**The Entrance Exam to Heaven!**

**Mark 4:1-12, 21-15 and 33-34**

**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 you **fail** the test?”

Let’s begin that exam. Here is the first question:

1. **The Discernment question:** Do you have spiritual understanding? **Yes or no?** In other words,can you discern the spiritual meaning of the truths contained in God’s Word? **Verses 10-12**
2. What does it mean to have spiritual understanding?

* It simply means that you are able to hear the truths of Scripture and understand their spiritual meaning.
* The only way you can understand spiritual truth is if it has been revealed to you.
* The One who reveals spiritual truth is the Holy Spirit.
* The only way you can experience this spiritual revelation is if the Spirit of God lives IN you.

**Romans 8:9** “You, however, are controlled not controlled by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone **does not have** the Spirit of Christ, he **does not belong** to Christ.”

**Augustine** recognized this truth after coming to faith. Then he wrote,

“*Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand*.”

**2 Corinthians 3:16**-**17** “*But whenever anyone turns to the Lord,* ***the veil is taken away****. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom*.”

1. **The Witness question:** Do you share your faith with others? Have you ever shared your faith in Jesus with someone else? **Yes or no? Verses 21-23**

**Martin Luther** said, “*If he has faith, the believer cannot be restrained. He betrays himself. He breaks out. He confesses and [shares] the gospel [with] people at the risk of life itself*. “

1. **The Hunger question:** Do you hunger for more light and more truth from God’s Word? **Yes or no! Verses 24-25**
2. We are to **earnestly contemplate** and **carefully consider** how we respond when we hear God’s spoken word or when we read His written word. How do you respond?

* Do you believe it?
* Do you hunger for more?

1. **The fellowship question:** Have you ever had real fellowship with Jesus? **Yes or no! Verses 33-34**
2. The greatest privilege of belonging to the family of God is that we get to have **fellowship with Jesus** and **He explains everything to us**.
3. The greatest privilege any human being can have is **to know God intimately**, and walk with him through life, **listening to His voice** as He guides through the journey of life.
4. Jesus compares this fellowship to that of a shepherd and his sheep.

**In John 10:3-4, 14, 27**, Jesus says, “The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When He has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and His sheep follow him because they know his voice…I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me…My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

**Jeremiah 29:12-13** “Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I WILL listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord.

**“Examine** yourselves to see whether you are **in the faith**; **test** yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless you fail the test?”