

THE FAITH EXAM - 2

(How God Tests Faith)

ATTENTION: Video: Is Your Faith in Kindergarten

*⁶ Now without faith it is impossible to please God
Hebrews 11:6*

(The nature of faith:)

- It is a living thing:
 - It's something that either grows, stagnates or dies.
 - It's not an inanimate object like a rock, podium, etc.
 - It must be nurtured and cultivated in order to be maintained and to grow.

ATTUNE:

- Last week we used the analogy of *faith is like a muscle* that must be worked out in order to grow – It must be tested.

Then we looked at one way that faith's testing or workout occurs:

² Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.
James 1:2-4

Let's look at another way our faith is given a workout, tested.

BODY: Always remember you are being tested/given a workout!
It is not simply something that happens without purpose!

Our Faith Is Tested Through God's Demands

- In the NT alone, it's estimated that there are over 1000 commands for believers to obey.
 - Some seem unreasonable.
 - Some are inconvenient.
 - Some of them seem downright impossible.
- When you have a command and it seems like, "I can't do that" –
 - Who am I going to believe?

- Who am I going to trust?
- Am I going to believe what God says or what I fear/believe?

– Examples:

- *Don't worry about anything*
 - Anybody struggle with that one?
- *Do good to your enemies*
- *Forgive those who sin against you*
- *Be thankful in everything*

- When God gives us a command it is a demand placed on our life and should be seen as a part of a test/workout
 - Like *Confess your faults to one another.*
 - That's a test.
 - Will I be transparent with a brother/sister or am I going to remain closed and protective?
 - There are many biblical examples of people that God said, "Do this" and they trusted Him, even though it didn't make sense to them or even seem possible. They obeyed!

– EXAMPLE ISRAEL IN WILDERNESS: Exodus 16

- The people of Israel in their wilderness travels were given Manna to sustain them - fell from the sky every morning.
 - BUT God put a demand on them not to take more than a one day's supply each morning except on the 6th day take 2 days' worth to have food for the Sabbath.

⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. This way I will test them to see whether or not they will follow my instructions.

Exodus 16:4

- Yeah-but...
 - Why can't I gather enough for the week?
 - It'd be more convenient that way.
 - What if I get sick tomorrow? What if I trip and hit my head on a rock and a snake bites me? There's all kinds of reasons why I need at least two days' worth, God."
- Some of the Israelites didn't obey for whatever reason and the leftover manna bred worms/maggots – stank!

- The point wasn't does it make sense to you.
 - The point was I want to test you so that you'll trust Me in a day to day way.
 - Follow My commands.
 - I want this experience to grow your faith.
- EXAMPLE ABRAHAM: [Genesis 12](#)
 - He was 75 years old.
 - God said I want you to leave home and go where I take you.
 - Abraham packs up everything he owned, his family, servants, livestock, nephew and his stuff, etc. etc. etc.
 - Goes without knowing where he was going.
 - If I put myself in the place of Abraham I'm asking questions.
 - "Where exactly am I going?" God says, "I'll tell you."
 - "How am I going to get there?" I'll show you.
 - "How will I know when I get there?" When you get there I'll tell you.
 - Faith is often a risk.
 - When it's a risk it means you can't understand it all in advance.
 - Why would God do that?
 - He's wanting to test and grow our faith.
 - The Bible says in [Hebrews 11:8](#) *By faith Abraham obeyed and went.*

- EXAMPLE NOAH: [Genesis 6-9](#)
 - God comes to Noah one day and says, "Noah, I want you to build an ark."
 - A huge boat
 - Remember Noah lived in the middle of a desert.
 - God says I want you to build an ark because there's going to be a flood.
 - Would you build an ark in the middle of a desert just because God says to?
 - Noah did. [Hebrews 11:7](#) The Bible says,
 - ⁷By faith Noah, after he was warned about what was not yet seen and motivated by godly fear, built an ark...*

PROJECT:

- God tests our faith.
 - He does it through difficulties as we saw last week.
 - But He also does it through demands/commands.
 - This way I will test them to see whether or not they will follow my instructions.*
 - Exodus 16:4*
 - If I am going to learn to live by faith I must learn to obey God's commands **PERIOD!**
 - When God says it, I do it.
 - Whether I understand it or not, I do it.
 - Whether it makes sense to me or not, I do it.
 - It's what God has asked me to do. So I do it!
 - When God tells me to do something in the Bible I do it.
 - God tests us:
 - ...that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.*
 - Deuteronomy 8:2*
- "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.*
- Jeremiah 17:10*
- For the righteous God tries the hearts and minds.*
- Psalm 7:9*
- The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked*
- Psalm 11:5*
- For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined.*
- Psalm 66:10*
- But the LORD tests hearts.*
- Proverbs 17:3*
- God takes us through these tests to determine our faith's composition – For Us To See And Learn!
 - Is it genuine or false?
 - Is it weak or strong?

- Also, since God has great plans for each of his children, these tests are preparation for greater works
 - Believers go through tests to build and strengthen their faith.
 - Tests are the lot of God's children because they must be prepared for God to use them to accomplish His purposes.
- Many believers fail God's tests, in part, by not expecting them.
 - They get mad at God.
 - They are shocked by the difficulty they encountered.
 - Some even fall away from God when tests come.
 - But to realize the opportunity in every command of God is to put our best foot of faith forward – To give God glory, love, etc.

Life is a series of challenges/tests that reveal/strengthen our faith.

- Every day your faith is being tested.
- This past week your faith was tested
- This afternoon your faith is going to be tested.
- Every choice, decision, challenge, victory as well as defeat can be a test of faith from which you mature in faith and longing for God!
- Embrace it and walk with God through it!