

2 Corinthians 13:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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?

Analysis

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves—Paul turns the tables: those demanding proof (*dokimēn*, v. 3) of Paul's authority must now *dokimazete* (δοκιμάζετε, "examine/test") themselves. The present imperative demands ongoing self-examination. The phrase **whether ye be in the faith** (*ei este en tē pistei, εἰ ἔστε ἐν τῇ πίστει*) questions their fundamental standing—not peripheral issues but salvation itself.

Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? The word *adokimoi* (ἀδόκιμοι, "reprobates/disqualified/failing the test") is the negative form of the *dokimē* they demanded—those failing the test are rejected. Paul's logic: if Christ is not in you (*Christos en hymin, Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν*), you've failed the ultimate examination. This doctrine of **Christ in you** (compare Col 1:27, "Christ in you, the hope of glory") is the essence of Christian identity—union with Christ, not mere intellectual assent.

Historical Context

The Corinthian church exhibited all external marks of Christianity—spiritual gifts, church gatherings, even claims of superior knowledge (1 Cor 8:1)—yet struggled with fundamental sins (incest, factionalism, idolatry). Paul's call to self-examination addresses the dangerous possibility of religious activity without genuine conversion, a perennial danger in church history.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to 'examine yourself' whether you are 'in the faith'—what are you looking for?
2. How does 'Christ in you' differ from mere intellectual belief in Christian doctrine?
3. Why does Paul raise the possibility that professing Christians might be 'reprobates' who failed the test?

Interlinear Text

ἐαυτοὺς πειράζετε εἰ ἔστε ἐν τῇ πίστει
your own selves Examine whether ye be in the faith
G1438 G3985 G1487 G2075 G1722 G3588 G4102

ἐαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε· ή οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκετε ἐαυτοὺς
your own selves prove G2228 not Know ye your own selves
G1438 G1381 G3756 G1921 G1438

ὅτι Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν ἔστιν εἰ μή τι
how that Jesus Christ in you is whether G3361 G5100
G3754 G2424 G5547 G1722 G5213 G2076 G1487

ἀδόκιμοι ἔστε
reprobates ye be
G96 G2075

Additional Cross-References

Lamentations 3:40 (Parallel theme): Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.

1 Corinthians 11:28 (Parallel theme): But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

1 Corinthians 9:27 (Parallel theme): But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Revelation 2:5 (Parallel theme): Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Galatians 6:4 (Parallel theme): But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

Hebrews 12:15 (Parallel theme): Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

1 Corinthians 11:31 (Parallel theme): For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

Galatians 2:20 (Faith): I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Psalms 26:2 (Parallel theme): Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

John 14:23 (References Jesus): Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.