



(Psalm 139:23-24). We, too, must share this attitude. If we cannot call upon our God to expose us and to ask that we see ourselves as He sees us, then we're simply afraid of what we'll find out. If we are going to improve, root out weaknesses and old habits, then we must be willing to confront them when exposed.

Finally, we must examine ourselves honestly and continually. If we deny that we have sinned then we're only deceiving ourselves (cf. 1 Jn. 1:8). Paul's instruction to the Corinthians was in the present active tense. In other words, he was calling them to *keep on* examining themselves. None of us will ever reach a point in this life that relieves us of this duty. Only those who have grown complacent and lazy behave in such a way. From the youngest babe in Christ to the most seasoned veteran, none are exempt from this command. Let us be diligent, then, brethren, lest we come up short by our own neglect. We must actively pursue our relationship with Christ beyond baptism and until our dying day. He will never forsake us, and will aid us in our fight to become better servants as we struggle against our weakness. Let us heed His warnings, then, and never cease to ask, "Is it I, Lord?"



4700 Andrews Ave.
Amarillo TX 79106
806-352-2809
www.olsenpark.com

Faithful Sayings Issue 14.21 May 20, 2012

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ISSUE

14.21

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

May 20
2012



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Jason Garcia

"Is it I, Lord?"

By Jason Garcia

On the night He was betrayed, Jesus revealed to His disciples that one among them would betray Him. Upon hearing this, all were deeply grieved, and **"they each one began to say to Him, 'Surely not I, Lord?'"** (Matt. 26:22 NASB). All of these men had been with Him for the better part of three years (cf. Luke 3:23), He called each of them to discipleship personally (cf. Mark 3:13-14), and they all had worked diligently in His Name (cf. Luke 9:10), and witnessed many other amazing things. However, they all understood they still had the capacity to betray Him. How could this be? How could one of these be so callous as to betray Him with a sign of affection (Matt. 26:49)? Though Judas would be His betrayer, the other disciples would desert Him. One would go so far as to deny ever knowing Him even while Jesus was within sight and hearing (Luke 22:60-62). These men who knew Jesus and lived in His

presence for three years fell under sin. Each understood that the spirit of a betrayer could be found in any one of them, and that any one of them could sink into condemnation. This sad prospect should give every Christian pause, knowing that the Lord said there will be those **“who have no firm root”** in themselves, and that there will be those who allow the



Olsen Park church of Christ

evil one to snatch away **“what has been sown”** in the heart, and also those who allow the **“worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth to choke the word”** which they received (cf. Matt. 13:18-23). Given these warnings, do we ever stop to ask ourselves, “Is it I, Lord?”

If we are to be found faithful in the end, then we must continually examine ourselves. We must always accept the truth that any of God’s people may turn and join His enemies, for so it was so even in the early days of the church (cf. Acts. 20:29-30). The apostles have warned the one **“who thinks he stands to take heed that he does not fall”**, and that we must test ourselves to see if we are in the faith—examine ourselves (1 Cor. 10:12; cf. 2 Cor. 13:5). We must retain that same spirit that rested in His closest disciples that was willing to ask “Is it I, Lord?” If we allow ourselves to believe we have risen above such vulnerability—that we are somehow bullet-proof, then we’ve already lost. How can be sure that we have the right attitude, and that we are examining our own hearts as we should?

First, we must acknowledge the deliberate, conscious effort one must make in order to remain in Christ. Our faith is not something that will simply

“take care of itself” or grow on its own. No, quite the opposite. If we do not strive to nourish our faith, then we will shrink. Consider the Spirit’s words that **“we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?”** (Heb. 2:1-3; cf. 3:12).

If we realize that we are not invulnerable to weakness and temptation that can cause us to stumble, then we must resolve to examine our heart. This exam should be *personal*. It is easy to spot others’ weaknesses and chide them in our mind. It takes a concentrated effort on our part to look within self, and resolutely concede to our God and self that we need improvement (cf. Rom 14:12).

We must be willing, also, to examine ourselves by the right standard. If we fail in this this, our examining will be worthless. We cannot hold ourselves up against the doctrines of men (cf. Pro.12:14), or compare ourselves with other people (cf. 2 Cor. 10:12, 18), or even our

past behavior (cf. 1 Cor. 4:4). All of these fall short of the true standard that God has set before us—His Word. It alone is what we will be held accountable to in the Judgment (Jn. 12:48).

When we judge ourselves by the proper standard, we may not like what we see. We discover things about ourselves that God demands we relinquish in order to serve Him. However, we cannot afford to shy away from thoroughly examining ourselves. David prayed, **“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way”**