

# The Real Work of Examination

by Bryan Anthony

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of self-examination in the Christian life, encouraging listeners to examine themselves in light of God's standards and to seek a deeper understanding of God's love and character.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:23, Proverbs 28:26, Amos 5:14, Amos 5:24, John 5:39, 1 Corinthians 11:28, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Hebrews 4:12, James 1:23

**Topics:** "Self Examination", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Bryan Anthony preaches on the importance of self-examination in the faith, highlighting how earthly comparisons and pursuits hinder true spiritual growth. He emphasizes the need for individuals to examine themselves in the light of the Scriptures, seeking to reflect the character of Christ in truthfulness, boldness, meekness, and kindness. Anthony stresses that God reveals the hidden areas of our character over time, urging believers to allow God to work in them for His purpose and to courageously look inwardly for self-awareness.

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## Transcript

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith...." -2 Cor. 13.5a

One great scheme of the principalities and powers of the air is to keep the fires of holy examination dampened and quenched in our lives, so that we fail to come into the perspective of the Lord regarding our present condition. We may be consumed with an unholy kind of examination. We may compare our external qualities and blemishes with others that we consider more comely, we may examine our social status as a result of peer pressure, we may examine the breadth and "success" of our ministry in comparison to other works or organizations. All of these modes of examination are earthly, worldly, and from below.

Our generation refuses to give itself to the examination of the Lord, and for that reason it is shot through with insecurity, fear, and unrighteous pursuits. There is a famine of true accountability, and men are scrapping and contending for the upholding of their rights and opinions. They are striving to appear before various judges, and have failed to see that "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." We are "chasing after the wind" in various ways, and the only resolution to the predicament of the age will be for men to "examine themselves to see whether they are in the faith."

The real work of examination can only come as we pour over the Scriptures, and see prayerfully to the increase of our own comprehension of the Man Christ Jesus. The real work of examination has to do with laying bare our souls before the Lord, that He may reveal the discrepancies and inconsistencies which keep us from the likeness of Jesus Christ. Am I bearing His image, emanating His fragrance, and have I been a conduit for the expression of His nature? Am I lacking His truthfulness, His boldness, His meekness, His kindness? If I am examining myself on any ground other than His ground, I will be robbed of the refreshing power of His love, and simultaneously, I will set the bar too low with regard to the real call to be "in this world as He was in this world."

Jesus doesn't take us aside and explain things to us all the time; He explains things to us as we are able to understand them. The lives of others are examples for us, but God requires us to examine our own souls. It is slow work-- so slow that it takes God all of time and eternity to make a man or woman conform to His purpose. We can only be used by God after we allow Him to show us the deep, hidden areas of our own character. It is astounding how ignorant we are about ourselves! We don't even recognize the envy, laziness, or pride within us when we see it. But Jesus will reveal to us everything we have held within ourselves before His grace began to work. How many of us have learned to look inwardly with courage?

(Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest, January 12th selection)

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