

7 examples of testing

God gave Satan permission to test Job's righteousness.

"If I go east, He is not there, and if I go west, I cannot perceive Him. When He is at work to the north, I cannot see Him; when He turns south, I cannot find Him. Yet He knows the way I have taken; when He has tested me, I will emerge as pure gold." Job 23:8-10

One of the metaphors that the Bible reveals about life is that it is a test. God continually tests people's character, faith, obedience, love, integrity, and loyalty. Character is both developed and revealed by testing. The truth of the matter is that *all* of life is a test. You are always being tested. God is constantly watching how you respond to people, problems, success, conflict, illness, disappointment and even the weather.

There are several ways God's people have been tested:

1. A test of patience

Trials and tribulation can be a test of patience. God has His own perfect and sovereign will and timing for fulfilling His plans and purposes. Often His plans take much longer than we expect or would like. In the meantime we go through severe trials and tribulations and they seem to last forever. These seasons are tests of our patience. Are we willing to wait for God's timing? Listen to what the scripture says in James chapter 1: "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trial, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."

Job's life was a test of patience. In fact the Bible says in book of James, "Remember the patience of Job."

2. A test of faith

Trials can be a test of our faith. Do we believe in God even in the midst of pain and suffering? Do we believe in the promises of God even when everything looks impossible? Do we trust in God even if He does not deliver us? Do we trust in God even when we do not understand His ways and working in our lives? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were tested and showed their faith.

"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied to the king, Nebuchadnezzar, we don't need to give you an answer to this question. If the God we serve exists, then He can rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire, and He can rescue us from the power of you, the king. But even if

He does not rescue us, we want you as king to know that we will not serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up." Daniel 3:16-18

Remember: You will not know if you are faithful unless you are tempted with unfaithfulness.

3. A test of love

Trials can test our love. They can reveal whom or what we love most in our lives. They reveal our priorities and desires. The Lord wants us to love Him more than anybody else or anything else. The depth of our love to God is revealed during the seasons of trials. Peter is an example of this test.

"When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? Yes, Lord, he said to Him, You know that I love You. Feed My lambs, He told him. A second time He asked him, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Yes, Lord, he said to Him, You know that I love You. Shepherd My sheep, He told him. He asked him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He asked him the third time, Do you love Me? He said, Lord, You know everything! You know that I love You. Feed My sheep, Jesus said." John 21:15-17

4. A test of endurance

Trials can be a test of our endurance. How much are we willing to endure for the Lord? Will we give up easily from following the Lord? Will we endure until the end? The life of Paul is an example of endurance.

"Five times I received from the Jews forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day in the depths of the sea. On frequent journeys, [I faced] dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own people, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the open country, dangers on the sea, and dangers among false brothers; labour and hardship, many sleepless nights, hunger and thirst, often without food, cold, and lacking clothing." 2 Corinthians 11:24-27

5. A test of humility

Trials can be a test of humility. The Lord humbles us by allowing us to go through seasons of trials. The Lord wants us to have the mind of Christ who humbled Himself to take the form of a servant and became obedient even to the death of the Cross. Moses went through times of trial and his humility shone forth.

"Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because of the Cushite woman he married. They said,

Does the Lord speak only through Moses? Does He not also speak through us? And the Lord heard [it]. Moses was a very humble man, more so than any man on the face of the Earth." Numbers 12:1-3

Remember that humility is not thinking less of yourself. It is thinking of yourself less.

6. A test of sacrifice

Trials can be a test of our sacrifice. Are we willing to sacrifice everything for the Lord? Are we clinging to the possessions and treasures of this world? Are we crucified to the world?

When we lay ourselves on the altar and die to our self, then we can bear much fruit for the Lord. The Lord leads us to the point of total surrender by leading us through the path of trials. He tests the level of our willingness to sacrifice for Him. He tested Abraham in this way.

"Then Isaac spoke to his father Abraham and said, My father. And he replied, Here I am, my son. Isaac said, The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? Abraham answered, God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son. Then the two of them walked on together." Genesis 22:7-8

7. A test of obedience

Trials can be a test of our obedience to God. Are we willing to obey God even when He commands us to do what we do not like or what we wish to avoid? The Lord teaches us obedience by leading us through trails. Jesus is the prime example of obedience.

"Going a little farther, He fell facedown and prayed, My Father! If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will." Matthew 26:39

"He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death - even to death on a cross." Philippians 2:8
