

## **The Ongoing Believer**

### **R12.2 September 2025 Blog**

*2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV)*<sup>1</sup>

*“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.”*

The call of Scripture is unmistakable: believers must examine themselves. Faith is not a memory of the past but a living reality in the present. The same Christ who said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life” (John 6:47), commands us to ensure that we are indeed believing now. Paul’s concern was never to leave believers in endless doubt but to lead them to genuine faith in Christ.

Self-examination strengthens assurance. Paul reminds us, “For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged” (1 Corinthians 11:31). By examining ourselves honestly, we discern that Christ is truly in us and find renewed confidence in the Savior’s preserving grace.

The Apostle John gives clear tests of genuine faith: “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him” (1 John 2:3–5). Ongoing faith is marked by obedience, love for Christ, and perseverance in truth.

Jonathan Edwards expressed this with clarity: “He that has true grace in his heart will be likely to persevere in it to the end of life.” (Religious Affections, Part III). Edwards insisted that true marks of faith are not past impressions or fleeting experiences, but enduring fruits—humility, holiness, and a present reliance on Christ.

The assurance of salvation is not sought in some distant profession but in present belief. As Hebrews affirms, “But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul” (Hebrews 10:39).

#### ***When Examination Calls You to Christ***

When we examine ourselves, we may find no true evidence of Christ within us. Yet even this discovery is an act of mercy, for it opens the way to receive Him. Jesus Himself invites us: “Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). And to those who fear rejection, He promises: “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (John 6:37).

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<sup>1</sup> All scripture references are NKJV

The answer is not to strive harder but to turn to Christ in repentance and faith. “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). “For *whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Romans 10:13). And the Lord Himself assures us: “... and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (John 6:37).

### ***When Examination Confirms You Are in Christ***

When self-examination reveals true evidence of grace—fruits that could never have come from an unbelieving heart—the believer’s call is to rest in assurance and enjoy the joy that flows from it. The Westminster Catechism reminds us that our chief end is “to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.” That joy springs from knowing we belong to Christ. Scripture says, “Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). Strength for what? Strength to persevere in faith and obedience. Paul writes, “Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6). Assurance produces joy, and joy becomes the strength by which the believer endures.

### ***Application***

Follow the command as given in 2 Corinthians 13:5 – “Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.” Get together with a mature believer and explore the scriptures to see what it means to truly examine yourself. Talk through the results of your self-examination and prayerfully follow the Holy Spirit’s leading. Develop a habit of routinely testing yourself in this way. Note, the only way to truly examine yourself is to spend time learning God’s Word for it is *the* standard.