

TESTED FAITH

#3 TESTED BY STORMS & BETRAYAL

1 Peter 1:6–7 (KJV 1900)

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

I. INTRODUCTION:

All faith will be tested. A test is an adverse circumstance that God allows in our life for spiritual development.

Because faith is believing in something that you cannot see, it will often be tested by those things that we can see.

Why does God allow our faith to be tested?

1. Testing of our faith reveals areas of personal _____ and refines our _____.
2. Testing of our faith strengthens our faith and builds _____.
3. Testing of our faith _____ us spiritually.
4. Testing of our faith allows us a special opportunity to _____ God in our trust.

Our faith is the _____ of every test. Faith is the currency of heaven. When faith is strong Heaven floods our life. When faith is weak and untested, we waiver and fail.

1 Peter 4:12–13 (KJV 1900)

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

II. FAITH IS TESTED WHEN WE ENCOUNTER THE _____ AND _____ OF LIFE:

Matthew 8:23–26 (KJV 1900)

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

Storms try our faith because they cloud our _____, overwhelm our _____ and incite our _____. Our faith is challenged and pressed upon by the reality of the world around us.

The big question for Christians in every storm is; will we look for the unseen?

In the storm we know what we feel, but do remember what I believe?

In times of hardship, Christians must _____ and _____ what they believe! If we do not do this, our fears will overwhelm our faith.

Here are eight questions we should use to examine our faith in the storms of life:

1. Do I believe that He knows _____ ?

Job 23:8–12 (KJV 1900)

8 Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; And backward, but I cannot perceive him:

9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him:

10 But he knoweth the way that I take: When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

11 My foot hath held his steps, His way have I kept, and not declined.

12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

We will come out "as gold," tested, tried, and true. God knows our way, and we are only passing through. He reminds us that will "come out" to the other side. Changed for the better, stronger, shining, beauty deepened from within.

2. Do I believe that He will help me _____ ?

John 16:33 (KJV 1900)

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

He reminds us that there will be trouble in this world, but He's already overcome it all. He's already victorious. And that same power works in us today, giving us the courage and strength to persevere and overcome through our faith. (See 1 John 5:4)

3. Do I believe that God works _____ for my good?

Romans 8:28 (KJV 1900)

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

For those of us who love Him and are called to his purpose, He promises these powerful words, "in all things God works for the good." In everything. Not just the

good things that happen, but in it all things, we can be assured, He will indeed bring good from it.

He is a _____, and He will not waste our pain.

4. Do I believe that my pain has _____? (Maybe that he is perfecting me)

James 1:2–4 (KJV 1900)

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

God reminds us to choose joy in whatever we face. We can be confident and rejoice knowing that He is using the hardship of the moment to make us perfect.

We never gain greater strength and spiritual muscles simply by living an “easy” life.

We can only build deeper faith and perseverance by walking through the hard times that press us more closely into His Presence.

5. Do I believe that He can _____ in my pain?

2 Corinthians 1:3–5 (KJV 1900)

3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

Matthew 5:4 (KJV 1900)

4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Jesus suffered and was tempted in “all things” so that we would be reminded that He truly understands “all” that we walk through in this life.

6. Do I believe that He will _____ through this?

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (KJV 1900)

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Our difficulties allow us to see God's strength displayed in our lives. Through every weakness and hardship. It brings us to a deeper humility and dependency on Him.

7. Do I believe that this storm will have an _____ ?

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (KJV 1900)

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

No matter what we are facing in this life, it pales in comparison to what we are being prepared for in the life to come. Every trial has an eternal component to it. Even if this storm lasted the rest of our life, it would be but a moment in eternity. We cannot lose sight of the eternal in our storms.

8. Do I believe that I will be _____ for my labor and suffering?

1 Peter 1:4–7 (KJV 1900)

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 6:10–12 (KJV 1900)

10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

III. FAITH IS TESTED WHEN WE ARE _____ OR _____ BY OTHERS:

Experiencing betrayal or wounding at the hands of another person shatters our sense of _____.

1. Our response to betrayal and wounding needs to be anchored to three important faith principles:
 - a. God's _____
 - b. God's _____
 - c. God's _____

2. The faith of _____:

Simply put forgiveness is never a feeling, it is always an _____ in _____.

Luke 17:3-5 (KJV 1900)

3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

When we chose, speak, and follow through on forgiveness we are declaring that we believe certain things:

About smallness and ignorance of those who wound us. (They know not what they do)

About ourselves and our own guilt before God. (Am I in the place of God?)

About His power to redeem and repurpose the wicked intentions of others. (What you meant for evil...)

Forgiveness is not a one-time decision. It is a decision we must _____.

Forgiveness involves making daily decisions that run counter to our present feelings.

Forgiveness happens when we choose to respond to the _____ who loves us instead of responding to the _____ who hurt us.

Will I respond to what I see or will I respond to what I believe?