



In just a few days, we will celebrate the birth of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps this is a proper time to examine and ask ourselves, do I belong to Christ, and does my life demonstrate my allegiance to Christ as Lord? Also, will Christmas simply be a time of worldly festivity, or will it rather be a celebration of the birth of our Savior?

Let's ask ourselves, "What does God see in my heart right now"?

2Chron 16:9 tells us, "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart *is* loyal to Him."

The reality is that God sees every action, hears every word and reads every thought that we entertain in our hearts. We sure can't hide anything from God, thus the importance of examining ourselves to see if we really mean what we say.

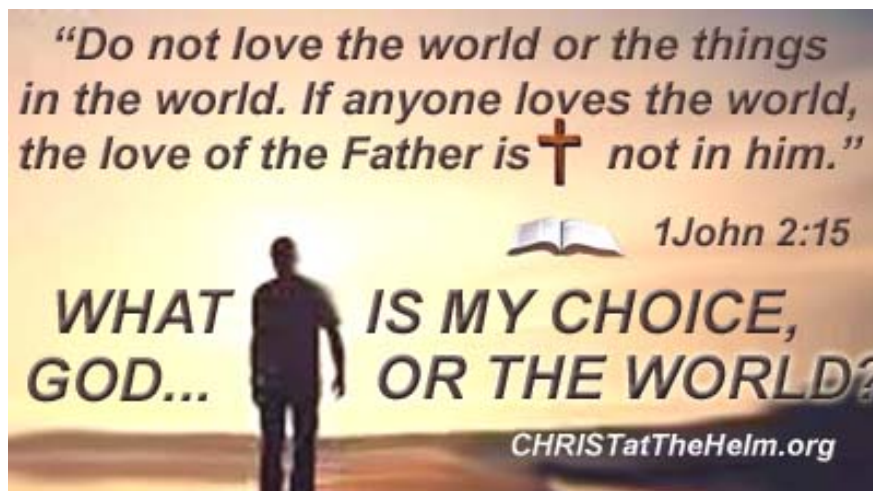
That's why James 2:17 says, "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

The solution is found in Lam 3:40: "Let us search out and examine our ways, and turn back to the LORD."

Then Jesus said in John 8:31-32, "If you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Introspection: If Jesus appeared to me and asked, "Are you really Mine", what would my answer be?

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Life is made of a series of choices. No matter our situation, environment, no matter whatever we may face, our choices will always determine and describe who we really are deep inside.

The truth is, there are only two choices in life. Either we recognize God as our Creator, surrender to His will through salvation in Christ, or reject God and follow the world.

In choosing God's salvation in Christ, we are empowered to conquer the flesh, as 2Cor 4:5 says, "The weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

And the purpose is: Philip. 2:15: "That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world."

How is that achieved?

James 1:22: "Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

What's our solution?

Rev 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."

Introspection: Do I choose God and follow Christ, or the world?

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If we choose to follow Christ through salvation, obviously we must make a true commitment to honor Him as Lord of our lives. What does making a commitment imply?

Mark 8:34-35: "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."

1John 3:18: "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

1Kings 8:61: "Let your heart therefore be loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day."

Why?

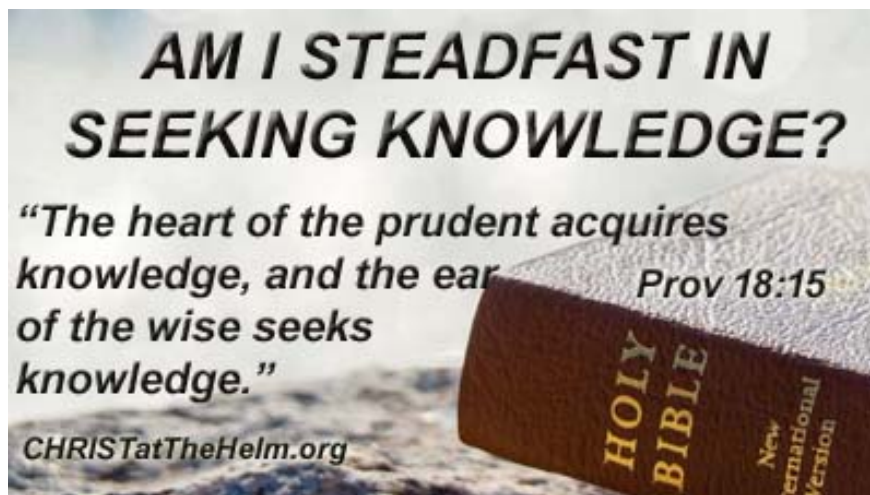
Gal 5:24-25: "And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Psalms 15:1-2: "LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart."

The reason Paul said in Eph 6:24: "Grace *be* with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

Introspection: Am I committed to follow Christ as Lord over my life, and abide by His Word?

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How can we follow through with our commitment to follow Christ?

Rom 12:2: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

How then do I renew my mind?

2Tim 3:16-17: "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Why?

Pro 15:14: "The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness."

How powerful is the Word of God to guide me on the path of righteousness?

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

What is the core element, and the reason to truthfully seek God in His Word?

Pro. 9:10: "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding."

Introspection: Do I understand the importance of being steadfast in studying the Word of God?

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Our commitment to follow Christ as Lord definitely requires vigilance so we are not swayed left and right by the world. Here's what scripture says on this:

1Cor 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

1Cor 16:13: "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."

2Peter 3:17: "You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked."

Gal 6:9: "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."

Even through trials 1Peter 5:9 speaking of the enemy enjoins us to: "Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world."

In Matthew 10:16 Jesus warned us: "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

The reason Jer. 29:13 says, "And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."

Finally, let's have the attitude that David had in Psalm 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

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