



## Examine Yourself

*Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.*

1 Corinthians 11:27-28



Self-examination is profitable, when done honestly and sincerely. This is especially true when we partake of the communion. Eating the bread and drinking the fruit of the vine signifies having fellowship with Him; a fellowship we share with Him in the death of our old self, so we might walk in newness of life in Him.

Examination of self, that is. Not of others. What shall we look for in this examination? **First**, we need to see whether we give honor to the source of our salvation (God). **Second**, do we appreciate the work of the heavenly host to bring about our salvation? **Third**, we need to look closely at our attitude toward the blessings made available to us through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Looking over our past actions we observe that, try as we might, we don't always act properly. Such thoughts humble us and make us realize that His grace is something we dare not be without.

Looking to the future, we see that with the Lord *we "overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."* (Romans 8:37). Without the Lord, the future would be bleak, the consequences unbearable to think about. Thus we look forward with great anticipation to His coming again. This is His promise, *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."* John 14:2-3

Our self-examination kindles our appreciation for what has been done for us, what we now have, and what is promised in the hereafter. Such self-examination motivates us to live for the Lord, enduring any reproach, any suffering, any hardship.

# The Power of Words

## A Warning

*So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.*

James 3:5-8

## A Confession

I have been hurt, and have hurt others, more by words than by physical blows. And I dare say this is true for more than a few. The amount of hurt would be significantly reduced if all would listen to (and heed) the following:

### Listen More, Speak Less!

*This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.*

James 1:19



### Heal, Not Hurt

*There is one who speaks rashly\* like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*

Proverbs 12:18

[\*to babble; hence to holler angrily; speak unadvisedly.]

*Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

Colossians 4:6



### Careful Not Careless

*“But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”*

Matthew 12:36-37

*So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.*

James 2:12

### Resolve to make sure that your words heal, not harm!

**Everyone may have a right to their own opinion,  
But that doesn't mean their opinion is right.**

# Cited by the 'Politically Correct' Police

## JOHN

**Called some people "liars."**

*P.C.: He should have given them the benefit of the doubt.*

**Warned the disciples about not having fellowship with false teachers.**

*P.C.: He should have been more understanding –realizing that such ostracizing is painful to the one shut out.*

**Told Gaius that he'd deal with the bad behavior of Diotrephes "when I come."**

*P.C.: He should have been forgiving, and should have instructed Gaius to be more tolerant.*

## PAUL

**Warned that some members were in danger of "falling from grace" and being "severed from Christ."**

*P.C.: He should have stressed the loving and forgiving spirit of God.*

**Taught that the goddess Diana (Artamus) was nothing, upsetting the Ephesians.**

*P.C.: He should have been more understanding of their long held veneration of Diana. He should have been aware that beliefs are a personal matter and are sacred to the individual.*

**Preached that the Greek's wisdom was foolishness in contrast to the wisdom of God, upsetting the Greeks.**

*P.C.: He should have praised the Greeks for their ability to think and reason. He had little regard for their self-esteem.*

**Confronted Peter face-to-face before all, after Peter had acted improperly.**

*P.C.: He should have avoided confrontation and been more understanding and forgiving.*

**Condemned those who were "preaching another gospel."**

*P.C.: He should have allowed for some diversity. Not all people think alike.*

**Believed he had an obligation to preach the "whole counsel of God."**

*P.C.: He should have known that such preaching would not be well-received, and turn some followers away.*

## PETER

**Preached that the Jews were responsible for demanding an innocent Jesus be put to death.**

*P.C.: He should have left off "blame." No one likes to be blamed. It makes one feel bad and sad.*

**Declared that he (and the other apostles) ought to obey God, not man, upsetting the rulers.**

*P.C.: He should have tried to find some "common ground" through compromise.*

**Charged men to speak "as the oracles of God."**

*P.C.: He should have made allowances for personal interpretation of Scriptures.*

## JAMES

**Chastised those who said but didn't do.**

*P.C.: He should have understood that many have good intentions and probably have good reasons for not doing.*

**Charged some members with "spiritual adultery."**

*P.C.: He should never have used such strong terminology. He should have been more positive, not negative.*

## JESUS

The most flagrant abuser of political correctness.  
**Healed on the Sabbath and upset the Jews.**

*P.C.: He should have done it on another day and avoided the confrontation.*

**Called the scribes and Pharisees "hypocrites," condemning their false piety.**

*P.C.: He should have refrained from such condemnation: no one likes to be called names. It hurts one's feelings.*

**Condemned the scribes and chief priests.**

*P.C.: He should have had more respect for the spiritual leaders, even if they were less than perfect.*

**Criticized the Pharisees and Sadducees, calling them an evil and adulterous generation.**

*P.C.: He should have known that such a combative spirit only turns off those you are trying to reach.*



## Musings of a Preacher

### 'Faithful'

There is one notion I have difficulty embracing: Equating faithfulness and being regular in attendance. Yes, it is important to be faithful in attendance, but by itself it is not an accurate measure of faithfulness.

The characters mentioned in Hebrews chapter 11 were considered faithful on the basis of the way they conducted their lives. They remained faithful while facing strong opposition and overwhelming odds. (Even a casual reading of the text reveals the difficulties they faced in remaining faithful.)

What's the point?

The point is this: One's faithfulness is based on how one lives, not just on assembling for a few hours several times a week. This is not to say assembling is not important. As eating is important to live (it is the activity that gives strength to be active), so assembling is the activity that helps us be faithful in our daily lives. One must live faithfully—that's the true measure of faithfulness.

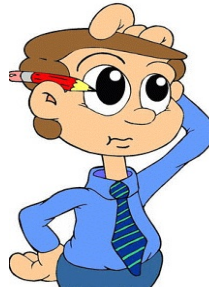
Sadly, I have known some who were there "whenever the church doors were open" and considered themselves among the most faithful, but lived like the world during the week.

*And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."*

Luke 9:23

*"... Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."*

Revelation 2:10



## Ponder This

### Keys to Creative Living

Do something to solve your problems.

Accept and meet your obligations.

Adjust to the necessary.

Plan ahead, set realistic goals.

Welcome new experiences, test new ideas.

Use your God-given talents.

Think, investigate and decide for yourself.

Put your best into everything you do.

Share your joys and sorrows with others.

Reach out and help others.

—Selected

*Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*

Colossians 3:23-24

*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.*

Romans 12:15-16

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Bible references are from the NASB except where another translation is referenced.

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