HONEST WITH OURSELVES

**(1Corinthians 4: 3-5)**

# **Introduction**

* 1. Text (1Cor 4:3-5) **Read**.
  2. “Know Thyself” was the inscription on the temple to Apollo at ancient Delphi.
  3. Nowhere is *accurate knowledge of self* more important than in its relation to the gospel of Christ.
  4. The gospel requires repentance – and repentance requires conscience.
     1. (Luke 13:3) ***“I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish..”***
     2. (2Cor 7:10) ***“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; )but the sorrow of the world produces death..”***

1. **The Advantage We Have In Knowing Ourselves**
   1. In one sense, we each know ourselves best.
   2. Others know thoughts, motives, and values only as we reveal them.

a. (1Cor 2:11) ***“For what man knows the things of a man except the (A)spirit of the man which is in him? “***

* 1. The information upon which others judge us is at best incomplete – and often it is inaccurate.

1. **The Disadvantage We Have in Knowing Ourselves**
   1. Yet it is true that we are sometimes the very *poorest judges* of ourselves.
      1. We may have all the “raw materials” out of which we could make an accurate self-evaluation.
      2. But rarely are we sufficiently candid and objective about our own situation.
   2. This is why, for example, doctors do not diagnose their own ailments – they understand the need to consult another doctor who will look at the facts more straightforwardly.
   3. In the spiritual realm, there is an even greater need for us to be *helped* in understanding ourselves.
      1. We tend to make *exceptions* of ourselves and “rationalize” the nature of our own conduct.
      2. When it comes to seeing our own faults, most of us have *blind spots* – what is plain as day to others can be invisible to us!
   4. Ultimately, what we need to do is to see ourselves as God sees us. (Luke 6:42)
      1. But God’s way of helping us is often to send friends to show us that what we are pleased to call our “mistakes” are just as much sins as if someone else had committed them!
   5. Consider David’s adultery (2Sam 12:1-15), Peter’s hypocrisy (Gal 2:11-14), etc.
2. **Love Of The Truth And Knowing Ourselves**
   1. Salvation depends on our response to truth.
      1. (2 Thess. 2:9-12)
      2. (John 8:32) ***“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”***
   2. But, the truth that must be loved is not just doctrinal truth – it involves the whole truth. Including the truth about ourselves, the truth about the sins that we need to repent of.
      1. (1John 1:8-10)
      2. Perhaps life never makes a greater demand on our courage than when we are faced with accepting some despicable fact about what we have really done. (Cain in Genesis 4:3-10).
      3. There is great contrast between the attitudes reflected in (Acts 2:36-41) and those in (Acts 7:54-60).
   3. In order to be adequately honest with ourselves we must want to know the truth more than we want anything else.
      1. The person who loves his preferred self-image more than the truth is not fit for the kingdom of God.
      2. Jesus’ story of the Pharisee praying in the temple shows how out of touch with reality we can be when it comes to ourselves (Luke 18:9-14).
3. **A Healthy Test of Our Honesty and Love Of The Truth About Ourselves**
   1. Here are some questions that can help us judge how honest we are willing to be about ourselves.
      1. Do we pray for help in seeing ourselves as God sees us?
      2. (Ps 19:12-14) ***“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me.***
      3. ***Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart. Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.”***
      4. Do we pray for friends who love our soul more than they love our friendship, friends who will not let us excuse or ignore our sins?
      5. (Gal 4:16) ***“Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?”***
      6. Do we pray to be set in the midst of circumstances that will make us to see our true character?
      7. Do we pray for our secrets to be exposed – and would we be glad for the honesty this forces upon us?
      8. Do we pray for every fault, which we have hidden from ourselves to be brought out into the open light of truth?
      9. (John 3:19-21) ***“And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”***
      10. Do we pray for help in accepting even the most painful truth, so that we can change our ways?
   2. Questions like these tend to make us uncomfortable – but truth very often has that effect!
4. **Conclusion**

1. God knows us perfectly, (Heb 4:12-13)

2. Do we genuinely love His truth?

* + 1. Enough to seek the help of others in learning the truth about sins we need to repent of?
    2. May God give us brethren who will gently help us “come to our senses” about what is really going on in our lives.

3. May we be truly honest with ourselves – and truly honest with God – before it is too late!