

“Examine Yourselves”

“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,” 2 Cor. 13:5.

The closing hours of the old year and the beginning of a new year is an appropriate time for self-examination. Many are now making (or breaking!) their “new year’s resolutions.” However, honest self-examination must always precede honorable resolutions to be and to do better. Hence, there is a need for self-examination.

There is one thing which nearly all examinations have in common — questions! This is true whether the examination be in the class room, the doctor’s office, or the driver’s license bureau. It is also true spiritually. In order to help you to “*know yourselves*” (2 Cor. 13:5), we are inserting a number of questions. Please insert your “yes” or “no” answer in the blank spaces provided (_____).

1. Primary obedience to the gospel in order to become a child of God includes: (1) faith, Mark 16:16; (2) repentance, Acts 17:30; (3) a confession of faith, Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10, and (4) baptism “*for the remission of sins,*” Acts 2:38. Based on these requirements, are you a child of God? (_____).

2. Love for God. Those who love God “*keep*” His “*commandments,*” John 14:15; I John 5:3. Do you love God? (_____).

3. Responsible children of God give of their means as they have been “*prospered*” on “*the first day of the week*” to the treasury of the local church of which they are members, I Cor. 16:1-2. Are you a responsible child of God? (_____)

4. Those who “*seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,*” Matt. 6:33, will put the worship of God before pleasure, company, or family, Matt. 10:34-38. Do you put God “*first?*” (_____).

5. Spiritual growth is a responsibility of every child of God, I Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18; Acts 20:32. Based on your attendance record, your study habits, your present interest, and your present attitude toward God, His church, and those who are members thereof, and toward your fellow man, have you grown (_____) or deteriorated? (_____).

6. Honest, sincere and fair-minded Christians do not condemn in others what they allow in themselves, Rom. 2:1-3. Are you honest, sincere, and fair-minded? (_____).

7. Those who are “*sound in the faith*” want to hear and to practice “*all the counsel of God,*” Acts 20:27, even though part of God’s “*counsel*” includes some “*hard*” sayings, John 6:60, sayings which may be offensive to some “*outsiders*” and even to some “*insiders.*” Are you sound in the faith? (_____).

8. “*Everyone who competes for the prize,*” I Cor. 9:24-27, is “*temperate in all things,*” and strives to “*so run*” that he may obtain “*an imperishable crown.*” Based on your habits, are you “*temperate in all things?*” (_____).

9. A “*crown of life*” will be given to those who are “*faithful unto death*,” Rev. 2:10. Based on your present condition, if you should die before you finished reading this bulletin, would you receive that “*crown*?” (_____).

10. A person whose heart is right in the sight of God, without anger, malice, or offense, will seek to honestly answer each of the preceding questions and determine within himself to correct whatever may be amiss in his life. Is your heart right in the sight of God? (_____).

May each one of us take the preceding test and honestly examine ourselves so that we may profit thereby. We cannot merely “hold our own” in the service of God. We either get better or we get worse! Each succeeding day should find us better than we were the day before, and to that end, we must strive so that death will not find us unprepared to meet God, before Whom we must all give account, Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10.

**** B. Witherington

Each one Save One: “*And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*,” 2 Tim. 2:2.

Timothy was Paul’s “*beloved son*,” 2 Tim. 2:2, “*in the faith*,” I Tim. 1:2. In other words, Paul had converted Timothy by teaching him the truth of the gospel. Now the favor Paul granted Timothy was the same favor Timothy was to extend to others — what he had “*heard*” from Paul he was to “*commit*” to others.

So it is with every child of God! We must share the gospel with others. I therefore issue this challenge to every Christian reading these words. Make it a point this year to reach another precious soul with the gospel of Christ. Begin now to prepare your list of people you know and upon whom you can have a potential influence for good, and then work on that list as we enter into the new year. If you do not feel capable of actually conducting the necessary studies, then ask some of the rest of us for help. There is no greater this-world joy than that experienced by two groups of people — those just **saved** (Acts 8:39), and those either directly or indirectly **responsible** for their salvation, I Thess. 2:19-20. —B. Witherington

This is the first issue of “**Rise Up and Build**” for the calendar year 2017. This issue is dated “January 1, 2017.” 2016 has officially ended. 2017 has officially begun. Most of us probably find it difficult to believe “the old year” has ended, for (from our perception) it passed so quickly. The older we become the more quickly it seems to take for a year to pass. A moment’s reflection enables us to understand why a year (for older people) seems to pass so quickly. For example, for a child born on January 1, 2016, the time it took for that year to pass represents 100 percent of his life on earth up to this point, whereas for a 50 year old man, 2016 only represents one fiftieth of his life on earth to date. The actual **time** it takes for a year to pass is the same for everyone, regardless of his age, but it is amazing how our **perception** of time changes as we get older!

As will so many, this writer sincerely wishes you a “**happy new year**” as you embark upon another year. However, actually *being* happy involves much more than simply hearing someone say “happy new year.” In the following acrostic are some proven rules which, if

obeyed, will bring happiness.

H for **Hope**, Titus 1:2. Do you have this hope?

A for **Assemble** in worship, Heb. 10:25. Will You?

P for **Preparation** for death, 2 Kings 20:1. Have you?

P for "**Pray without ceasing**," I Thess. 5:17. Are you doing this?

Y for **Yoke**, Matt. 11:29. Do you have on the yoke of Christ?

N for **Near**. "*Draw nigh to God*," Jas. 4:8.

E for **Endure**. "*Endure sound doctrine*," 2 Tim. 4:3.

W for **Work**. Always abound in the "*work of the Lord*," I Cor. 15:58.

Y for **Yield**. "*Yield yourselves unto God*," Rom. 6:13.

E for **Evangelize**, 2 Tim. 2:2. Teach others the truth of God.

A for **Abide**. "*Abide in*" the Lord, and let Him abide in you, John 15:4,5.

R for **Rejoice**. "*Rejoice in the Lord*," Phil. 3:1.

—Bobby Witherington