

The Better Way

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SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:00 a.m.
Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Afternoon Worship.....1:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:30 p.m.
(via Zoom Meetings)

ELDERS

David P. Brown
Ken Cohn
John West

DEACONS

Bret Bailey
J. D. Gunter
Eric Paluka

EVANGELIST

David P. Brown

SECRETARY

Sonya West

“EXAMINE YOURSELVES”

B. C. Goodpasture

The church at Corinth received more written instruction from Paul than any other on New Testament record. This unusual amount of teaching and correction was called forth by the deplorable conditions that prevailed among the Corinthian brethren. Although this church was addressed as **“the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours”** (1 Cor. 1:2), it was guilty of a fearfully long list of sins. The example of Corinth shows clearly that the **“sanctified”** can sin. It justifies the admonition: **“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”** (1 Cor. 10:12). It would be difficult to find a congregation afflicted with more ills than was that at Corinth. Paul had spent a year and six months there at the time he established the church (Acts 18:11). In spite of all the sound, wholesome teaching he did, the church drifted far from its original moorings. Pride, envy, jealousy, drunkenness in connection with the Lord’s supper, lawsuits between brethren **before** unbelievers, divisions over men, and fornication, **“such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife,”** were among the sins of which the Corinthians were guilty.

In an effort to restore the Corinthians to the truth and uprightness of the gospel, Paul wrote them two epistles. In these he condemned sin in no uncertain terms. He gave instructions for correcting the mistakes of the past and for avoiding their repetition in the future. Among these he said: **“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?”** (2 Cor. 13:5). The examination he here enjoined was strict and searching. It was intended to discover and correct all errors in thought, speech, and conduct.

“Examine” is from *peirazo*. It is used about forty times in the New Testament. It is translated “tempt,” “assay,” “examine,” and “try.” It means to put to the test. The reason for the test, or trial, does not inhere in the word. The intention must be gathered from the context. When Satan makes trial, it is for the purpose, and with the desire, that evil be the result. He tempts in order to induce men to sin. *Peirazo* is the word used to describe the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness. On the other hand, God tests men to bring out and develop their good qualities. Such was the trial of Abraham (Gen. 22:1). *Peirazo* expresses what God did with Abraham in commanding him to offer

Isaac. It is the word used in the Septuagint. The intention and the result of the trial were good. Similarly, Paul used the word in writing to the Corinthians. But *peirazo* did not convey the idea as strongly as Paul wanted it. He used another word to express the idea more specifically. The word was *dokimazo*. It is used less frequently than *peirazo* in the New Testament, being found twenty-three times. It is translated 'discern,' 'prove,' 'approve,' 'try,' 'examine' in the New Testament. It was the word employed to describe the process of the refiner in freeing the pure metal from the dross. It suggests the idea of separating the good from the bad with the idea of holding on to the good and getting rid of the bad. Unlike *peirazo*, it describes a test, the purpose of which is uniformly good. *Peirazo* is used, on occasion, of God, but exceptionally; and of Satan, usually. On the other hand, *dokimazo* is never used of Satan. He never desires that good be the outcome of trial. It has been said that God tries His people to discover the wheat, but Satan tempts them to reveal the chaff. The two words, then, have some common ground, in point of meaning, yet they are not exactly synonymous.

In the New Testament, Christians were admonished to examine, *peirazo*, and *dokimazo* two classes of persons—namely, themselves and others. The process of testing has to do with self and the non-self.

The Thessalonians were commanded to **"prove (*dokimazo*) all things; hold fast that which is good"** (1 The. 5:21). The word *prove* in some connections means to establish the truthfulness of a proposition, statement, or doctrine. Here it means to put to the test with the idea of purging out the evil that the good may be retained in unalloyed purity. It would not be possible for one to prove that all he hears is true, because much he hears is false. Again, John said: **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try (*dokimazo*) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world"** (1 John 4:1). Teachers were to be subject to a rigid examination or test to see if they were sound—to see if they spoke according to the pattern of the **"sound doctrine."** The church at Ephesus was heartily commended because it had **"tried (*peirazo*) them which say they are apostles**

and are not, and hast found them liars" (Rev. 2:2). This was pretty strong language, you say. Yes, because the situation demanded it, and John used it. The church in Pergamos was reprov'd **"because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication"** (Rev. 2:14). So was Thyatira condemned for not having put to the test the self-styled prophetess, Jezebel (Rev. 2:20). This investigation of teachers is for the purpose of approving the good and exposing the bad. Those who are unsound and false must not be encouraged or tolerated.

To this it should be added that there rests upon us the obligation to put all persons to the test in order that we may know how they stand in relation to the truth, and, consequently, how to deal with them. **"Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted"** (Gal. 6:1). This commandment could not be obeyed without a certain amount of examination to determine the state of the one under consideration. Again:

Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works (2 John: 9-11).

Then "any one" in this connection could not be encouraged, if sound; or condemned, if unsound, without first being put to the test to determine his status.

In the right spirit, and in the proper sequence, it is required that one assist in removing the mote from his brother's eye. Jesus said:

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; ... and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye (Mat. 7:3-5).

Here we find the order of examination indicated. It is self first, then the other fellow. When we find the order reversed, we may find hypocrisy. We are likely to find one ruthlessly trying to impose on another that which he himself has failed or refused to practice. As a matter of consistency, one ought to prove himself first, then his brother. It ill behoves the man whose fields are choked with thorns to be forever pointing out the weeds in his neighbor's garden. He could find employment, at least for a time, nearer home. Cleaning the thorns from his own fields might encourage, by way of example, his neighbor to pull the weeds out of his garden. Pointing out the weeds in his neighbor's garden will not remove the thorns from his own fields.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. ...And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?...And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? (Rom. 2:1-22).

After one has demonstrated the merits of a remedy or treatment on himself, he can recommend it to others. Think of a bald-headed man urging the efficacy of a hair restorer! **“Physician, heal thyself!”** The action of one who attempts to examine another without having first examined himself comes without grace and will be accepted as it comes.

Again, as a matter of sympathy, one should put himself to the test before he attempts to prove, or examine, another. Only when he does this can he adequately sympathize with the one whom he seeks to put to the test and correct. Having first gone through with the

experience himself, he can better understand how the other fellow will feel when the hour of his trial is on. Christ, by reason of his having been tempted, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted (peirazo) like as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).

For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted (Heb. 2:18).

It is here insisted that Christ, by reason of his having been tempted, is the better able to sympathize with those who are tempted. Likewise the one who has examined himself first is able to be touched with the feelings of his brother whom he is subjecting to a rigid testing.

Once more, it may be added that one should examine himself first in order that he may be better qualified to examine his brother. Jesus evidently thought this prior operation on self would minister to a more successful operation on the other fellow. **“First cast out the beam [large timber] out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote [splinter] out of thy brother's eye” (Mat. 7:5).** *“Then,”* and only *then*, after the large timber is removed, **“shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote [splinter] out of thy brother's eye.”** Without the prior removal of the beam, the professional mote hunter would see darkly and imperfectly to remove the mote from his brother's eye. He would be wholly incapable of so delicate an operation. Are we to gather from this example that the case in hand is unusual or far-fetched and exceptional? Is it not true that the expert mote remover is usually the outstanding beam possessor? If this is not true, then Jesus did not, in this connection, teach the lesson most generally needed. The man who makes so much ado over the mote may be trying to divert attention from the beam. The man who has removed the beam from his own eye will be too humble and sympathetic to make much noise over the mote in his brother's eye.~

Deceased

Rightly Dividing
The Word Of Truth

Sunday Morning Bible Class David P. Brown

A Study Of
1ST PETER

Teacher:
David P. Brown

WEDNESDAY NIGHT
BIBLE CLASS VIA ZOOM

**VOLUNTEERS
FOR
DUTIES IN
2025**

**Sign-up sheets
are in the foyer**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
www.churchesofchrist.com

TEST YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

What woman advised her husband to have nothing to do with Jesus?

Answer to last week's question:
Thomas; John 20:25

THOSE TO SERVE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024

Announcements	Eric Paluka
Scripture Reading	Eric Paluka <i>Genesis 4:9-15</i>
Song Leader	Bret Bailey
Prayer	Gary Blasingame/Eric Paluka (AM) Joshua West/Gary Blasingame (PM)
Speaker	David Brown
Lord's Table (AM) <i>(Mat. 26:59-66)</i>	
Bret Bailey	Steven Johnson
Andrew Paluka	J.D. Gunter
Lord's Table (PM)	
Jonathan West	Eric Paluka
Audio/Video Monitor	Jonathan West
Camera/Door Monitor	Stephen Cohn
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2024 <i>(via Zoom Meeting)</i>	
Announcements	Ken Cohn
Speaker	Bret Bailey
Bible Class Teacher	David Brown
FOR DECEMBER	
Prepare Communion	West
Lock Buildings	West
Prepare Bulletin Board	West

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

John West, Emma Gomez, Family of Wayne Blake, Glenn Kryszak, Barbara Perkins, April McCain, Gayle Barnett, Noah & Glenda Hackworth, Tania Turcios, Robbie Kirby, Edith Young, Zack Nero, Debbie Brannon, Cynthia Jackson, Elnora Oxendine, Charles & Ann Nero, Chuck & Nancy Verkist, Freda Smith, Orlanda Chumbley, and Roelf & Janice Ruffner.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Saturday, January 25, 2025: Fish Hatchery Road Lectureship.

Saturday, February 22, 2025: Spring CFTF lectureship.