

**Matt 6:6**

6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Unfortunately, distractions of this world often get in the way of prayer.

5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

**Phil 4:8**

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.

**Col 3:1-3**

1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

**Phil 2:5**

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

So how does one develop the mind of Christ?

**Rom 12:1**

1 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove (discern) what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**Eph 4:22-24**

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

Garbage in, garbage out. Stop collecting trash!

23 and (Instead) be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

### How Is the Christian Different?

The Christian sees through kinder eyes—like Jesus. He gives from a bigger heart—like God. He speaks with a purer tongue—like Christ. He serves with more willing hands—like Jesus. He walks with a greater faith—like his Lord. He loves with agape love—like the Father in heaven. He thinks with a spiritual mind—like Christ. He sees the needs of others with a compassionate view—like Jesus. He heals the wounds of others with love—like the Master. The Christian is different only when Jesus rules his life.

Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ and be transformed by the renewing of the mind.

Now things get a little personal towards Paul. So much so that he feels that he needs to speak up against it.

#### 2 Cor 10:1-6

1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ — who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. 2 But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

#### 2 Cor 10:7-11

7 Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he is Christ's, even so we are Christ's. 8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed — 9 lest I seem to terrify you by letters. 10 "For his letters," they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." 11 Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such we will also be in deed when we are present.

One of the most difficult lessons for a person to learn when put in a position of power is that it doesn't give him the authority to do anything he likes.

Some in Corinth did not consider Paul a true apostle.

Their mindset was, if he were a true apostle

- then he'd exercise his authority as an apostle.

If he had exercised his authority as an apostle

- they would have condemned him for that.

It's as if they were trying to trap Paul but in the process it backfires on them.

If he were not an apostle then he was a deceiver and they were deceived.

Jesus said in **Mk 10:45** that **He did not come to be served but to serve.**

The Lord is always looking for people that are humble.

The Lord sent Samuel to go to Bethlehem to find a suitable king among the sons of Jesse. That was David.

**1 Sam 16:7, man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.**

We often judge someone by their appearance, but the Lord sees differently.

We don't have hard copies of what Jesus or others looked like and the same can be said of Paul.

The second century apocryphal describes Paul as short,

- bald guy, having one eyebrow which spanned the width of his forehead,
- bowed legs and a high-pitched voice.

Paul was a mighty man of God,

- bold and fearless.

Is the Lord speaking thru us or are we a voice in the wind!

**1 Kings 19:11**

**11 Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake;**

**CHURCH ISN'T MEANT TO BE A PLACE OF ENTERTAINMENT, BUT A PLACE TO LEARN THE WORD OF GOD.**

Notice the insults hurled towards Paul:

**10 "For his letters," they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."**

**"weighty" is derived from the Greek word "barus" which is translated as "severe, oppressive or grave."**

Paul used this in Acts 20:29 to describe savage wolves in the church:

Acts 20:29

29 For I know this, that after my departure savage (severe, oppressive) wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

They Corinthians couldn't deny that Paul's letters were powerful.

But they (the critics) didn't take his letters serious

- because they looked at his outward appearance

In fact, they described him as weak.

10 "For his letters," they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak,

Galatians gives us a little more insight to Paul's physical condition:

Gal 4:13-15

13 You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. 15 What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.

Although Paul appeared weak to them, he was far from weak.

In Acts 23, Paul's life was in jeopardy and

- Ananias the high priest commanded those who stood near him
- to strike him on the mouth.

Paul's response:

Acts 23:1

3 Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?"

Paul was essentially calling Ananias, the high priest a hypocrite.

In Matthew 23 Jesus said the same of the Scribes and Pharisees.

- He called them hypocrites because
- they told others what they should do,
- yet they did the opposite.

Matt 23:27

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

Jews marked their graves with white lime once a year so that they appeared a pristine white. People knew to stay away.

The tombs glowed at night with the reflection of the moon.

Now if any of them were to open a coffin they'd immediately smell the decaying rotting flesh of an individual. They'd see the dead bones!

That's what Jesus was referring to when He said they **appear beautifully outwardly, but inside they were full of dead men's bones.**

Paul must have been thinking of the grave yards when he referred to Ananias as a whitewashed wall,

Notice another insult towards Paul in verse 10: **and his speech contemptible.**" (that is, they despised his speech, to regard as nothing) The Greek word is **Exouthenéo**;

Fortunately God doesn't look at the outward. But the Corinthians did.

In fact, they were probably comparing Paul to Apollos.

Apollos we know from Acts 18:24 was a man of eloquent speech.

But that didn't intimidate Paul.

Don't be intimidated. None of us want to have regrets at the end of our life.

- I don't want to look back and say,
- would've, could've, should've and didn't,
- because I was intimidated!

**11 Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such we will also be in deed when we are present.**

**2 Cor 10:12**

**12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves.** (to commend is to present as worthy) (He was speaking of the false teacher, those who had come into the church seeking their own following)

Paul uses the same verb in verse 18. **"For not he who commends (to present as worthy) himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends."**

**12b But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.**

In 1 Sam 2 Hannah issued a warning to the proud, to anyone who would go around speaking proudly and arrogantly.

1 Sam 2:3

3 "Talk no more so very proudly;  
Let no arrogance come from your mouth,  
For the LORD is the God of knowledge;  
And by Him actions are weighed.

The Psalmist said of the proud:

Ps 94:4

4 They utter speech, and speak insolent things;  
All the workers of iniquity boast in themselves.

Gal 6:3-4

3 If someone thinks he is something when he really is nothing, he is only deceiving himself. 4 Each one should judge his own conduct. If it is good, then he can be proud of what he himself has done, without having to compare it with what someone else has done.

Today's English Version

We should never measure ourself to someone on THIS earth because we are all sinners!

Our measuring stick should be Jesus, no one else!

His measuring stick is the one that matters!

To the church of Smyrna He said:

Rev 2:9

9 "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich);

- They were poor.
- They didn't have a lot.
- But spiritually, they were rich!

Then to the dead church of Sardis, Jesus says:

Rev 3:1

'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

If we're not getting into God's word,

- if we're not spending time in prayer,
- if we're not fellowshipping,
- we will become the dead church.

To the church of Laodicea He writes:

Rev 3:1

17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' — and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked —

As an individual and as a church we really don't have anything until we've surrendered everything to Christ.

Jesus said:

Matt 16:26

26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

2 Cor 10:13-15

13 We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us — a sphere which especially includes you.

14 For we are not overextending ourselves (as though our authority did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ;

15 not boasting of things beyond measure, that is, in other men's labors, but having hope, that as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere,

16 to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment.

Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles.

He was effective because he worked within his calling to ministry.

Are you doing what the Lord has called you to do?

- He wants you to be faithful to Him.

To the corrupt church of Thyatira, Jesus said to hold fast what you have till I come.

- In other words, hold on to the faith!

17 But "he who glories, let him glory in the Lord." 18 For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.

One last sign of success to me is here in verse 17.

- If we're going to glory or boast,
- let it be in Christ alone!

Ps 70:4

4 Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;  
And let those who love Your salvation say continually,

"Let God be magnified!"

The false teachers, the Judaizers and others boasted in themselves.

John said of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

2 Cor 10:18

18 For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.

It won't be anyone on this earth that will tell us, "well done good and faithful servant." That will be the Lord so it's Him we want commending us, not the world.

To commend is "to present as worthy." So Paul is saying, don't present yourself as worthy, but let the Lord present you as worthy!