

Introduction:

- We have been looking at the topic of faith Wednesday nights and show you how important your faith is in the area of deliverance, freedom and overcoming.
 - John said the work of God is this, to believe on the One who He sent.
 - In 1 John we read, this is the victory that overcomes the world even our faith. 1 John 5:4-5 **Every God-begotten person conquers the world's ways. The power that brings the world to its knees is our faith. The person who wins out over the world's ways is simply the one who believes Jesus is the Son of God.** (from THE MESSAGE)
 - Faith makes all things possible! That is so exciting! In Christ all things are in the realm of possibilities.
- Faith was important to Moses and the Children of Israel and it will be important to us in the end of the age. Ex. 4 Moses asks God, “What if they do not believe?” Moses was concerned both for Israel’s faith and for Egypt. We hear lots about what faith does and we should but I do not think the church has come to the place where it really knows how to handle trouble.
- Read James 1:2-4 from NKJV and then from **Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.** (from THE MESSAGE)

1. This is a test

- a. Dokimion-test—that by which something is tried, proved, tested.
 - i. The root of this word is doke which means ‘watching’
 - ii. We are all living under the divine eyes of God. This watching is as a General watching his troops train, or a coach watching the players train. It is the searching for the best. A gold smith melts the gold and silver in furnace of affliction to see how pure the gold will become.
 - iii. The future judgment and the present divine scrutiny fashion a corresponding mode of life.

(from Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, abridged edition, Copyright © 1985 by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. All rights reserved.)

 1. It is good for us to connect testing and trial to this word judgment.
 2. Under the watchful eye of God, He will render a judgment during the time of testing. In other words the release of the judgments of God allows Him to make a determination of the content of our hearts. It therefore has the potential to separate sheep and goats at the end of the age.
 - iv. Dokimion Rom 5:3,4 produce patience and patience character. What is the question asked by the Saints at the end of the age, “How long oh, Lord?” Proof we will need character produced by patience while in the furnace.
 1. 2 Cor 8:2 the Macedonian become generous in testing.
 2. 1 Cor 11:19 factions/testing promote the truth and the truly tested.
- b. 1 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, NKJV**
- c. Under Gods watchful eyes believers are to do two things
 - i. They must learn the will of God by testing.
 1. (Rom 12:2; Eph 5:9-10; Phil 1:10; 1 Thess 5:21).
 - ii. They must learn to test themselves.
 1. 2 Cor 13:5 test yourselves.
 2. 1 Cor. 11:28 Especially before receiving communion.
- d. The attitude of the tested
 - i. No one likes taking tests.

- ii. Tests are given to reveal things or to bring understanding into light. What we know and do not know.
- iii. Tests are not feared by those who are well prepared.

2. Do not forget what is being tested.

- a. James calls these trials the testing of our faith. In other words, trials bring our faith under the watchful eye of God. Therefore, anything that tests your faith qualifies as a trial.
 - i. Poikilos-various—the Greek literally means many colors. Therefore it implies that tests can be quiet colorful or creative regard the testing of our faith. How many have experienced that?
 - ii. Peripipto—fall into—it does not mean that you trip and fall into something. It means to come on to something and be totally surrounded/encompassed by it. The idea is that of being brought somewhere by chance or unexpectedly. (Kittle-abridged.)
- b. Faith is what is being tested by trials. The test causes us to/ or should cause us to:
 - i. To look for God. The first place you look reveals where your faith lies. Are you looking to your own strength? Someone else's strength? If you first look to God, then under God's watchful eye He sees that you are aware that God is in control and you are now looking to find God in your situation or circumstance. A common question to always ask in any trial/test—"Where is God in this?" ie. Am I here for me? Am I here for others? What is God doing?
 - ii. To remember that we are now positioned to grow if we allow ourselves to cooperate with the testing. Tests are not designed to punish, destroy, or maim. They are designed to accelerate growth.
 - iii. My faith response is critical to my success in this situation! Key word is response. Remember you are under the watchful eye of God. He is looking to see the condition of his troops. Are they ready for something bigger? Your faith response will determine your promotion or extra lap around Sinai again! It reveals the place where you genuinely rest in life. If you can rest in God when all hell is breaking loose around you, then you have truly found the resting place.

3. What is God after in testing Us?

- a. Very simple: NKJV—that we would be:
 - i. Perfect—teleioi-properly brought to finish, completed-master piece, done right.
 - 1. Three ways to know you are getting close to perfect:
 - a. You are able to control your tongue. James 3:2-3 **For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.** NKJV
 - b. You are free from fear. 1 John 4:18 **There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.** NKJV
 - c. Mt. 19:21—You are able to do what Jesus asks.
 - 2. Matt 5:48 **Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.** NKJV
 - a. Jesus gives this about 1/3rd of the way into the sermon on the mount and some very heavy truth.
 - b. It must be obtainable if Jesus exhorts us to aim for it.
 - ii. Complete –holokleeroi-not one part missing
 - 1. Without defect—as of animals or men.
 - 2. 2 Thes. 5:23 Sanctified complete lacking nothing. Completeness here, speaks of body, soul and spirit.
 - 3. We have to get tested to know our progress. Complete then becomes another goal of our testing.
 - iii. Lacking nothing. Not lacking, can't be improved upon, in no possible way inferior.
 - iv. Message: The testing of our faith is to make us mature, well developed, not deficient in any way. This is the purpose of testing.
- b. God wants us to be like Him in the earth! So we have to be continually tested. Everyone loves the story of the overcomer! They are exciting because we desire to see ourselves overcoming.
 - i. See Hebrews 11:35-ff.

- c. God wants us to arise to place of dominion. 1 John 5:4-5 **Every God-begotten person conquers the world's ways. The power that brings the world to its knees is our faith. The person who wins out over the world's ways is simply the one who believes Jesus is the Son of God.** (from THE MESSAGE)
 - i. Note: The power that brings the world to its knees. Is Faith!
 - 1. Moses toppled Egypt with a wooden staff.
 - 2. Daniel stopped the mouths of Lions.
 - 3. Shad, Mesh, Abed, were not burned in the fire.
 - 4. Mary Queen of Scotts feared John Knox's prayers more than all the armies of France.
 - 5. Rees Howell of England was credited several times to his prayers of faith against the Nazi regime. One key place he prayed was Dunkirk. The Germans had the British army against the sea and stopped.
 - ii. What happened in Egypt? Egypt was brought to its knees by a man of faith—Moses.
 - iii. God is looking for a church that aspires to rise to dominion.

4. Help I am being Tested!

- a. Start counting—Count it all joy!
 - i. Ie. I do not know where it started but I remember my grandmother singing a song, “Count your many blessings, count them one by one.” I remember her irritating Grandpa at times when the picture looked bleak she would say, “Delbert, you need to count your blessings and she would start down the line counting the blessings.” I could tell he wanted to argue but why wrestle against God.
 - ii. James says the first act we must do in the midst of trials is to count. Count it all joy.
 - 1. Gr. Word is Hegiomai—to lead, to think (believe), to account. TDNT. GR. Chara—joy, rejoicing.
 - a. Lead yourself out.
 - b. 2 Cor. Take captive every disobedient thought...make it obedient to Christ.
 - c. This is the check up from the neck up section. Called attitude adjustment.
 - 2. Let us not forget, James 1:17-18 **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.** NKJV
 - 3. If we look to the good gifts we have received we bring ourselves back to the One who gave them in our times of testing.
- b. Give yourself to the word. Romans 10:17 Faith comes by hearing...
 - i. Faith comes by hearing...the message...word.
 - ii. Mary in Luke 1:38 Let it be to me according to your word.
 - iii. Jn 6:63 My words are Spirit and they are life.
- c. Don't look for the easy way out. Find the God way out. Submit yourself to the test. Jesus words to Saul on the road to Damascus-why are you kicking against my leading?
- d. Ask for wisdom while taking the test.
 - i. Eph. 1:17,18
 - ii. Wisdom is what gives you the edge for passing the test.
 - iii. Prov 2:6 The Lord gives wisdom
 - iv. Prov. 4:7 wisdom is the principle thing get it!
 - v. Prov. 24:3 Through Wisdom a house is built.
 - vi. Mt. 7:24-27 Wise man built upon the Rock. And when tested his house stood.

Conclusion:

- Perseverance—faith sustained over time in the midst of pain. Bob Sorge