

And God Saw: Learning the Practice of Evaluation

Overview

1. God practiced evaluation at Creation, and continues to evaluate throughout Scripture.
2. God prescribes evaluation in many places and in several ways in Scripture.
3. God defines evaluation (He Himself is the Standard by which everything is evaluated). **God's Word is essential!**

God's Ongoing Evaluation

NOW – (1 Thes 2:4) *But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.*

LATER – (1 Cor 3:13) *each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.*

Areas of Evaluation Required by Believers

1. We Are to Evaluate Everything, and Hold Fast to that Which Is Good (Good vs. Bad)

(1 Thes 5:21) **Test** all things; hold fast what is good. (BNT) πάντα δὲ δοκιμάζετε, τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε,

¹⁴ Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. ¹⁵ See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ **Test** all things; **hold fast** what is good. ²² **Abstain** from every form of evil. ²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Th 5:14-23)

2. We Are to Evaluate Things to Ascertain What Is Excellent (Important vs. Unimportant)

(Phil 1:10) *that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,* (BNT) εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τὰ διαφέροντα, ἵνα ᾗτε εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ,

⁹ And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹ being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (Phi 1:9-11)

3. We Are to Evaluate the Basic Teachings of Teachers (Truth vs. Error)

(1 John 4:1) *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*

(BNT) Ἀγαπητοί, μὴ παντὶ πνεύματι πιστεύετε ἀλλὰ δοκιμάζετε τὰ πνεύματα εἰ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν, ὅτι πολλοὶ ψευδοπροφήται ἐξεληλύθασιν εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

²³ And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. ²⁴ Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. ^{4:1} Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. ⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵ They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. ⁶ We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. (1Jo 3:23-4:6)

4. We Are to Evaluate Our Self-Assessment to Our Actual Actions (Perspective vs. Proof)

(Gal 6:4) *But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.*

(BNT) τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμάζέτω ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον τὸ καύχημα ἔξει καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸν ἕτερον.

²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. ^{6:1} Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³ For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. ⁵ For each one shall bear his own load. (Gal 5:25-5)

5. We Are to Evaluate Our Conduct in Light of the Word (Practices and Purposes)

(2 Cor 13:5) **Examine** yourselves [as to] whether you are in the faith. **Test** yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?-- unless indeed you are disqualified.

(BNT) Ἐαυτοὺς **πειράζετε** εἰ ἐστὲ ἐν τῇ πίστει, ἑαυτοὺς **δοκιμάζετε**· ἢ οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκετε ἑαυτοὺς ὅτι Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν; εἰ μήτι ἀδόκιμοί ἐστε.

¹⁹ Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But *we do* all things, beloved, for your edification. ²⁰ For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and *that* I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults; ²¹ lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced. ^{13:1} This *will be* the third *time* I am coming to you. "By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." ² I have told you before, and foretell as if I were present the second time, and now being absent I write to those who have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare-- ³ since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you. ⁴ For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you. ⁵ **Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.** Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?-- unless indeed you are **disqualified**. ⁶ But I trust that you will know that we are not **disqualified**. ⁷ Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear **approved**, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem **disqualified**. ⁸ For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. ⁹ For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete. ¹⁰ Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction. (2Co 12:19-10)

6. We Are to Evaluate Our Paths & Choices by the Word of God (God's Ways vs. Us)

(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.*

(ESV) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

(KES) *And do not be schemed with this age, but be metamorphed in the renewing of the mind unto the proving to you that which [is] the will of the God, the good and acceptable and complete.*

(BNT) καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοῦς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον.

(Eph 5:10) *finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.*

(BNT) δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστὶν εὐάρεστον τῷ κυρίῳ,

¹ Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. ³ But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; ⁴ neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵ For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them. ⁸ For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*. ¹² For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. ¹³ But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. ¹⁴ Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." ¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord *is*. (Eph 5:1-17)

7. We Are to Evaluate the Religious Impact of Our Choices Upon Ourselves and Others (Idolatry)

(1 Cor 10:15) *I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say.* (BNT) ὡς φρονίμοις λέγω· κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὁ φημι.

¹¹ Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*. ¹⁴ Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵ I speak as to wise men; **judge** for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ For we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread. ¹⁸ Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? ¹⁹ What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? ²⁰ Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. ²² Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? ²³ All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. ²⁴ Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's *well-being*. (1Co 10:11-24)

8. We Are to Evaluate the Impact of Our Liberty Upon Others (Freedom vs. Edification)

(Rom 14:22) Do you have faith? Have [it] to yourself before God. Happy [is] he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

(BNT) οὐ πίστιν [ἦν] ἔχεις κατὰ σεαυτὸν ἔχε ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. μακάριος ὁ μὴ κρίνων ἑαυτὸν ἐν ᾧ δοκιμάζει.

¹⁹ Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed *are* pure, but *it is* evil for the man who eats with offense. ²¹ *It is* good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor *do anything* by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. ²² Do you have faith? Have *it* to yourself before God. Happy *is* he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³ But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *he does not eat* from faith; for whatever *is* not from faith is sin. (Rom 14:19-23)

9. We Are to Evaluate the Needs of Others in Addition to Your Own Needs

(Phil 2:4) Let each of you **look out** not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

(BNT) μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἐτέρων ἕκαστοι.

10. We Are to Evaluate Spiritually Damaging People and Avoid Them (Unity and Purity)

(Romans 16:17) Now I urge you, brethren, **note** those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

(ESV) I appeal to you, brothers, to **watch out** for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.

(BNT) Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, σκοπεῖν τοὺς τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε ποιοῦντας, καὶ ἐκκλίνετε ἀπ' αὐτῶν.

11. We Are to Evaluate the Walk of Believers and Focus On and Copy Spiritual Doers

(Phil 3:17) Brethren, join in following my example, and **note** those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

(ESV) Brothers, join in imitating me, and **keep your eyes on** those who walk according to the example you have in us. (BNT) Συμμιμηταὶ μου γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί, καὶ σκοπεῖτε τοὺς οὕτω περιπατοῦντας καθὼς ἔχετε τύπον ἡμᾶς.

12. We Are to Evaluate Our Active Relationship with Other Believers (Unity and Charity)

(1 Cor 11:28) But **let** a man **examine** himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

(BNT) δοκιμαζέτω δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἑαυτὸν καὶ οὕτως ἐκ τοῦ ἄρτου ἐσθιέτω καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ποτηρίου πινέτω.

¹⁷ Now in giving these instructions I do not praise *you*, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

¹⁸ For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. ²⁰ Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. ²¹ For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. ²² What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*. ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. ²⁷ Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man **examine** himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks **judgment** to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would **judge** ourselves, we would not be **judged**. ³² But when we are **judged**, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. ³³ Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, **wait for one another**. ³⁴ But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come. (1Co 11:17-34)