

Keeping thy heart with all diligence by the Precious Word of God

Do we automatically find sin in those who may not conform to our own profession of faith? We can always find sin based on evidence, or imagination! But is this what God's word is teaching us to do? How do we examine ourselves? Is it not true that in one way all of mankind stand on the same ground? Our founding fathers once thought so, who wrote, "all men are created equal." But where did this belief come from? Proper research of America's first leadership reveals how these words landed in the Declaration of Independence by men who loved the word of God:

Psalm 14:2-3 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. **3** They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

1 John 1:8 ¶ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

From God's Holy word we can see how all of mankind from every nation come short of the glory of God! In ourselves, there are none who are perfectly righteous and without sin! There are none, who of themselves, understand and who seek God! On the flip side, all have the potential of receiving God's mercy and truth in the saving work of Jesus Christ! "All stand on the same ground! All are created equal!" So, when may we *condemn* our brothers and sisters of being guilty of sins, we've either observed, or not observed? Why ask this question? The reason is because, all of mankind are guilty of this self-righteousness since Cain murdered his brother Abel! God teaches if in our thoughts and hearts we hate our brother God sees us as Cain:

1 John 3:15-16 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. **16** Hereby

perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Because we don't like someone, or don't want them around, 'for whatever reason', it is natural man's tendency to think they see evil which they themselves may have no justification for. This can be for the purpose of discrediting their perceived enemy in order to remove them while making themselves as thou THEY ARE WITHOUT SIN! But what did Jesus say so that no one would cast a stone at the woman caught in the act of adultery? She is a picture of the true church of Christ God is going to protect by the faithfulness and life of Christ, who, alone, is without sin!

John 8:7 ... He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. ... 10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? 11 She said, no man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

"Do we judge our neighbor according to outward appearance? Is this how the Lord judges? Scripture says, the Lord looks at the heart! God declares that what's in the heart comes forth from the mouth, and not necessarily from what the outward flesh shows!"

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Matthew 15:18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart;

Proverbs 4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks:

The words that come out of the mouth is what reveals who we are in our hearts, which may, or may not parallel what our outward appearance reveals in the flesh! Consider Lazarus, a beggar, who's sores the dogs licked! Consider, Elijah, (who, John the Baptist, represents), who wore a leather girdle and ate wild locust and honey! "But their witness we can see from scripture! They were God's elect!" A bad tree cannot

continually produce, *[witness]*, good fruit, which is Christ. From the abundance of the heart our mouths speak!

Luke 6:44-45 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. 45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

According to scripture, it is impossible for someone, who, truly loves the things of this world, who have to draw back from God's instruction, (word), who finds it impossible to forgive, and, who have little to no desire to fight their besetting sins: that out of their heart will continue to flow the truths of God's word that is good fruit! God does not allow a tree that bares no fruit to look and sound the same as one that bares fruit! "But how do we recognize that which is good? If it's only according to the outward appearance, how will we see God's people by their fruits that come from the heart, such as, Elijah, and, John the Baptist?" Yes, scripture also declares, there are persuasive deceivers! Then, keeping our heart with all diligence, properly discerning between good and evil, happens only by becoming thoroughly familiar with all of God's word (Hebrews 5:14)!

Matthew 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

There will always be tell-tale signs and patterns from those who may be deceivers. Who eventually reveal that they are hypocrites. But ultimately, it is NOT from the flesh or the outward appearance, *[which is often very deceiving]*, that we learn this! But it is from the mouth which the bible says no man can tame, (James 3:6-10). This must be understood! Because no one, including the Christian, is perfect in what comes out of their mouth! Be that as it may, what is the heart revealing over time that comes from the mouth? What is their true intent showing to be, according to that which proceeds from the mouth? As a believer our ultimate reference point has to be God's word by which we discern between that which is truly good and that which will not benefit us.

How do we approach our ultimate point of reference, the Bible? We ought to be cautious if we discern scripture is coming from man's wisdom and not God's Wisdom! Witnessing God's word as man's wisdom is done by taking verses out of context, and adding ideas to verses that are not there. So that we are subtracting and thus adding our own ideas which the Lord has not thus said!

In, 1 Corinthians 2:13, Scripture reveals the beginning of a process by which we can learn how to avoid this error. But why? So that we can KNOW it is God who is speaking to us, and not our own understanding, or someone else's understanding (Proverbs 3:5-7):

1 Corinthians 2:12-13 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

With, 1 Corinthians 2:12-13, in mind, the following exercise may be helpful. For example, let's do a short exercise by comparing, John 1:1, 14, with, Romans 10:17. We will then compare these with, Galatians 2:16, as we read slowly and attentively:

John 1:1, 14 ¶ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

In, John 1:1, 14, and, Romans 10:17, scripture reveals how Jesus Christ is, Himself, God's word, personified, by which the believer receives, [*hears with spiritual ears*], the faith of God by the work of Christ! Additionally, when we compare, Galatians 2:16, with, John 1:1, 14, and, Romans 10:17; twice, God shows how it is not by our works, but it is by Christ's faith we hear and come to believe His word and are justified:

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Why are these things so important? According to, Galatians 2:16, of ourselves, there is no work we can do that would make us faithful and just before God (*See also, Ephesians 2:8-10*)! But it is Christ's work and faithfulness, in us, alone, that makes us just and right with Him, yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8)! This understanding makes a gigantic difference in how we witness His good news – the gospel – to others! Are we bringing them to the One who can save them from their sins by God's Grace through Faith, and that of Jesus Christ which is the

gift of God? Or, are we bringing them ourselves according to the works of our own hands, [*understanding*], which is the reason God destroyed ancient Israel! Later, in person, [in the flesh] the Lord showed hatred towards the Pharisee's as He condemned them to their faces?

Many, today, are indirectly taught that it is by the works of their own hands they are obedient, and thus faithful before God. This may attract a lot more people to fill a congregation! But it ultimately discredits God's Son who's purpose it was to work the works of God, having no sin of His own; that many would believe and repent! It is by His daily sanctification, through the Holy Spirit, in us, that we mortify the deeds of the flesh (Romans 8:13). So that by His grace we are participants of His work by His Spirit. "It is Christ who must receive all the glory"!

John 6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

If we take the previous verses above and compare them with, Galatians 2:20, we can see how the faith that was in the Apostle Paul was the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and NOT the faith of Paul himself; though Paul would be a partaker of Christ's faithfulness (1 Co 9:10):

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Again, as we compare, Galatians 2:20, with all of scripture, the point here is that the faith of Paul was not of himself. Rather, the life that Paul lived, being born again, was by the Faithfulness of Jesus Christ who 'is' the Living Word of God, abiding in Paul; and what we want to see in us!

Is the Faith of God's Son, by the Holy Spirit, making us right with God, and this because of Christ's perfect faithfulness on the cross? Or, are we, in ourselves, and of ourselves, doing our own works according to our own understanding, according to our own faithfulness? This would

be walking by sight and not by faith? Man's work of itself which is imperfect must end in eternal death:

James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

The fact that many put Christ's name on their works is meaningless if Christ is Not in them through the rebirth of the Holy Spirit being born again (Isaiah 4:1; John 3:3-5)! This is a problem many are seeing in too many of the Christian churches today; and why so many have left, or have been banished. According to what comes out of the mouth, too many Christians today make it difficult to see how they are born again, according to the scripture. While many show their knowledge of scripture, yet, are failing to reveal the walk Christ gave us as His example. Walking by faith and not by sight. Suffering in His steps as we take up our cross to follow Him. Separating ourselves from this world that hates God (Mark 10:21).

1 Peter 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

2 Corinthians 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

We don't separate ourselves from our 'friends', but from their behavior, if it is not of the faith of Christ! As the scripture warns in, Matthew 22:14, For many are called, but few are chosen. These truths, like the plague, many of today's churches ignore, because it would move them to examine themselves, ACCORDING TO HIS WORK AND NOT ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN WORKS. It is a repentance only those who are born again will desire to pursue, according to the scripture. But as scripture warns, many others, 'who are called', will ever be learning, while never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. "And that is NOT where we want to be, if we truly love the Lord!"

2 Timothy 3:5, 7 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ... 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

**In your patience
possess ye your souls:**

Is God's unfolding of His salvation plan winding down and coming to an end? I know, we've heard this before! But is it? Are we seeing the signs the Lord said would appear, signaling, "as it was in the days of Noah

(Luke 17:26)". One of those signs is, that, across the board, THE LOVE OF MANY SHALL GROW COLD. Is this NOT what we're experiencing throughout the world today and in America? Another sign is, "and THERE WILL BE WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS; as the beginning of woes." I have to confess, of myself I don't want to look at these things, but my heart insists that this is also part of the word of God which is the gospel!

Matthew 24:10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Luke 21:16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. 17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. 18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish. 19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

If we believe what God declared to those who lived thousands of years ago is NOT what He's saying to us today, then, according to scripture, this would be a major discrepancy in how we approach God's word! Eventually most of the verses in the bible would have to be, revised, or, cut out, that provide God's loving warning to us who can hear! Yet, this is what's happening in the Christian churches today! Only by becoming familiar with all of God's word can we see how these things are so!

So, what is a true test we can give that would reveal the hearts we are speaking to? Could it be that it is especially in our day God has given us, Luke 6:27-28, for the purpose of attracting those who may be becoming saved, while others may want to separate themselves from us; therefore, revealing who we're speaking to:

Luke 6:27-28 ¶ But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, 28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Are we finding ourselves doing what the Lord commands, in, Luke 6:27-28? I find this is one of the best tests to see whether we are saved or not! While we are not perfect in ourselves as we seek to obey His commandments, but our on-going-desire is to become more perfect in our obedience to Him through Him! Amongst the suffering we may encounter, yet, God promises the greatest blessings will follow when we obey Him on this matter! But God warns that our hearts will only grow

colder if we continue to judge according to the outward appearance, which may deceptively appear beautiful; yet, it's what's on the inside the Lord looks at!

Mt 23:25 ... you make clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of violent behavior and uncontrolled desire. (BBE)

Oh, that the spiritual state of our fellowship would be according to ALL OF GOD'S WORD by which His people spiritually comfort one another. That the young men and women would be spiritually trained to put on the armor of God, [*the whole counsel of God*], that can ward off the darts of the enemy – the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Otherwise, we're just another community club which the world has had since the beginning of time, according to the carnal mind and the spirit of the world (1 Corinthians 2:12-13). But God is calling His saints to another world:

1 John 2:15-16 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Isaiah 65:17 ¶ For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ...

Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

To God Be All the Glory. Amen.