

Fundamentals of Faith

(The Testing of Our Faith)

There are two types of trials from two different sources.

There are two different Greek words for test and tempt.

“Peirazo” – to try whether a thing can be done; a test to cause to fail.

This word is always used when the enemy tests, tempts, or tries. He tests us to see what he can get away with. If we stand in our authority by faith, he can't get his way.

“Dokimazo” – to test the quality of something and to use it in a greater way.

This word is used when God tests. God tests to show what is genuine and to promote to greater usefulness.

Does God test us?

The answer to this question is what type of testing are you referring to?

God does not test [peirazo] us. (to try whether a thing can be done; a test to cause to fail)

However, He does test [dokimazo] us. (to test the quality of something and to use it in a greater way)

James 1:13 – “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted [peirazo] by God;’ for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt [peirazo] anyone.”

I Thessalonians 2:4 – “But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests [dokimazo] our hearts.”

I Timothy 3:10 – “But let these also first be tested [dokimazo]; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.”

God will never test us to cause us to fail or sin. The devil does this. However, God uses the devil's test against him by proving the genuineness of what He has given us and to promote us after the test.

James 1:2-3 – “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials [peirasmos], knowing that the testing [dokimion] of your faith produces patience.”

The devil will send a trial to us to see what he can get away with and to cause us to fail. God turns this around and uses this test to prove the faith He gave us is genuine and also to use us in a greater way afterwards.

The Greek word “dokimion” means a small test. When the ending of “ion” is put at the end of a word it implies something small. The trial from the devil might seem huge to us, but God sees it as a small test to prove what He has given is genuine and effective, and also to promote us!

I Peter 1:6-7 – “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials [peirasmos], that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested [dokimazo] by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,”

Again, the enemy sends trials to us to break us, but God turns them around to prove the genuineness and effectiveness of the faith He gave to us and to promote us. The praise, honor, and glory here will not be towards God but towards us!

Why Is Our Faith Tested?

Many see our lives being a classroom where tests and trials come to teach us things God wants us to learn. This is a faulty religious view.

Trials and tests come to us not because we are in a classroom, but the truth is, they come because we are on a battlefield. We are ambassadors for Christ sent out into enemy territory to take spiritual ground and take back prisoners of war from the enemy. Because of this, we are a target. Satan hates God, so he hates us!

Our classroom is the church services we attend and our time spent in the Word listening to the Holy Spirit. That is where we are trained to go out into the battlefield which is our own particular mission field.

God has equipped us with everything we need to be victorious out on the field God has called us to be on. He has given us His name, His promises, and His armor, which includes faith.

Each trial that you go through is about the truth of God’s Word being challenged. Your faith in the truth of God’s Word is challenged by the enemy. He makes natural circumstances appear to be opposite of what God’s Word says.

Luke 22:31-32 – “And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.’” **Your faith will not fail, Jesus is praying for you.**

Examples of Faith Tested

Joseph had a time test - Psalm 105:19 – “Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him.”

There is almost always a time between the giving of God's promise and its fulfillment.

Daniel had a Faithfulness Test - Daniel 6:10 – “Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.”

Daniel 6:23 – “Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.”

Saul had a Peer Pressure Test - I Samuel 15:20 – “And Saul said to Samuel, ‘But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.’”

I Samuel 15:24 – “Then Saul said to Samuel, ‘I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.’”

Nehemiah passed the Peer Pressure Test - Nehemiah 6:1-4 – “Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, ‘Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono.’ But they thought to do me harm. So I sent messengers to them, saying, ‘I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?’ But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.”

Elisha passed the Loyalty Test - Elisha (II Kings 2:1-9)

II Kings 2:4 – “Then Elijah said to him, ‘Elisha, stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to Jericho.’ But he said, ‘As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!’ So they came to Jericho.”

The Results of Our Faith Being Tested

James 1:3-4 – “...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.”

Romans 5:3-4 – “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

I Peter 1:7 – “...that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,”

Hebrews 10:35 – “Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.”

Conclusion – Key Thoughts

- A. The devil sends trials to see what he can get away with and to break us. **God turns those around to prove the genuineness and effectiveness of the faith He gave us and to promote us.**
- B. The test is not really about you. **It is really about the truth of God’s Word and your faith in it.**
- C. Tests do not come to us to teach us. **They come because we are on enemy territory doing the Lord’s work.**
- D. We will all have to pass the **Time, Faithfulness, and Peer Pressure tests** in regards to our faith.