

May 13, 2024

Dear Brethren,

We recently observed Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, and one lesson from that time continues to firmly resonate with me. It is succinctly summarized in 2 Corinthians 13:5:

"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 [margin: *"do not stand the test"*].

What does it mean to have Jesus Christ in us? For one thing, it means that we have eternal life—begotten (not yet born) of God by His Holy Spirit. As Romans 8:9-11 explains, we have both the Spirit of the Father and of Christ:

*"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit [which] dwells in you."*

Continuing, in verse 14: *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."*

This message is one of the most dramatic truths of the Bible—as the Apostle John also writes:

*"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:1-3).*

Still, we must examine ourselves regarding our standing in the "faith"—as mentioned above. Are we living pure lives as measured by the life of Jesus Christ? We are admonished:

*"For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 'Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth'; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23).*

Furthermore...

*"Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:14-15).*

Brethren, we do indeed live in a very crooked and perverse generation! This world is filled with sin at every turn, and righteousness is being suppressed in ways that are utterly astonishing! Our evil time has been foretold in the prophecies of God's Word, and we find His indictment:

*"Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20).*

We, as a part of the Church of God, bear great responsibility for what we have been given and how we, personally, are living our lives. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Our good works include our involvement in the Church of God, and we certainly know that Jesus Christ is always leading the Church—figuratively, described as His "body" (Compare Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24). If we want proof that Jesus Christ is in our lives, it can be found in the fruit that we bear as members of His body!

In this regard, let us be faithful to do all that we can whenever we can. This principle is found throughout the Bible, and we have been given many examples—especially that of Jesus Christ, Who gave His life, "that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17).

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Harris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dave Harris