

# Tests, Trials & Temptation

## Growing Pains

Tests show us what we are made of. They expose strengths and weaknesses in us. But God is with us in the tests, trials and temptations to help us become strong, where we were once weak or needed to grow. God wants us to become the best that we can be and help us through life's many challenges.

## Tests

**2 Corinthians 8:2, James 1:2-4, James 4:12**

**2 Corinthians 8:2 (NIV)**

(2) In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.

**James 1:2-4 (NIV)**

(2) Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

(3) because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

(4) Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

**James 4:12 (NIV)**

(12) There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

How were they tested? What can we look forward to?

**2 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV)**

(5) Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

How can you test yourself?

**Revelation 3:10 (NIV)**

(10) Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.

How does God protect those who obey?

## Trials

**1 Peter 1:6-7, Romans 5:3, 2 Corinthians 1:6**

**1 Peter 1:6-7 (NIV)**

(6) In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

(7) These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

**Romans 5:3 (NIV)**

(3) Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

**2 Corinthians 1:6 (NIV)**

(6) If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer.

What is the purpose of trials?

**1 Peter 4:12-13 (NIV)**

(12) Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

(13) But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

What is important to God?

**2 Peter 2:6-9 (NIV)**

- (6) if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;
- (7) and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless
- (8) (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—
- (9) if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment.

How does God rescue Godly people from their trials?

#### 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV)

- (16) Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.
- (17) For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.
- (18) So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

How long will our troubles last?

What do they produce?

## Temptation

Read James 1:14, 1 Timothy 6:9, Matthew 4:1-4

#### James 1:14 (NIV)

- (14) but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

#### 1 Timothy 6:9 (NIV)

- (9) Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

#### Matthew 4:1-4 (NIV)

- (1) Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- (2) After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
- (3) The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."
- (4) Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

Where does temptation come from?

The devil anticipates our strong desires and works away at them.

What are some examples of desires that we need to surrender to God?

## Out Great Example — Jesus

Read Hebrews 2:18, Hebrews 4:15

#### Hebrews 2:18 (NIV)

- (18) Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

#### Hebrews 4:15 (NIV)

- (15) For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

How is Jesus able to help us in our testing?

#### Hebrews 12:1-4 (NIV)

- (1) Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,
- (2) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- (3) Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.
- (4) In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

What did Jesus endure and why?

Matthew 4:1-10, Matthew 26:41

#### Matthew 4:1-10 (NIV)

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- (2) After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
- (3) The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."
- (4) Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "
- (5) Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.
- (6) "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.' "
- (7) Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "
- (8) Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.
- (9) "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."
- (10) Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.' "

**Matthew 26:41 (NIV)**

(41) “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

What can we learn from Jesus example of overcoming temptation?

**Matthew 6:13 (NIV)**

(13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. ’

How should we pray?

## Ask a Friend

Can you share from your experience about a test that helped you to grow?

## Application

Are there any areas in which you are being tested now?

How can you apply what you have learned in this study to your situation?

## Prayer

Lord, please help me to endure in times of testing, trials and temptation. Strengthen me so I don’t give into temptation, and rescue me from the evil one.

## Key Verse

**James 1:12 NLT**

“God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.”