

## The LORD and the Subject Of Testing

### Why Does God Test Us?

When we ask why God tests us, or allows us to be tested, we are admitting that testing does indeed come from Him, as clearly taught in Scripture. Although we are forbidden to test Him (Deuteronomy 6:16; Matthew 4:7), when God tests His children, He does a valuable thing. David sought God's testing, asking Him to examine his heart and mind and see that they were true to Him (Psalm 26:2; 139:23). In both the Old and New Testaments, the words translated "test" mean to prove by trial. Therefore, when God tests His children, the purpose is to prove that our faith is real. Not that God needs to prove it to Himself since He knows all things; rather, He is proving to us that our faith is real, that we are truly His children, and that no trial or test will overcome that faith.

In His Parable of the Sower, Jesus identifies the ones who fall away as those who receive the seed of God's Word with joy, but as soon as a time of testing comes along, they fall away. James clearly explains that the testing of our faith develops perseverance, which leads to maturity in our walk with God. Perseverance in times of trial and testing will result in our spiritual maturity, our completeness (James 1:3–4). James goes on to say that testing is a blessing, because when the testing is over and we have "stood the test," we will "receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12). Testing and trying come from our heavenly Father who works all things together for good for those who love Him and who are called to be the children of God (Romans 8:28).

The testing or trials we undergo come in various ways. Becoming a Christian will often require us to move out of our comfort zones and into areas we have never encountered before. We've perhaps heard the saying 'No pain—no gain' when exercising our physical bodies. The same applies to exercising our faith in God. This is why James wrote 'Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds' (James 1:2). Testing our faith can be in small things like daily irritations; they may also be severe afflictions (Isaiah 48:10). Whatever the source of the testing from God, it is to our benefit to undergo the trials.

The account of Job is a perfect example of God allowing one of His saints to be tested by the devil. Job bore all his trials patiently and "did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing" (Job 1:22). However, the account of Job's testing is proof that Satan's ability to tempt us is limited by God's sovereign control. No demon can test or afflict us with beyond what God has ordained for His perfect purpose and our benefit.

There are many examples that can be used to illustrate the positive results from our being tested. The Psalmist likens our testing to that of being refined like silver (Psalm 66:10). Elsewhere in Scripture we can read of our trials as that of gold being refined in order to remove all its impurities (1 Peter 1:7). By the testing of our faith, God causes us to grow and mature into strong disciples who truly live by faith in Him, not by what we see (2 Corinthians 5:7).

When testing and trials come our way, we should receive them with joy, because we know that it is God who allows them to strengthen our faith. When we are knocked about in the storms of life, like the tree that digs its roots ever deeper for a greater grip, we must dig our roots deeper into God's Word so we can withstand whatever comes against us.

Most comforting of all, we know that God will never allow us to be tested beyond what we are able to handle and in all things will provide a way out of the test (1 Corinthians 10:13). This does not mean He will remove the trial from us. Why would He when He says trials are for our benefit? Rather, the "way out" is the way *through*. the trial, with Him ever faithful by our side, until we come out on the other side of it by His grace and power, stronger and more mature Christians.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Got Questions Ministries. (2002–2013). [Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered](#). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.