

## EXAMINE YOURSELVES

As the apostle Paul comes to the end of his third epistle to the Corinthian church, he writes, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (II Cor. 13:5). Let us add one more passage to this before we get to our point. James wrote, "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:23-25).

First, every accountable human needs to examine himself by looking into the word of God to see if he is in harmony with that word. The non-Christian needs to look closely, for if he has not truly obeyed the gospel of Christ, he stands in line for the Lord to come with His mighty angles, In flaming fire to take vengeance on them (II Thess. 1:7-8). When that day comes, it will be too late to start examining oneself and changing oneself to be in harmony with the word of the Lord. You may knock on the door saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He will answer and say, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Matt. 25:11-12). It matters not if one is sincere or one is honest, if he is sincerely wrong or honestly wrong.

Second, lest those who have already embraced the gospel of Christ, have already been immersed into the Lord Jesus Christ and added to the church by the Lord Himself, get to smug with our present condition, remember that Paul was addressing Christians when he gave that command to examine oneself. Christians can start off on fire for the Lord only to gradually cool down, even to become "lukewarm" which the Lord says He will spue out of His mouth (Rev. 3:15-16). If there is one thing the Lord does not need nor want, it is slothful, lazy Christians (Matt. 25:26-30). Some Christians have altogether left the church (apostates) concerning which Peter said, "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (II Pet. 2:21).

There is only one way that one can know just where they stand concerning their salvation. Examine yourself!

*Robert*

## WHAT IS YOUR EXCUSE?

Some four hundred and thirty years after Israel went into Egypt, God chose Moses to deliver them from their bondage (Exo. 3:10). Immediately Moses began to make excuses as to why he should not be the one to go into Egypt and deliver God's people. It just may be that there is a parallel between his excuses and the excuses of many Christians for why they do not go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

His first excuse was, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exo. 3:11). The answer God gave Moses will serve for those who feel inadequate to teach the gospel. God told Moses, "Certainly I will be with thee" (Exo. 3:12). With God on your side, how can you fail?

His second excuse was "What shall I say unto them?" (Exo. 3:13). In the next several verses, God tells Moses that he is to tell them the word of God. That is all that one has to do when going out to teach others how to become children of God, just teach the word (II Tim. 4:2).

Moses' third excuse was, "They will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice" (Exo. 4:1). God's response to that excuse began with a question, "What is that in thine hand?" (Exo. 4:2). In the case of Moses, God used that which Moses had. It would behoove us to have the right thing in our hand if we wish to prove that what we are teaching is the word of God, and that something is the Bible, the gospel of Christ, which is the word of God (I Pet. 1:25). We might add here that certainly not everyone is going to believe because as Pharaoh was hard hearted and refused to believe the word of God, so shall many that we try to teach.

The fourth excuse of Moses was, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Exo. 4:10). God's response to that was also a question; "Who hath made man's mouth?" (Ex. 4:11). No where in the entire Bible is there any statement, command or promise that implies one must be able to speak eloquently in order to teach the gospel to others. But also remember what Paul said; "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

Let's not try to use the same lame excuses that Moses tried to use. They didn't work for Moses and they will not work for us! **Robert**