

# A Sober Evaluation?

- *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. Rom. 12:3*
- How can we successfully accomplish this?
- How do we avoid overconfidence?
- How can we soberly evaluate ourselves?
- Everyone else but not me...
- It is important to remember who wrote these words.

# Paul's “*more highly than he ought*”

- *For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. 14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. Gal 1:13-14*
- *though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. Phil 3:4-6*

# God's Mercy with Paul's Deception

- *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 1 Tim 1:12-14*
- *Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1Cor 15:8-10*

# A Chasm in Our Mind

- Paul was not alone.
- The entire Jewish nation crucified their own Messiah and refused to repent.
- Can you imagine how they will feel on the day of Judgment when Jesus stands before them as King of Kings and Lord of Lords?
- No matter how hard we try we can't always see ourselves clearly.
- There is always the danger of self-deception

# The Deluded Pharisee

- *Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:*  
10 *"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 **The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men — extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'** 13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; **for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**" Luke 18:9-14*

# He is Not Alone

- Many are self-deceived.
- *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 **Many will say to Me in that day**, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, **'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'** Mt 7:21-23*
- Jesus gave the objective standard to weigh ourselves
- *We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. 1Jn 4:6*
- What is a danger to others is a danger to us!

# Are We Above This?

- What are we thinking right now?
- I'm glad that's not me ... but what if it is you?
- Don't think of yourself more highly ...
- No one is immune:
- *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. Jer. 17:9-10*
- If we haven't learned this yet we are in danger.
- What we see in others can also be within.

# We Must Learn How to See

- *Your eye is the lamp of your body. **When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light,** but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. 35 Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. 36 If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light." Lk 11:34-36*
- Paul gave the key ... never think more highly ... think soberly ...
- That's what he told the Corinthians



# Paul's Warning to All

- *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!** 6 I hope you will find out that **we have not failed the test.** 2  
Cor 13:5-7*
- How do we Test ourselves:
- *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. Pr. 3:5-7*
- Scripture is our own standard: Read it & Assess

# When We Test ... We See...

- *but **test everything**; hold fast what is good. 22 Abstain from every form of evil. 1Th. 5:21-22*
- *But let each one **test his own work**, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. 5 For each will have to bear his own load. Gal 6:4-5*
- *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1Jn. 4:1-2*
- *Have we done this lately? Have we taken stock of ourselves based on what we know today?*

# God Sees Us Clearly

- *O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. Ps 139:1-4*
- Have we asked Him?
- “God help me to see myself as you see me so I can correct any problems and prepare for eternity.”
- We would not be the first to ask.
- *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Ps. 139:23-24*

# God Tests Every Heart ... Even Mine

- *I know also, my God, that You test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. 1Chr. 29:17*
- *The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests the hearts. Pr. 17:3*  
*Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Ps. 139:23-24*
- *The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven; his eyes behold, his eyelids test the sons of men. The LORD tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates. Ps. 11:4-5*

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