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS' WILL CONDEMN Paul's shocking warning in Galatians 1:6-8 is still, today, applicable to anyone claiming to be a christian or His church. The Galatian Kingdom of Jesus in every city was being taught "a different and erring 'good news' of Jesus Message"—which was not the true Good News of Jesus, but a perversion or erring Plan of salvation. Paul tells them that some people are creating confusion to the point of accepting their perverted 'good news', which was perverting the genuine 'Good News' by their ideas, which were not from God. He told them that even if he or an angel from heaven comes and reveals any 'good news' other than what they had already been taught and proclaimed by Paul when he was among them, he and the believers of the perversion will be condemned eternally. He proclaimed and revealed the only and accurate 'Good News of Jesus'. He emphasizes that these will be condemned eternally unless they reform to the genuine 'Good News of Jesus'. So, if one person from any era or culture wants to be sure of their

salvation, they must be sure, careful, and wise, using correctly the God breathed Word that He has revealed and preserved for our clear and accurate comprehension. Any changed (added to, subtracted from, neglected, or rejected) perversion of Jesus' "once" delivered will condemn all followers of them (of which there are many)! All different 'good news' messages damn the follower and cannot save any of them. Reform of mind and lives is required by God for all of them to be in His Son's (Jesus) Kingdom, which only He can transfer folks into, declaring that they each one is now a citizen of Jesus' Kingdom.

ONLY PURE 'GOOD NEWS OF JESUS' CAN SAVE YOU

Jesus prayed for His Apostles and for all that believe on Him through only their 'Good News' (John 17:20), that they are to be truly sanctified (John 17:19). Only pure Truth (God breathed) can provide any sinner God's cleansing, never can a perverted gospel do any good, only condemnation. 1 Peter 1:22,23 informs that Christians had been purified 'by obeying the Truth' or being 'born again' (John 3:3). Too, Jesus insist that no one (person) can "enter" His Kingdom unless he is born again of 'water' and 'spirit' (John 3:5). Therefore, I was sanctified by God when I was converted or I was not. I was purified by obeying His Truth and 'born again' of 'water' and 'spirit', or I was not. Did you really 'enter' His Kingdom (obey so God and only God could transfer you into His Son's Kingdom (Colossians 1:13) or did you not follow exactly what His Word reveals is acceptable? Only God's Word is Truth and must be your only Source of authority, if you are to gain access to His Kingdom (His called-out group)/His new Way. Only His "Good News of Jesus" can save.

A SERIOUS CHANGE IN THE 'GOOD NEWS OF JESUS'

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 reveal to us that the first parts of the 'Good News of Jesus' are His death, burial, and resurrection. This is Paul's meaning in Romans 6:17, that they had obeyed (the form of Teaching). This will set them all 'free of sin' or 'united with Him'. Just as Jesus died for our and all sins, we die to sin and no longer live in it (sin and its ways). As Jesus was buried, so, each of us is 'buried with Him through immersion', and as He was raised by God's glory, each of us is also raised from the water grave (our immersion action) to live His new Way; as a 'new creation' we are to reform to be (Jesus' likeness is our goal and only example) daily changing and growing into His likeness. Each of us are to be 'united with Him in the likeness of His death'. Only by obeying His 'Good News' and Its "pattern" am I or you united with Christ Jesus.

OBEYING, NOT JUST BELIEVING, THE 'GOOD NEWS OF JESUS'

When I joined a popular 'denomination', I was taught to "accept Christ as my personal Savior and to receive Jesus into my heart" so that I could be saved. I felt, when I did these, that I was saved by God. But, actually, I had only believed and had not yet done any obeying to enter His Kingdom. I was wrong, as I had been taught a perversion of the original Good News of Jesus, which we still have in the pages of Jesus' God breathed

Truth, we call His “New Covenant”. 1 Peter 1:22,23 says that obeying the Truth purifies my soul, but I had only believed (as I was taught). In John 3:5, Jesus says that being ‘born again’ is required (by God’s design not man’s ideas) for any and all to be placed (by only God) into Jesus’ Kingdom (Colossians 1:13). Romans 6:3,4 reveals to all readers three times that each person must allow themselves to be immersed into Christ and into His death, but I had felt that I had already been saved without being immersed. Which one is a perversion of what His revealed Word teaches? Which is a rejection and is subtracting from what Jesus commands all to submit to (obey) for His approval and God ‘transferring’ each of us into His saved Kingdom? Which one?? Both cannot be accurate, thus, one is erring gospel and the other is the Message taught in the 1st century A.D. What is imperative that you do?

JESUS SAID I HAD NOT BEEN SAVED

When Jesus said that the Good News was to be proclaimed to every creature in all the world, He also told them how He would accept them into His Kingdom in Mark 16:15-16, just before His ascension into heaven, “As you all are going into all the world, you MUST proclaim the ‘Good News of Jesus’ to every creature. He who has trusted, then has allowed himself to be immersed [in Jesus’ Name], he will be saved, but he who has not believed will be condemned [for eternity]”. I had only believed but had not been immersed into Jesus, thus was not saved! Believing the Good News without obeying the ‘Good News of Jesus’ does not save you (James 1:19; John 12:42-“...many among the rulers believed (aorist) unto Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him,...”). Without obedience, believing will not save you. Jesus has ‘blazing fire’ and ‘everlasting destruction’ for all who do not ‘obey the Good News of Jesus’, after they ‘believe’ upon Him (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

PETER SAID I HAD NOT BEEN SAVED YET

When Peter proclaimed the Good News of Jesus the very first time in Jerusalem in the Jewish men’s section of the Temple (Acts 2:1f), Peter was asked by some Jewish men in the group if there was any thing they could do to not suffer God’s wrath for murdering His Son-Jesus (2:37f). Peter was not doing the talking but rather, it as the Holy Spirit speaking through Peter. He said, “Peter said to them, “All of you must willingly reform in mind and life, and each one of you must allow yourself to be immersed in the Name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38-39). Peter’s audience had already been ‘cut to the heart’ by Peter’s lesson, thus they had repented. They still had two requirements from God’s mouth to ‘do’ to be pleasing to Him: 1) all of them must be willing to ‘reform’ to Jesus’ new Way (which they will be taught to obey) and 2) each one of them must allow themselves to be immersed in Jesus’ Name. At that obedient action being completed, God will add them to Jesus’ Kingdom and give them His “Seal”- the Holy Spirit, which guarantees them of God’s assurance of entry into His eternal Kingdom at their death or Jesus’ return. These 3000 had not yet been saved until God is satisfied with their

obedient response to His new Way (different than Jews way). Peter told them and then went to another place in the Temple to explain the details. About 3000 gladly surrendered their lives to Jesus and His new Way and were immersed. Then, God “added” them to Jesus’ Kingdom (Acts 2:28-47; Colossians 1:13). They had no salvation until they had agreed to reform to Jesus’ new Way and learn It, and each one had been immersed into Christ and neither was I ‘added’ by God because I had never been immersed into Jesus. There is, explained here, no forgiveness of sin without these two action required by God’s new Way completed by each of us. According to Peter, then, until I or you are immersed in Jesus’ Name, there is no forgiveness of sin and you are still lost.

WHAT AN INCREDIBLE DIFFERENCE

Peter wrote in 1 Peter 3:21, “This is a figure, which now saves us, immersion! He knew immersion in Jesus’ Name was God’s final action required for the forgiveness of our sins. Ananias, when he taught Paul what was expected of him by Jesus in Damascus (Acts 22:16): “Now, why do you delay? Arise, having called upon the Lord’s Name, you must be immersed, and must wash away your sins.”, yet many false teachers sadly tell folks that immersion is not required by God to be saved! What a difference! If you do not have faith in God’s Word of being correct and think preachers are smarter than God. Paul warns in Colossians (2:3, 7, 18-23) that you must only hold to the things Jesus has revealed, as men are wrong and err in their ways of false salvation (3:1-4) He raised us from death (due to our sins) to newness of life (Jesus’ new Way) when each of us were immersed into Christ and not at the moment we first believed. This incredible difference is clear if you use just His inspired Word and not the words of men. So, what do you do now? His new Way or the ways of men, you have to decide which is Truth. What a difference!

Questions:

1. Is there any doubt after these New Covenant verses that you are in ‘the Faith’?
2. Is it possible to feel saved but actually being lost?
3. Could you be one that Jesus said would be misled?
4. Could you have sincerely believed an erring gospel?
5. Were you taught that believing saved you instead of obeying the Good News of Jesus?
6. Were you sprinkled or immersed thinking you are already saved?

7. Were you immersed in Jesus' Name to wash away your sins?
8. Were you taught that at the point of being immersed in Jesus' Name you were given remission of your sins or when you believed?
9. Does it make good sense to trust your eternal life to an unsafe conversion?
10. Should you not take the steps of the Ethiopian treasurer (Acts 8:26f) as taught by an inspired Prophet named Philip to insure your eternal calling is accurate by God's Standard, His God breathed Word, because It will be your only judge at Judgement Day (John 12:48)?
11. God be with you in your decision.

Contact us for any help we can provide at (979) 324-0622.