



Communion, Spiritual Self-Examination

The believer is commanded to examine their spiritual status prior to partaking of the bread and the cup in communion or the Eucharist.

In 1 Corinthians 11:28, “examine” is the present active imperative of δοκιμάζω (dokimazō) and means to test, to analyze, to examine. The imperative is a mandate or command from our Lord. Believers are to examine themselves in view of being approved to partake of communion. In other words, are you in fellowship? The present tense indicates that the believer shouldn’t have to wait until communion to do this spiritual self-examination.

"But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup." (1 Corinthians 11:28, NASB)

Believer-priests are to judge themselves. In 1 Corinthians 11:31, “if we judged ourselves rightly” is the imperfect active indicative of διακρίνω (diakrinō) and means to discern, doubt, judge, be partial. The believer-priest is to stay in fellowship. 1 Cor. 11:33-34.

"But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged." (1 Corinthians 11:31, NASB)

"So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come." (1 Corinthians 11:33-34, NASB)

You must pass the test of being in fellowship before partaking of communion. This is between you and the Lord. If you pass the fellowship test via confession of known sin using 1 John 1:9, the believer is also commanded to partake of the bread and the cup in communion.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, NASB)

If you do not pass the test and do not use 1 John 1:9 to ensure that you are in fellowship, “judge the body rightly” in 1 Corinthians 11:29, then partaking of communion out of fellowship will result in divine discipline. This was a problem in the Corinthian church. 1 Cor. 11:30.

"For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly." (1 Corinthians 11:29, NASB)

"For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep." (1 Corinthians 11:30, NASB)

The word “weak” in 1 Corinthians 11:30 is ἀσθενής (asthenēs) in the Greek and means both a spiritual and physical weakness. The word “sick” is ἄρρωστος (arrhōstos) in the Greek and means diseased or infirm. The phrase “a number sleep” refers to physical death κοιμάω (koimaō) of a believer. Matt 14:14.

"When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick." (Matthew 14:14, NASB)

The Greek word δοκιμάζω (dokimazō) was used in the secular sense to test the durability, purity, temper, and worth of a metal. In a practical sense, it’s used to mean to test, to try or prove in the hope and expectation that the test will prove successful, i.e. that the metal passes the test. The Greek word dokimazō is used in the spiritual sense in the following ways.



Not passing a test in Romans 1:28 and 1 Corinthians 9:27.

“And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,” (Romans 1:28, NASB)

“but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.” (1 Corinthians 9:27, NASB)

Functioning under the grace apparatus for perception in Romans 12:2.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2, NASB)

Passing the fire test at the Judgment Seat of Christ in 1 Corinthians 3:13.

“each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work.” (1 Corinthians 3:13, NASB)

To prove the genuine character of the Corinthian’s love in 2 Corinthians 8:8.

“I am not speaking this as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also.” (2 Corinthians 8:8, NASB)

Regarding the ministry of Titus who was tried and proven in 2 Corinthians 8:22.

“We have sent with them our brother, whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of his great confidence in you.” (2 Corinthians 8:22, NASB)

For a man who is spiritually self-sustaining in Galatians 6:4.

“But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.” (Galatians 6:4, NASB)

For a believer passing application tests in Ephesians 5:10.

“trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:10, NASB)

Regarding the believer passing the spiritual testing that cause the building up of the edification complex of the soul in Philippians 1:10. Here, “excellent” refers to a spiritual maturity where there is a completed edification complex in the believer’s soul.

“so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;” (Philippians 1:10, NASB)

For the constant advantage of being tested spiritually in 1 Thessalonians 2:4. Here, “approved” means the believer is able to take bigger responsibility in the angelic conflict as a result of God bringing these tests.

“but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.” (1 Thessalonians 2:4, NASB)

For a command to all believers to pass all the tests of life because they have been given sufficient grace resources to handle the test. 1 Thess. 5:21.

“But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;” (1 Thessalonians 5:21, NASB)