

2 Corinthians 13:3-9
“You Are in Christ, but is Christ in You?”
April 14, 2024

2 Corinthians 13:5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?

A common interpretation of this verse goes as follows:

“If you fail the test of self-examination, then that means you really aren’t saved.” This viewpoint makes the assumption that “in the faith” and “Christ in you” are synonyms for being saved. If that is the case, then the believer has no solid foundation for his or her assurance in Christ, not if our assurance derives from our own behavior at any given time. This would contradict plain passages that tell us we can know that we have eternal life, such as **1 John 5:13**, These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. The interpretation of this verse relies on its context.

Please note the following points about this verse:

This verse is addressed to believers.

“Examining” yourself is something believers do.

“Failing the test” applies to believers.

“In the faith” and “Christ in you” refer to your walk on the path to maturity.

This verse is addressed to believers.

See **1 Cor 1:2,3; 3:5**, and **2 Cor 1:1**, among others.

“Examining” yourself is something believers do.

A brief understanding of the root for *dokimazo* is helpful.

Dokimazo = examine, test, approve

Dokime = proof

Dokimos = approved

Adokimos (i.e., “not dokimos”) = failing the test; unapproved

2 Corinthians 13:5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine (*dokimazo*) yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test (*adokimos*)? **6** But I trust that you will realize that we ourselves do not fail the test (*adokimos*).

These verses are about approval, not justification.

“Examining” yourself is something believers do.

See **1 Cor 11:28** (*dokimazo*), **2 Cor 10:18** (*dokimos*), **2 Tim 2:15** (*dokimos*)

“Failing the test” applies to believers.

See **1 Cor 9:27** (*adokimos*), **2 Cor 13:3-9**.

“In the faith” and “Christ in you” refer to your walk on the path to maturity.

See John 14:21-23.

- Judas Iscariot has left the room; Jesus is talking to believers – the eleven disciples.
- “has My commandments” vs “keeps them” – There is a difference between studying God’s Word and obeying God’s Word.
- You show your love for Jesus by obeying Him.
- When you are obedient, the Father loves you back, Jesus loves you back, and Jesus shows you more of Himself.
- There is a deeper level of intimacy with God the Father and Son reserved for those who love God by obedience.
- “abode” (*mone*) used only here and in 14:2 “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places. . .”

Compare Abraham and Lot in Genesis 18,19

See John 15:1-11.

- The audience, once again, is one of believers.
- Abiding in Jesus causes Jesus to abide in us, and we are fruitful. “Christ in you” = sanctification.
- Don’t waste your life by not abiding in Jesus!
- Obedience → Abiding in Christ → Christ in us → Joy made full

Summary of contextual interpretation of 2 Cor 13:5

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith (living a life of obedience and good works), abiding in Christ and Christ in you, so that will meet with Christ's approval at the Bema seat.

Wouldn't you rather live like Abraham than live like Lot?