



# THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

## PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

### Part 1. Seven Examples of Testings

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January 17, 2018

**TESTINGS** are experiences of inconveniences, seemingly unjust difficulties and sufferings and long waiting that may hit us rock bottom or lead us to hopelessness if we put our trust in ourselves or if we hold on too much to our "Isaac's" for power, courage and strength. God is so concerned about our character more than any material things in this world. Thus, he allows us to be tested in order to cultivate the soil in our hearts where the seeds of the Holy Spirit have been planted. The digging, crushing and plowing effects of these trials and tests are meant to grow and harvest the fruit of the Holy Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). Life is a continuous test of character and obedience!

#### Testing of Love and Patience

-Jn. 15:18-22

"If the world hated you realize that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, the world loved its own, but because you do not belong to the world, and I have chosen you out of the world, the world hates you."

To be chosen and set apart by God is to love compassionately as He loves us. With this we choose only what is good and best in the person, no matter what wrong he has done.

#### Testing of Love, Faithfulness and Trust in God

-Job 1:1-20

The purity of Job's heart is manifested in faithfulness to offer sacrifices. Job is favored by God because he:

- fears God
- tries to be blameless
- maintains an upright life
- avoids evil

Satan questioned God about Job's fear of the Lord.

He challenged God saying that Job only fears Him because of all the blessings and protection from the Lord. Job was very blessed with his family and all that he has. God blessed the work of his hands and his livestock was spread all over.

God allowed Satan to touch all of Job's blessings or seemingly source of security, except Job. His children died, while his house was destroyed by a natural

calamity and all his livestock were taken away. Despite this tragic event, his love, faithfulness and trust in the Lord remain. For he knows everything belongs to God.

He fell to the ground and worshipped. He said, "Naked I came forth from my mother's womb, and naked shall I go back there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

- God allows Satan to test us, but not beyond God's limit.
- **1 Cor. 10:13** No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength, but with the trials He will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it.
- **1 Pet. 5:7** Cast all your worries upon Him for He cares for you.

#### Testing of Character

-Job 23:8-10

But if I go to the east he is not there, or west, I cannot perceive him. The north unfolds him, and I cannot catch sight of him; the south hides him, and I cannot see him. Yet he knows my way; if He tested me I should come forth like gold.

#### Testing of Patience and Trust in the Lord

- 2 Pet. 3:8-9

But do not ignore this one fact, with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise as some regard "delay", but he is patient with you not wishing that any should perish.

- The problem: It's so hard to wait!
- It takes time to fulfill His plans – we need to undergo seasons of testing.
- Are we willing to wait for God's timing?

#### Testing of Joy, Faith, Character and Perseverance

-Jas. 1:2-3

Consider it all joy when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- Character is both developed and rebuilt on how you respond to testing.
- This sickness will not lead me to death but will glorify my father in heaven.

- With all the teachings we heard, we are indeed encouraged!

### Testing of Humility and Faith

#### - Jas. 1:5

*But if you lack wisdom he should ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly and he will be given it. But he should ask in faith not doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed about by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive from the Lord for he is a man of two minds, unstable in all his ways.*

- The wisdom we have is foolishness to the world.
- God wants our patience, for God to change us.
- God asks us to be single-minded and put our trust in Him alone.

### Testing of Obedience, Patience with God, Others and Self

#### - Heb. 12:1-2

*Therefore, since you are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of our faith. For the sake of the joy that lay before him he endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken His seat at the right of the throne of God.*

- God is the author and finisher of our faith. He doesn't delay His promises, but He is just patient with us, until we come to repentance.
- Sometimes we think we are good enough or at our best, only to find out that God isn't finished with us yet.
- We should be patient with ourselves and with God and wait for His perfect timing.
- God allows us to be with people who will be instrumental in molding us.

### Points to Ponder:

1. Don't allow the enemy to rob us of joy and faith.
2. If we waiver, James is teaching us the power of prayers.
3. Blessed is he who overcomes tests.
4. Man of two minds is unstable. Command this doubt to leave me now (Jas. 1:6-7).
5. Sometimes God allows delay for His glory.
6. He loves to test our faith.
7. Sometimes God tests us- if we believe in Him or not.

8. Is work or going abroad your salvation?
9. Look for the consequences of your decision.
10. Trials can be a test of your faith and means of character formation.
11. Do you believe in the promises of God even if it appears impossible?
12. Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold. There were 4 persons in the furnace and not a single strand of hair was burnt. They showed their faith in God. They expressed that even if God will not rescue them, they will not worship the golden image (**Dan. 3**).
13. Jesus healed the daughter of a Jewish leader, Jairus, who ONLY BELIEVED in Him. (**Matt. 9:18-26**).

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