

Turn in your Bibles this morning to 2 Corinthians Chapter 13 and we will be reading verses 5 through 9. Today we will be finishing up our study in Corinthians. The Apostle Paul spent 18 months in Corinth, preaching, discipling, healing, and pouring his life into the people of Corinth and the church that was begun because of his faithfulness to the Word of God and to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Well, the first sermon beginning this study of 1st and 2nd Corinthians was preached by Pastor Kevin on April 5th, 2020. So, this being the last Sunday of November, we have spent 19 months studying about all the happenings that were going on in Corinth with the Corinthian church.

We have learned that the church in Corinth was going through quite a few major issues. Division, pride, quarrelling, jealousy, anger, perverting worship, perverting the Lord's Supper, and the tip of the iceberg, Sexual Immorality! Besides all that the continued accusations against Paul, that he was a fake, was in it for himself, and didn't care about the people. The continued harassment by the false teachers that came into Corinth spreading false teaching as well as spreading lies about the Apostle Paul.

But at every turn the Apostle Paul debunked those lies by either, saying, compare my life to those making the accusations. Would I go through all that I have gone through in my life if I was not committed to the Lord Jesus and to the people the Lord Jesus called me to go preach his Gospel to. The beatings, the imprisonments, the danger that he was continuously in. Above all that the weight, the daily pressure he felt for the churches to make sure they were following Jesus Christ and growing in their faith and being obedient to God's Word.

Once again, we see Paul's love for the people of Corinth as we finish up our study in the books of Corinthians.

As Pastor Kevin shared a couple of weeks ago, it is around 56 AD, and the Apostle Paul is in the region of Macedonia. It has been about 6 years since Paul planted this church in Corinth and over those years, they have become a colossal mess. The Apostle Paul writes these letters to try to deal with all the chaos that was going on and he finally told them, I am coming again to work this out. This is the third time I am coming to you and with the establishment of evidence with two or three witnesses we are going to deal with these sins.

So, this letter is sent to Corinth and Paul warns them he is coming, and he gives them time to repent and to fix the issues before he gets there. With what we are about to read I believe that Paul realized something. Is there a possibility that these sins are so prevalent in the people's lives, is that they are not even saved? So, Paul challenges them to examine themselves to see if they are saved. Let's read our verses for today.

2 Corinthians 13:5-9

⁵ Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you-unless indeed you fail the test! ⁶ I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. ⁷ But we pray to God that you may do no wrong-not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may have seem to have failed. ⁸ For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. ⁹ For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for.

In some aspects of today's study, what we are looking at in seminary terms is the Doctrine of Soteriology. The Doctrine of Salvation! What is Salvation and what does it mean to be saved. Based of what we see today, I ask the question to all of us today. Are you saved? Probably everyone in this room today understands that term. But

even in good ole Wilkes County some people may ask, “Saved, what does that mean? Saved from what or whom?”

The only saved that may come to mind is this symbol when it comes to saving our documents on our computer.



In this day and time, among the thousands of people that drove by our sign this week, that has the title of today’s sermon on it. Many may have asked that question. “Saved, saved from what?” And possibly many that do believe they are saved, may have paused, and said, “Am I saved? Hmmm, I think so!”

Paul’s love for the people and his desire that they are saved and being obedient to the Lord, it brought him to this point to say, “Examine yourself, take the test, are you in the faith?”

But to be able to examine yourself or test yourself there has to be a standard by which to do that with. Think about when you go to a doctor for a checkup. He or she is looking in your ears, up your nose, down your throat, poking and prodding to make sure all is well. Take your blood to test it. They have to have a standard of knowing how your body is supposed to work to know if you pass the examine, the checkup.

Think of the tests we took in school, and some of you are still taking. There is a standard that has been set, and based off that standard, and depending on how much you have retained and able to put down on paper, shows whether you pass the test once you have completed the test.

So, Paul shows the people of Corinth and for us today the standard. Look at verse 5 again.

2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵ Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

We see the standard, The Faith! In essence what Paul is asking is, “Are you saved?” I believe it to be most important that we describe this and describe it accurately. Through God’s Word I believe, I know, we can do that today. First of all, the word faith is used to describe the numerous religions around the world.

There is the Christian Faith, the Muslim Faith, the Hindu Faith, the Buddhist Faith, the Atheist’s faith, which primarily consists of a faith in Evolution. According to the last statistic there are over 4000 different faith systems around the world. I would pose to you today that the most prevalent religion is the religion of Communism, Marxism, Socialism veiled by a cloud of “wokeness” that has infiltrated our society and our

education system like never before and if you don't fall in step with this belief system you are not to be heard or listened to and you are to be silenced. Everyone has faith in someone or something.

Faith also can be described as the living out of your belief system. Does your life match what you say you believe? Paul is saying that is the problem here. Your life is not matching what you are saying.

I must mention this though. What we saw in the list I just mentioned is that they all contradict each other. Paul had to deal with many faith systems in Corinth also. Therefore, showing us that they all can't be true. Only one can be true. Only one can lead to true salvation, and Paul is asking are you walking in the one true faith that leads to salvation. Just as taking a test, there is only one right answer, there is only one right answer when it comes to our need of salvation.

That is the beginning of the test. In Ephesians 4:4-6, the Apostle Paul wrote these words led by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:4-6

⁴There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope at your calling – ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

The essence of the Christian faith does begin with that there is one God who reveals himself in three persons. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is creator of all that exists and therefore, has authority over all his creation. In his authority he expects obedience to his standard of what is truth. And any belief that is contrary to his standards is sin. Sin separates us from God because of his holiness! All are born into sin. Do you believe that?

Romans 3:23

²³For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

In eternity past, sin came into mankind through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. They were given the command to not eat of the fruit of the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil reminding them and should remind us, that we are limited by what we can or should do. God deserves our obedience for he is worthy of our obedience. Therefore, ALL have sinned!

We can all examine ourselves and compare ourselves to someone else. That is a huge problem. We can always find someone that we may think is worst than ourselves. But each other is not the standard that we test ourselves against. It is the Lord Jesus Christ! When we say the Lord Jesus Christ, we also mean by the Word of God, the Bible, that has been given to us through the Holy Spirit. Turn to Psalm 19 and let's look at why the Word of God is the standard to test all aspects of our lives against.

Psalm 19:7-11

⁷The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. ¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

As we read these verses, you saw various words that described God's Word. Law, testimony, precepts, commandment, rules. Through God's Word we gain knowledge of his majesty, his power, his holiness but also, we gain knowledge of who we truly are. In verse 10 of Psalm 19, we see how wonderful the Word of God is. God's Word being compared to pure gold, sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb.

In the first verse 6 verses of Psalm 19 we see that the creation is a witness to God's glory and how wonderful it is. How many of us when we see a rainbow, we run out to take pictures? How many of us when we see a beautiful sunrise or sunset, we just, say Wow, look at that! How about on one of those clear starry nights and you can see millions of stars. Chloe came up with a term, "Well, looks like another reoccurring smallness night!" Meaning how insignificant we are compared to the beauty of God's creation!

But in the same breath we can say, how much he loves us that he would give us his Word through Scripture! And that is something we should examine ourselves against. Do we love the Word of God! Using another Psalm. Psalm 119, do we say this about God's Word.

Psalm 119:47-48

⁴⁷ I shall delight in Your commandments, Which I love. ⁴⁸ And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, Which I love; And I will meditate on Your statutes.

As we saw in verse 10 of Psalm 19 how wonderful God's Word is. We see in verse 11 that by God's Word we are warned. We are warned that by keeping God's word there is great reward. So, in turn if we don't keep them what is the result? There is great consequence! What is that consequence?

Romans 3:23

²³For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.

Romans 6:23

²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I mentioned a few moments ago, that God's Word gives us knowledge of who he truly is. But also gives us knowledge of who we truly are. As we just read, we see we are sinners, in need of salvation. Jeremiah 17:9 says that our hearts are deceitful above all else and incurable or desperately wicked, who can understand it? In Romans Chapter 7 verse 24 he says, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

As we examine ourselves did we ever get to the point in our life that we recognize we are without hope in our sin? You see we can look at ourselves and think, I am a good person compared to _____ you fill in the blank. But that is not what we compare our lives to, we compare ourselves according to God's Word and to the Lord Jesus. And when we do, we find ourselves to be wretches in need of salvation. What is our recourse? What do we do next then?

Repent! As we examine ourselves have we come to a point in our life where we have recognized our sinfulness (our depravity) and repented of our sins. John the Baptist came, and as he was preparing the way for Jesus, he proclaimed what? ***Repent! For the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!*** (Matthew 3:2) Jesus came and he proclaimed what? ***"Repent! For the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*** (Matthew 4:17) So, have you repented of your sins?

The word repent, in the Greek word, is metaneo – which means to have a change of mind, to turn from. When it comes to repentance. I am not necessarily just asking did you say a prayer a long time ago, walk an aisle, shake a preacher's hand. I am not asking if you have been baptized! I'm not asking if you believe in God or believe in Jesus. I'm not even necessarily asking about some past experience in your life. Has what you are saying happened in the past bring you to the point that you are you repenting now? What is the Lord doing in your life now to make you more holy?

I am asking, “Have you repented and continue to repent of your sins and your life now shows that you hate the sin you once loved. The sin that you were once so comfortably walking in you are now walking the other way towards Jesus.” Jesus Christ said in Matthew 5:4, ***Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*** Mourning over our sin! Blessed are we when we mourn over the sin that we commit because it brings disgrace to the name of Jesus, and we repent.

But there is an aspect to repentance that I believe we miss warning, teaching people about.

Obedience! What Paul is trying to see here in these verses is not just for them to say they are saved but are they truly genuine in their faith. You see there are a lot of professing Christians that aren’t saved. They say all the right things, portray they are doing all the right things. They cause divisions, they slander people, they shun people because they are not part of your group, they are prideful, they are sexually immoral but will tell you they are saved.

Obedience is a very important way to examine ourselves and pass the test. Are we being obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said if you love me, you will keep my commandments! Are we being obedient to God’s Word? Luke 9:23-24, Jesus tells us this.

Luke 9:23-24

²³ And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

You all know the next verse, “For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself, or his soul!” What are you living for? Are you seeking things of this world more than seeking what you can do for the kingdom? Are you truly being obedient to Jesus and his Word? There is only one way you can know. Are you reading the Bible, are you studying the Bible, are you living the Bible?

I want us to look at verse 26 also.

Luke 9:26

²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Since we are examining ourselves today let’s do that right now. Turn to 1 Corinthians Chapter 6 and we will read verses 9 to 11. I read these a few Wednesday nights ago.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Would you be ashamed to use those verses in a witnessing opportunity if asked about those lifestyles? Those are Jesus’ words. Do you recognize those lifestyles as sin? God says those that live those lifestyles are the unrighteous.

Here is the hope in all of this! As I have asked, “Are you saved?” and the Apostle Paul says examine yourselves if you are in the faith. Yes! It starts with repentance, but it also includes faith in Jesus, that he went to the cross and died for our sins as he bore our sins on the cross, was buried and rose again. Then there is a life of obedience. Just as we read that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Verse 11 of 1 Corinthians shows us the hope in Jesus Christ, by showing that those lifestyles were some that the Corinthians had lived in, such were some of you! But now through repentance and faith in Jesus we are washed, sanctified, declared holy, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. Teaching all of us that God’s Word is the truth when it comes to what sin is. But also, that there is salvation for all sinners through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus.

In verses 6 to 9 of Chapter 13 of 2nd Corinthians, the Apostle Paul shows the Corinthians and us this is all based off of truth. You know they had been examining Paul. Remember they were examining him against all the false accusations that the false teachers were bringing against him. You’ve been examining me, how about examining yourself also. But Paul is asking in all sincerity.

2 Corinthians 13:6-9

6 I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. 7 But we pray to God that you may do no wrong-not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may have seem to have failed. 8 For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. 9 For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for.

It was Paul’s hope that the church in Corinth would truly examine themselves and that they would find themselves saved or if they discover they are not that they will repent and surrender their life to Jesus Christ. He wasn’t trying to win a contest here. This isn’t a comparison! Paul was at a point that he said even if it looks like I have failed in your eyes, if this brings you to true salvation it is worth to all of us that had come to Corinth.

I have brought you the truth and we can’t do anything against the truth, but only for the truth, even at the chance of offending some of you, we will ask, “Are you saved?”

A couple more items to point out today about examining ourselves through our repentance and obedience. There is another indication we are saved. ***Jesus said in Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.***

Jesus came to seek and to save which was lost. Again, when we asked, “Are you saved?” and the question that may come, “Saved from what?” Your sin that has condemned you to Hell. You see you can think you are a good person, but Scripture tells us that none of us are. We can compare ourselves to other people and we may look better to ourselves than someone else.

But that is not what we are to do. We are to examine ourselves if we are in the faith! I ask it one more time.

Are you saved? If you examine yourself in the light of Scripture. In your repentance are you hungering and seeking after righteousness through obedient living and seeking after him through his word and prayer.

Have you truly repented of your sin, calling out to God to save you? Putting your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, understanding that he died for your sins upon the cross, was buried, but rose three days later and is sitting beside God the Father.

With all that has been said today and shown to you through Scripture, I do want to make sure that we understand one thing.

Salvation is not something that we can do or work for. Salvation is by God, through God, and for God. In verse 11 of Chapter 6 of 1 Corinthians, there is a word to define. Justification.

Justification is a legal term. In our salvation we do not become righteous, but we are declared righteous, we are declared not guilty through the eyes of God because of this saved button.



Through what Jesus, the Son of God, did for us on the cross, through our repentance then Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us. So, when God looks at us, he thinks of Jesus' righteousness belonging to us. In the book of Job, it is described as being clothed with righteousness. Again, we are not righteous, we are still the sinner, but through repentance and faith in what Jesus did sacrificially for us we the sinner can be saved.