

## EXAMINE YOURSELVES

This morning I would like to begin with looking at 2 Cor. 13:5-6. (Reading text). It's unusual to speak about exams at this time of year. We think of exams at the end of the year. But this verse, I think, is very applicable because I think that it is good to examine ourselves all the time. That's what Paul suggested at this point. That we examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. You notice he did not merely say that we should examine ourselves, but he said he trusted that they would find that he had not failed the test. So we find that even Paul who had served the Lord so effectively for such a long time--one of the greatest Christians who ever lived--felt that he was subject to examination, as to whether he was truly serving Christ as he should.

I'd like to look at this this mornigg under three heads: salvation, sanctification, and service. First, as to salvation. This, of course is the beginning and this is most important. It is possible for a person to try to serve the Lord in religious work without ever having truly known Him. It is possible for one to devote his life to what others call Christian service and not really be a Christian himself! So even in a theological seminary, even with students who have come here in order to serve the Lord, it is very vital that we first examine ourselves as to our salvation.

I remember reading an illustration years ago of the people who worked on building Noah's ark. Here were these men who worked and put in their time effectively building this great boat that would take so many and yet they themselves were lost in the flood! It is possible to be one of the builders of the ark instead of one of those who are in the ark. So we need to examine ourselves. Do we truly belong to Christ?

Of course we know that as John told us: "As many as received Him to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name." So there is no excuse for any of us not being saved. There is no excuse, but it does happen. The Lord wants us constantly to go back to remembering our salvation because it is the very foundation of our Christian service. It is the foundation of everything that is worthwhile in our lives.

From my earliest childhood as far as I could remember, I felt that I belonged to Christ. I desired to serve Him. I desired that my life would count for Him. Some people have great experiences of salvation. They go through a tremendous crisis in their lives wherein they turn from sin and turn to the Lord. I had no such testimony that I could give. I never had any experience of that type. I went through a so-called Christian college--a college that a few years before had been a very fine Christian institution. But modernism had already begun to come in to such an extent that there was an undermining of faith there. It was very difficult to resist.