

"In the beginning  
was the Word,  
and the Word was  
with God, and the  
Word was God."  
~John 1:1

The Lord's Flock  
**Growth**  
DIGEST  
PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES



## “HOW GOD TESTS OUR FAITH?”

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### **I. God tests our faith to find out the real extent of our trust in Him.**

- God wants to see how much we love Him. He wants to know whether we will trust Him no matter what happens in our lives.
- So, let us evaluate ourselves. Do we only thank God when blessings come our way or do we thank Him all the time, even when we are in the middle of impossible situations?

#### Brief Sharing:

- From the moment I was diagnosed with cancer until the Lord healed me completely, I remained strong, and the members of the Lord's Flock Community were witnesses to my God-given strength. In fact, I cried only once and it was tears of joy. Yes, what happened to me was, indeed, horrifying. I had to wait and wait for several medical test results, and I found out that the cancer I had was in the ductile and was described as invasive. I cried once and with joy overflowing in my heart because when I asked God why He allowed me to have cancer, He revealed to me that He allowed it so that when I testify to the people who have cancer, I can say that I also had cancer, but I am also a miracle work

of God— that my big C, Christ, is bigger than c which stands for cancer.

On the day that the people were expecting to know my result, I, who was diagnosed with first stage cancer of the breast, intentionally did not tell the assembly the result of my biopsy at once. Instead of talking about the results, at the start of praise and worship, I exhorted, “What if we prayed and prayed and expected with faith and all of a sudden the answer is not what we are expecting. The answer is different from what you have been asking.” After this, I saw the faces of the people in the assembly became so sad for they thought I meant that their prayers for my complete healing was not granted by the Lord. Their gloomy faces did not stop me from continuing: “Will we still praise and thank God? The Lord knows why He said ‘no’ when He said ‘no’, but let us not question God because He alone knows everything.”

So, let us just praise the Lord, even if He did not answer our prayers the way we want Him to.

### **II. God tests our faith through demands or assignments given by the Lord.**

- Before Sis. Techie discovered that she had cancer, the Lord's Flock had colossal assignments from the Lord. First, the leaders of the community were meeting with Bishop Tobias regarding the birth of the Lord's Flock Pious Union. Second, the community, once

again, continued the already delayed construction of the Heritage, the Lord's magnificent building that will be renowned in many nations. Third, the Lord was asking the community to open one chapter in Vienna, Austria; one in Calgary, Canada; the third chapter in Winchester, England; and, to take care of the two newly opened chapters in Hong Kong.

- These are demands from the Lord, and what He asks us to do are tasks that are seemingly impossible. However, we must never ever be afraid because if a demand or work seems impossible, it came from the Lord.
- Remember this: Whenever the Lord hands you difficult tasks, it is accompanied by all that you will need to accomplish it.
- The reason is that the Lord is interested in seeing whether or not you are willing to do His demands and He wants you to put your trust in Him.

### III. God Tests our faith through delays.

- "My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him."— Psalm 62:5
- Waiting takes time and we, nowadays, are used to everything that is instant. We used to wait for things like telegrams, but now we have text messages and email. We used to wait for our schedules to clear just to see a friend, but now all we have to do is talk to them via Face Time. Calling someone overseas takes less than a minute now. We have become accustomed to immediate results for everything is instant. That is why Christians, nowadays, find it hard to wait on the Lord.
- And the Lord, just like He

always says, just wants to test us at times. Why? Because most of us like to have things whenever we want them. The sign of this is when we ask the Lord, "When will this testing end?"

- There are times when the Lord is just going to be very silent and we will think that He is not there. We end up asking questions like, "Why can't I feel you?" or "Why do you not talk to me?" When He is silent, He is testing our hearts for it is written in Matthew 17:17, "You unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus continued, "How long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?"

Sometimes the Lord wants to know whether we will believe that He is there, though, we do not feel Him because most of the time we really want to feel His presence. To wait does not imply passive submission on our part, but it breeds an attitude of patience. It expresses our dependence on God. Long suffering is when we say, "How much longer can I wait for God to answer?"

- If every prayer were immediately answered, if your every need were automatically met, if every problem were instantly solved, then we would not need faith because faith could only be present when we see no solution or evidence. It is when we see something contrary to what we have in mind, like medical exam results.

The result of Sis. Techie's biopsy was 99.9% cancerous. But there is still .01% chance of it being benign. As charismatics, being in the spirit and also believing in God, the .01% chance of benign may be God's miracle. But waiting really

was hard because temptation always comes when we wait.

- Why do we have to wait? Because God is looking at our faith and faith is the substance of the things we are hoping for, but there is no evidence to it because the

object of our faith must be measured by how much we know God. How much do we trust Him? Even if there is no evidence, do we still believe that God can do it? That is why, waiting is so important. Also, patience is very significant because there are times the Lord may answer us; but it is not what we want, and it is not how we want it. That is why we have to wait on things.

- If you can't learn how God wants to stretch and grow our faith during the times of waiting, we miss out so much of the faith lessons that God wants to teach in our lives.
- A good example of this again is the people of Israel in the Old Testament, when they were on their way from Egypt to the promise land. Going from Egypt to the promise land, according to Deuteronomy 1, takes only eleven days; however it took them forty years, imagine that. They could have made it. They could have travelled the distance in two or three weeks only i.e. eleven days. But it took them 40 years. Why all the wasted time? Because the Bible said that God led them in their journey from Egypt to the promise land. Why all the wasted time again? Because God was more interested in developing their faith than in getting them from one point to another- from point A to B. And the quickest way is the fastest way. So, God tested their faith for 40 years. Did they pass? Not all of them did, for when Moses told them that he would talk to God and asked them

to wait for Him, they already made an idol by the time he got back. Even Moses was not able to enter the promise land because they had been complaining.

- Did you ever find yourself in situations like these? When you feel like you're in a hurry and you get a

definite idea that God is not in a hurry. Sometimes when we think that we are done for we question God and stop having faith in Him. Always remember: God is always looking at our faith that on the eleventh hour He can work wonders.

#### Brief Sharing:

- Doctor Vangie used to call me when she had an operation and was in need of wisdom to decide who to save, the mother or the baby. I would pray and the result was both mother and child was saved— a miracle.
- When Judge Leviste was alive, he would always consult the Lord for wisdom before he rendered judgment. The same thing applies to Bro. Froi. Before they start, they conduct a prayer meeting for an hour just to seek guidance from God on what to do with their projects.
- Many years back, the Lord's Flock was in need of PHP 500,000 to pay for the Heritage's contractor the following day when the Lord's Flock's accountant, Rose, told me, we only had PHP 200,000 at that time. With faith, I assured her that there would be PHP 500,000 before the day ends. When Rose left, I fervently prayed to the Lord for provision.

Sis. Linda Chang, my godmother, then called and told me that my godfather died and that the Lord asked her to call me instead of Fr. Larry. She asked for my help

in talking to the priest and buying a lot for burial in Greenhills. I made some calls and when I finally got hold of Bro. Danny, who knew someone from Manila Memorial, I accompanied my godmother to Greenhills and talked to the parish priest there for he is my friend. Afterwards, we went to Makati and there I assisted my godmother in buying a lot, which cost 9 million pesos, for burial.

At four in the afternoon, on the same day, Bro. Danny called me up to inform me that a PHP 500,000 check was due to be issued to me as my commission for referring a buyer, Sis. Linda. When he asked me to whom should he address the check to, I told him to address it to the Lord's Flock and immediately informed Rose to bring it to the Lord's Flock before five in the afternoon that day. The Devil then tempted me. He said I should only give fifty thousand or ten percent of my commission as tithes. But I rebuked Satan and stood firm in my decision. I, then, called up Sis. Linda and told her about the PHP 500,000 commission that I received, and my godmother was delighted. When I said that I gave it to the Lord's Flock, my godmother asked me why did I not just get it. I said I did not take it because the Lord's Flock needs it.

So, the next morning, Sis. Linda decided to buy another lot because her children thought that the one she bought yesterday was small. "Dad, you have another PHP 500,000." I told the Lord. However, Danny called at around ten o'clock and informed me that an in-law of Sis. Linda was there trying to steal my commission. Not wanting a fight, I told Bro. Danny to give it to Sis. Linda's in-law. Bro. Danny refused because he wanted to protect me, the one who referred the client. I said it should not be a cause for argument, so I insisted that Bro. Danny should give it to Sis. Linda's in-law. I then turned to the Lord and said, "Dad, that money is supposed to be yours, right? But it was taken. What will I do? We need that for the Heritage." The Lord said, "Tell Sis. Linda about him." I told her just as the Lord commanded.

The next morning, Sis. Linda called me up and told me that she was at the bank. She

said she would issue a check worth PHP 1,000,000 and asked for my full name so she could address it to me. I was astounded so I asked, "Why will you give me one million?" My godmother replied, "I'm going to give you one million because the first PHP 500,000 is supposed to be yours but you gave it to the Lord's Flock and the second PHP 500,000 is supposed to be yours also, but you gave it away. So, I need to give it back to you." I assured her that there was no need for her to return it. However, she insisted so I told

her to address it to the Lord's Flock. Sis. Linda was shocked but she did it anyway. PHP 1,000,000 was no joke but I never regretted giving it to the Lord's Flock because I knew the Lord's Flock needed it more than I did for I trusted the Lord to take care of my needs.

We must not be afraid whenever the Lord asks us to do something because it is the Lord who is asking us to do it. Instead, we should wait because whenever God asks us to wait, He will perform miracles. We must never give up on the work of the Lord.

We start asking "when" questions, while we are waiting. When is my marriage going to get better? When is it going to turn around? Sis. Techie thought her marriage to Bro. Bobby was hopeless. It took a while, but then the Lord answered their prayers. So, if you are single and asking, "When am I going to find the right person and get married?" Do not be anxious. It will come.

He will make all things beautiful but in His time. Remember, God's time is unlike ours. His time is more beautiful.

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