PASSING THE TEST OF FAITH!

(2 Corinthians 13:1-10)

I. HATE SIN!
* God condemns sin and takes it seriously and so should we!
  1. This is the third time I am coming to you. Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses. I have previously said when present the second time, and though now absent I say in advance to those who have sinned in the past and to all the rest as well, that if I come again I will not spare anyone, since you are seeking for proof of the Christ who speaks in me, and who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you. For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, yet we will live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you (2 Corinthians 13:1–4).
  2. A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed… Thus you shall purge the evil from among you (Deuteronomy 19:15, 19b).

II. LOVE JESUS!
* Spiritual examination requires honesty and introspection!
  1. Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? But I trust that you will realize that we ourselves do not fail the test (2 Corinthians 13:5, 6).
  2. Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words” (John 14:23, 24a; see 1 John 5:11-13).

III. DEFEND TRUTH!
* Obedience to the truth develops our spiritual maturity!
  2. But in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15).
An important Guideline of Care Groups: Create an environment in which people feel free to share real questions about their faith and receive grace and truth in response.

Getting Started:
1. What are some tests and exams that you have taken or are taking in life?
2. How do you pass the test of faith? What is the standard that you use in evaluating your spiritual health?

Discussing Truths:
1. Do you consider yourself a follower of Jesus Christ (Luke 6:46-49)?
2. Why is it important for Christians to hate sin (Psalm 97:10; 119:104)?
3. How do you know if you really love Jesus? How do you know if you are in the faith?
4. What are some practical habits you can use to facilitate your love growing for our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:17, 18)?
5. What areas of your life need a fresh examination? What role does the Holy Spirit play in our examination of ourselves (John 16:7-11)?
6. What is the spiritual danger for some with this self-examination? How does Ephesians 2:8, 9 encourage us in our salvation?
7. Why is repentance often viewed as a negative instead of being seen as a precious gift from our loving heavenly Father (Romans 2:4)?
8. How did Moses resist the passing pleasure of sin (Hebrews 11:24-26)?
9. Why is defending the truth so vital in our current culture (2 Timothy 4:1-5)? What lessons can we learn from Pilate’s failure to pass the faith test (John 18:33-38)?

Now What? Application:
1. Who will hold you accountable to live above reproach and pursue a life-long goal of spiritual maturity?
2. How will you present yourself approved to God (2 Timothy 2:15)?