

“Examine Yourself”
2 Corinthians 12:11-13:14
3/6/22
Message 19

Introduction

- Title of the Message is: “Examine Yourself”
- **We Have Come to the END of 2 Corinthians**
 - What comes at the END of a Book you Study in School...?
 - The Final Examine
 - Well that is what we are going to take this morning the Final Examine
- **Review - Context for Chapter 10-13**
 - **1st Paul has been DEFENDING his Apostleship**
 - **He has Challenge**
 - The Rebels in the church
 - The False teachers (The Judaizers)
 - He will encourage them to repent
 - **Paul will NOT Mince words**
 - There is NO Political Correctness taking place
 - Paul will answer his Accusers and destroy their false charges
 - (2 Cor. 10:7, 10–12; 11:4, 20–23)
 - He is NOT afraid to call it EVIL

- The Judaizers in the church are ministers of Satan who want to destroy the work of God

- (2 Cor. 11:12–15)

- **The ABRUPT Change in TONE**

- As a Matter of Fact Some Believe because of the ABRUPT Change in TONE
 - That Chapter 10 - 13 are a part of another Book
 - That they were a part of the “severe letter” (2:4)
- But I Don’t believe that to be the case
 - The best interpretation views 2 Corinthians as a unified letter
 - With chapters 1–9 addressed to the repentant majority
 - Chapters 10–13 to the minority still influenced by the false teachers.

- **2nd What we can Learn From these Chapters**

- **1st God’s Work will ALWAYS have Challenges –**

- There will always be those who attempt to tear it down
- This is Nothing new and will continue until Jesus Comes

- **2nd Paul Leadership**

- We Will see How to handle these Situations
- Meekness yet Boldness
- The AIM is always restoration – NOT REVENGE

- **3rd Conflict Between Congregations and Pastors**

- Make sure we are dealing with this conflict Biblically

- **4th Last few weeks we have seen**

- 1st This Portion of Scripture is an indictment against a Wayward Church
 - Entrainment Driven Church
 - Comfort Driven Church
 - Consumer Driven Church
 - Prosperity – Success Driven Church
 - That if you're suffering you are doing something wrong
 - Emotionally / Feelings Driven Church
 - 2nd Struggles at times are a part of God's Will
 - BUT God's GRACE is Sufficient

- **Now This Morning We will Finish this Great Book by Taking a Examine**

- Examine Yourself in 4 powerful ways
 - Examine Yourself In Serving vs. 12:11-18
 - Examine Yourself In Attitude vs. 12:19-21
 - Examine Yourself In Faith vs. 13:1-6
 - Examine Yourself In Paul Final Encouragement vs. 13:7-14

Examine Yourself In Serving vs. 12:11-18

- **First: Conclusion to Paul's "foolish boasting." vs. 12:11-13**

2 Corinthians 12:11–13 (NKJV)

11 *I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, **though I am nothing.***

12 *Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.*

13 *For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong!*

- **1st I have become a fool in boasting v. 11a**

2 Corinthians 12:11 (NKJV)

11 **I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me.** *For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.*

▪ **Since this section began in 2 Corinthians 10**

- Paul was forced to boast more than he wanted to before the Corinthian Christians.
- Paul Says “You Have Compelled ME”
- The Corinthians because of their rebellion caused great confusion in the church
- To the Point that Paul had to step in and prove if your will – that he was a Apostle

▪ **Paul Hated this!!!**

- Paul is almost apologizing for writing so much about himself!
- Because he would much rather write about Jesus.

- **2nd For I ought to have been commended by you v. 11b**

2 Corinthians 12:11 (NKJV)

11 *I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.*

- The Corinthians did not defend Paul
 - They allowed the “Super Apostles” To tear down Paul
 - They did not stand up for Paul
 - Paul is saying if you guys would have done your God given responsibilities –
 - This would have never happened
- **3rd Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you v. 12**

2 Corinthians 12:12 (NKJV)

12 *Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.*

- Paul could also point to the signs and wonders and mighty deeds that were accomplished among the Corinthian Christians.
- Each of these was evidence of Paul’s apostolic standing
- **4th For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches v. 13**

2 Corinthians 12:13 (NKJV)

13 *For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong!*

- If Paul is inferior in any way, it is only in that he refused to take money from the Corinthian Christians.
- So, he **sarcastically** asks their forgiveness:
 - Forgive me this wrong!

- **Second: Paul isn't trying to deceive the Corinthians vs. 12:14-18**

- **1st Now for the third time I am ready to come to you v. 14a**

2 Corinthians 12:14 (NKJV)

14 *Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*

- On his first visit to Corinth
 - Paul founded the church and stayed a year and six months (Acts 18:11)
- His Second visit
 - Was a brief, painful visit in between the writing of 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians.
- His Third Visit
 - Now he is prepared to come for a third time.

- **2nd And I will not be burdensome to you v. 14b**

2 Corinthians 12:14 (NKJV)

14 *Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. **And I will not be burdensome to you;** for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*

- He will not receive money from them for his personal support.
 - He will continue his previous practice among the Corinthian Christians of supporting himself and he will not be burdensome to the Corinthian Christians.

- **3rd For I do not seek yours, but you v. 14c**

2 Corinthians 12:14 (NKJV)

14 Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; **for I do not seek yours, but you.** For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

- For I DO Not Seek Yours!!
 - The Super Apostles – only after what they can get
 - Mark of a TRUE Apostle – Only after God’s Will and the care for the people
 - This is the testimony of every godly minister.
 - They do not serve for what they can get from God’s people but for what they can give to God’s people.
 - They are shepherds, not hirelings.
- **4th For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children v. 14d**

2 Corinthians 12:14 (NKJV)

14 Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. **For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.**

- Children Don’t Support the Parents – Parents support the Children!
- Since he was their spiritual “father” and they were his spiritual “children,” it made sense that they should not feel “burdened” to support him.
- **5th I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls: v. 15**

2 Corinthians 12:15 (NKJV)

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

- Paul was glad to give; he would very gladly spend and be spent for your souls.

- Paul had this heart, even though the Corinthian Christians were unappreciative.
 - In fact, Paul puts it painfully: the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.
 - There is hurt in those words!
 - Yet, Paul did not allow that hurt to cripple him or even to rob his joy in serving and living.
 - He would still very gladly spend and be spent for the Corinthian Christians.
- The Mark of a TRUE servant of God
 - Willing to suffer in loving souls
 - If a pastor is not willing to suffer in doing his job he is not a pastor
- **6th Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile! Vs. 16-18**

2 Corinthians 12:16–18 (NKJV)

16 *But be that as it may, I did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning!*

17 *Did I take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you?*

18 *I urged Titus, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?*

- Here is Paul being sarcastic again.
 - Some among the Corinthian Christians accused Paul of being crafty.
 - *Their accusation probably went like this: “Sure Paul won’t take any support money from you, but he will trick you by taking the collection that is supposed to be for the Jerusalem Christians and then put it in his own pocket.”*

- Paul's opponents, the most eminent apostles were in ministry at least partly for the money.
 - They could not bear the fact that Paul didn't care about money in the ministry, so they assigned their motives to him

• **Third: Lesson – Test #1 Serving Examine**

- 5 Good Questions to ask Regarding Serving!
- **1st Do WE have a Humble Hearts vs. 11**

2 Corinthians 12:11 (NKJV)

*11 I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, **though I am nothing.***

- I am nothing –
 - This is NOT false humility here. (True humility)
 - Paul understood that he was nothing and Christ was everything!!!
- Do We see ourselves as NOTHING?
 - When we see yourself as nobodies
 - Then we don't mind doing tasks that others see as beneath them
 - We can work with people who have don't always have the right heart
 - We can TRULY be USED by GOD
- **2nd Do WE seek their souls or their stuff? v. 14**

2 Corinthians 12:14 (NKJV)

14 Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

- I do not seek yours, but you –
 - He's not after what you got, but who you are!
 - This lays down one of the supreme principles of Christian living!

○ **3rd Do WE joyfully serve the Lord v. 15**

2 Corinthians 12:15 (NKJV)

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

- I will very gladly spend & be spent

Matthew 20:28 (NKJV)

28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

○ **4th Do WE Take Advantage of anyone? vs. 16-18a**

- Did I (or Titus) take advantage of you? –
- Do we use our positions for our personal gain?

○ **5th Do WE Walk the Talk v. 18b**

2 Corinthians 12:18 (NKJV)

18 I urged Titus, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? **Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?**

- Did we not walk in the same steps
- Paul models what he expects of others.

Examine Yourselves In Attitude vs. 12:19-21

- **First: Paul Encourages the Corinthians to repent before he comes vs. 12:19-21**

- **1st Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? V. 19**

2 Corinthians 12:19 (NKJV)

19 *Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, beloved, for your edification.*

- Paul boldly says, **“We speak before God in Christ.”**
 - Paul proclaimed the truth before God
 - Not excusing himself before the Corinthian Christians.
- We do all things, **beloved, for your edification:**
 - Everything Paul did for the Corinthian Christians he did to build them up in the Lord.

- **2nd For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish v. 20-21**

2 Corinthians 12:20–21 (NKJV)

20 *For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;*

21 *lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.*

- Paul is worried
 - He is Worried that he will find the same old problems among the Corinthian Christians when he visits a third time and that they would still be unrepentant.
 - These guys have been stuck in their worldly thinking!!!

- So Paul has huge right to be concerned!
- Paul makes it clear on his concerns
 - Contentions
 - Jealousies
 - Outbursts of wrath
 - Selfish Ambitions
 - Backbitings
 - Whisperings
 - Conceits
 - Tumults.
 - All these were the fruit of the worldly thinking the Corinthian Christians bought into, and these must change before Paul comes for his third visit to Corinth.
- Paul is very Honest how that would make him feel
 - To find the Corinthians still living in unrepentant sin would both humiliate and sadden Paul.
 - This warning (and the one in 13:2) was designed to prevent that from happening.

• **Second: Lesson – Test # 2 Attitude Examine**

- **How is our Attitude in regards to living in the World**
 - Has the world squeezed you into its mold? Or, are you remolding the world?
 - Are you living the lifestyle of the carnal Corinthians?

- Are you embodying the character of Christ?
 - Are you salt & light in a decaying world?!
- **Time to Change**
 - Paul is warning them that he is indeed coming for a visit and he is hoping that things have changed.
 - That they will Repent

Examine Yourselves In Faith vs. 13:1-6

• First: Paul promises to come with severity, if necessary vs. 13:1-4

- **1st This will be the third time I am coming to you v. 1-2**

2 Corinthians 13:1–2 (NKJV)

1 *This will be the third time I am coming to you. “By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.”*

2 *I have told you before, and foretell as if I were present the second time, and now being absent I write to those who have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare—*

- The Third TIME
 - Reminder
 - His first visit to Corinth
 - Paul founded the church and stayed a year and six months (Acts 18:11).
 - His second visit
 - Was a brief, painful visit in between the writing of 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians.
 - Now the Third!

- By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established:
 - Paul quotes this passage from Deuteronomy 19:15
 - He quotes it in reference to his coming visit.
 - Either the two or three witnesses or Paul's three visits or they are the testimony of his associates.
 - The point of the quotation is to remind the Corinthian Christians that he comes this time as a judge, not an investigator.
 - He has enough evidence to write, "If I come again I will not spare."

○ **2nd Since you see a proof of Christ speaking in me v. 3-4**

2 Corinthians 13:3–4 (NKJV)

3 *since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you.*

4 *For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.*

- Paul's opponents said they wanted to see more "power" from Paul.
 - He seemed too weak and humble for their liking.
- So Paul addressed this thinking:
 - "You want to see proof of Christ speaking in me? Fine.
 - When I come the third time, you will see the power of God in my rebuke as I clean house.
 - So clean it up before I come."

- **Second: A plea for self examination vs. 5-10**

- **1st Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith v. 5**

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV)

5 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.

- Test Yourselfes!

- Paul asks the Corinthian Christians to consider a sobering question:

- “Am I really a Christian?”

- What Does this Look like

- Guzik; “We are rightly concerned that every believer has the assurance of salvation and knows how to endure the attacks that come in this area from Satan. At the same time we also understand that there are some who assume or presume they are Christians when they are not. It is a challenge to all: Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?”
- Redpath; “To examine yourself, in fact, is to submit to the examination and scrutiny of Jesus Christ the Lord – and this never to fix attention on sin but on Christ – and to ask Him to reveal that in you which grieves His Spirit; to ask Him to give you grace that it might be put away and cleansed in His precious blood.” Self examination “takes the chill away from your soul, it takes the hardness away from your heart, it takes the shadows away from your life, it sets the prisoner free.”

- Seriously – Take the Time consistently to Examine Yourselfes

- We are not to look for perfection – in ourselves or in others –

- But we should see real evidence of Jesus Christ in us.
- More on this in a minute
- **2nd But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified v. 6-7**

2 Corinthians 13:6–7 (NKJV)

6 *But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.*

7 *Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem disqualified.*

- Paul anticipates a counter-question.
 - “Paul, you ask us to examine ourselves. Well, why don’t you examine yourself?”
 - Maybe you aren’t a Christian after all!”
- Paul dismisses this question out of hand.
 - It is so apparent that we are not disqualified that he simply trusts that they recognize the truth of it.
- **3rd For we can do nothing against the truth:**

2 Corinthians 13:8 (NKJV)

8 *For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.*

- Paul, even as an apostle, could do nothing against the truth.
 - Even the apostles were not above the truth.
 - Paul could only work effectively for the truth, not against the truth.
- **4th For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong:**

2 Corinthians 13:9–10 (NKJV)

9 For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.

- If Paul's weakness could contribute to the strength of the Corinthian Christians, he would be glad.
 - His real concern was that the Corinthians may be made complete.
- Again Verse 10
 - All that Paul did was for their highest good

• **Third: Lesson # 3 – Examine Your Faith**

Psalms 139:23–24 (NKJV)

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;

24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

- **1st The test here isn't asking...**
 - How often you go to church?
 - How often you say your mealtime prayers?
 - How many verses you've memorized?
 - How many ministries do I help support?
 - It goes right to the bottom line...
 - Are you even in the Christian faith?
- **2nd Examine Your Faith – Good questions to ask**
 - 1st Do you have a personal relationship with Christ?

- 2nd Have you experienced any significant changes in your life through knowing Him?
- 3rd Do you experience His leading, His presence, His peace, & His joy?
- 4th If you were to die today, do you have the assurance of eternity with God?
- 5th How would you “prove” you were a Christian?
- 6th Is there enough evidence to convict you of being a Christian?
- 7th Can you show evidence you are really a changed person?
 - How different are your thoughts?
 - Your habits?
 - Your goals?
 - Your relationships?
 - Your feelings?
- 8th Are you getting easier to live with?
- 9th Are your attitudes any different now than they were in the past?

Examine Yourselves In Paul Final Encouragement vs. 13:7-14

• **First: Concluding exhortation v. 11**

2 Corinthians 13:11 (NKJV)

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

- **1st Finally, brethren, farewell:**
 - Farewell is much better translated rejoice
- **2nd Become Complete:**

- The verb is the same as the one used of mending nets in Matthew 4:21, and can also mean “mend your ways.”
 - The Corinthians were to stop quarreling and sinning, and live in harmony with each other.
- As Christians...
 - We shouldn’t excuse and neglect areas of our life by saying, “I’m just not into that” or “That’s just my weak point.”
 - We MUST become Complete.
- **3rd Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace:**
 - Be of Good Comfort
 - May also be understood as “be encouraged” or “be exhorted.”
 - They had been given strong admonitions by the Apostle Paul.
 - Here he tells them to receive these admonitions in a good spirit and to act on them.
 - Be of one mind.
 - The only way, of course, in which Christians can be of one mind is to have the mind of Christ.
 - It is to think as He thinks, to bring all their thoughts and reasonings in subjection to Himself.
 - Live in Peace.
 - Do you’re BEST to live at PEACE with EVERYONE

• **Second: Final words vs. 12-14**

2 Corinthians 13:12–14 (NKJV)

12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

13 All the saints greet you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

- **1st Greet one another with a holy kiss:**
 - Holy Handshake today
- **2nd The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.**
 - This is the only place in the New Testament where the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are mentioned together in this kind of blessing.

Closing

- John Wesley when he was a student at Oxford called "The Holy Club."
 - The first list appeared about 1729 in the preface to Wesley's second Oxford Diary.
- Questions:
 - 1st Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
 - 2nd Do I confidentially pass on to others what has been said to me in confidence?
 - 3rd Can I be trusted?
 - 4th Am I a slave to dress, friends, work or habits?
 - 5th Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
 - 6th Did the Bible live in me today?

- 7th Do I give the Bible time to speak to me every day?
- 8th Am I enjoying prayer?
- 9th When did I last speak to someone else of my faith?
- 10th Do I pray about the money I spend?
- 11th Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
- 12th Do I disobey God in anything?
- 13th Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
- 14th Am I defeated in any part of my life?
- 15th Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrustful?
- 16th How do I spend my spare time?
- 17th Am I proud?
- 18th Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
- 19th Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
- 20th Do I grumble or complain constantly?
- 21st Is Christ real to me?

Communion

- First: Remember (Looking Back at what Jesus did)
- Second: Repent / Reflect (Looking Within) 1 Cor. 11:27-28
- Third: Rejoice (Looking Forward) 1 Cor. 11:26

- Fourth: Reconcile (Looking Around) 1 Cor. 11:29, 33-34

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV)

23 *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;*

24 *and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”*

25 *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”*

26 *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.*