



Examining Our Faith - A Journey of Growth and Reflection

By Ariel Presswood

2 Corinthians 13:5 – "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?"

Setting the Scene

Key Concept:

Examining our faith is a vital spiritual practice that allows us to grow closer to God, strengthen our relationship with Christ, and align our lives with His purpose. It involves reflecting on our actions, attitudes, and beliefs to ensure we are walking in faith and relying on God's guidance. This process fosters humility, encourages personal growth, and deepens our understanding of God's grace. By regularly examining our faith, we build a foundation that helps us navigate life's challenges with trust and confidence in God.

Engaging Analogy:

"Imagine your faith journey as navigating a ship through the ocean. To stay on course, you regularly check the compass and adjust your direction based on the stars. Examining our faith is like checking that compass—it helps us realign with God's direction, ensuring we reach our destination safely and with purpose."

Invitation:

Encourage participants to view examining their faith as a journey of discovery and growth. Invite them to celebrate the progress they've made, acknowledge areas for improvement, and trust in God's grace to guide them every step of the way.

EXAMINING OUR FAITH

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Section 1: Reflect and Discuss

Reflection Questions

1. What does it mean to examine your faith? Why is this important for spiritual growth?
2. How can we test ourselves to ensure our actions align with God's will?
3. Can you share a time when reflecting on your faith helped you overcome a challenge or grow closer to God?
4. What are some practical steps we can take to address areas where we struggle in our faith?
5. How does examining our faith strengthen our ability to encourage and support others?

Family or Group Discussion

- **Biblical Examples:** Explore stories of self-examination and growth in the Bible. Examples include David's heartfelt repentance in Psalm 51, Peter's restoration after denying Jesus (John 21:15-19), and the persistent faith of Job through trials. Discuss how these moments of reflection and reliance on God led to spiritual renewal.
- **Accountability and Encouragement:** Talk about the importance of having trusted friends or mentors who can help us examine our faith and encourage us in our spiritual journeys.
- **Practical Applications:** Brainstorm ways to incorporate regular faith examinations into daily or weekly routines, such as journaling, prayer, or family devotions.

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Section 2: Hands-On Activities

Activity 1: Faith Compass Craft

Objective: Create a symbolic compass that represents staying aligned with God's direction in life.

Materials Needed:

- Paper plates
- Markers or crayons
- A brad fastener
- A paper arrow
- Decorative items like stickers or glitter

Instructions:

1. Decorate the paper plate to resemble a compass. Label the cardinal directions with aspects of faith, such as "Prayer," "Scripture," "Obedience," and "Love."
2. Cut out a paper arrow and attach it to the center of the plate using a brad fastener so it can spin.
3. Reflect on how each "direction" keeps us aligned with God's will. For example, discuss how scripture provides guidance and love helps us build relationships.
4. Write a short prayer or a Bible verse on the back of the compass as a reminder to seek God's guidance daily.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to share how they use their "compass" during moments of decision-making or prayer. Create a group reflection time to discuss how this tool has impacted their spiritual walk.

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Activity 2: Growth Rings of Faith

Objective: Visualize spiritual growth by creating concentric circles that represent milestones in faith.

Materials Needed:

- Large paper or poster board
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Stickers, glitter, and decorative items

Instructions:

1. Draw a tree cross-section with concentric rings, each symbolizing a stage of spiritual growth.
2. Label each ring with milestones or lessons learned, such as "Learning to pray," "Overcoming fear," "Trusting God in hard times," or "Sharing my faith."
3. Write personal milestones on each ring, celebrating how God has worked in your life.
4. Add Bible verses, symbols of faith, or stickers to decorate the rings.
5. Reflect on how each milestone represents God's faithfulness and areas for continued growth.

Extension Idea: Invite participants to add future goals or areas they want to grow in, such as "Memorize scripture" or "Serve in my community."

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Activity 3: Reflection Mirror Craft

Objective: Create a mirror to help participants reflect on their faith and actions regularly.

Materials Needed:

- Cardboard
- Aluminum foil
- Markers and glue
- Decorative items like stickers, gems, and ribbon

Instructions:

1. Cover a piece of cardboard with aluminum foil to create a reflective surface that resembles a mirror.
2. Decorate the edges with words or symbols that represent faith, such as "Hope," "Love," "Grace," and "Trust."
3. Write reflection prompts on the back, such as "How am I growing in my relationship with God?" "What areas of my life need more faith?" and "How can I show God's love to others this week?"
4. Use the mirror as a tool for daily or weekly reflection, encouraging participants to examine their faith regularly.

Extension Idea: Provide a journal for participants to record their reflections and prayers after using the mirror. Encourage them to track their spiritual growth over time.

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Section 3: Music and Creativity

Memory Verse Song

Set 2 Corinthians 13:5 to the tune of a familiar children's song, such as "Mary Had a Little Lamb":

"Examine yourselves, test your faith, / See if Christ is in your life. / Reflect on His love and grace, / And walk in His guiding light."

Encourage participants to create hand motions or add their own verses about how examining their faith has impacted their lives.

Extension Idea: Invite participants to write a song or poem that reflects their faith journey and share it with the group.

Creative Writing Prompt

Ask participants to write or draw about a time when they examined their faith and experienced spiritual growth. What challenges did they face, and how did God help them overcome? How did this experience strengthen their trust in Him?

Extension Idea: Compile these stories and drawings into a group "Journey of Faith" book. Include illustrations, testimonies, and scriptures that highlight God's guidance and grace.

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Section 4: Closing Reflection and Prayer

Reflection:

- What is one area of my faith that I want to focus on growing this week?
- How can I use prayer, scripture, and reflection to deepen my trust in God?
- How can I encourage others in their faith journeys?

Prayer:

Lead a prayer thanking God for His guidance and grace. Ask for wisdom to examine our faith honestly and grow in love, trust, and obedience. Include a moment of silent prayer for participants to seek God's help in specific areas of their lives.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to write their own prayers for growth and reflection. Share these prayers with the group or keep them for personal devotion.

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