



*He sent a man before them—Joseph—who was sold as a slave. They hurt his feet with fetters, he was laid in irons. Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the LORD tested him.*  
Psalm 105:17-19 (NKJV)

There are three types of words:

- A. The written Word
- B. The Living Word
- C. The rhema Word

The word can't come to pass if you don't pass the test.

Everything you have is either a test or a reward!

Your faith can't be trusted until it's tested.

The word for "test" is more refiner's fire than classroom quiz. The test is less about passing and more about purging (1 Pet. 1:7; Prov 17:3; Zech 13:9; Ps 66:10)

A test reveals and refines.

### **1. The test of waiting. Fire is purging impatience.**

Patience is more than bearing affliction. It's standing fast under pressure, turning adversities into opportunities.

Impatience is the first thing that brings emotional immaturity.

Boy vs Man.

Man has developed the capacity to avoid demanding immediate gratification.

A boy has to have what he wants when he wants it.

"Patience serves as a protection against wrongs as clothes do against cold. For if you put on more clothes as the cold increases, it will have no power to hurt you. So in like manner, you must grow in patience when you meet with great wrongs, and they will then be powerless to vex your mind." Leonardo da Vinci.

*By your patience, possess your souls. Luke 21:19*



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

## **2. The test of faith. Fire is purging your mood swings.**

The presence of problems equals the absence of God. Silence means absence.

*And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Mark 10:47*

When you can't see Jesus, hear Jesus!

When you can't feel God's presence, feed on His promises.

## **3. The test of purity. Fire is purging your lust.**

Purity leads to the prison before it leads to the palace. Joseph went through the prison of restriction before he got to the palace of relationship.

God's will is found in God's way. If you don't know God's will, just get on God's way.

If you don't want to fornicate, make a decision to flee lust.

*For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5*

Possess your passions, don't let your passions possess you.

## **4. The test of forgiveness. Fire is purging your offense.**

You can't be fruitful if you don't forgive.

When you let go of hurt, you will embrace the future.

The offender can't hurt you if you shake off the shackles.

Forgiveness is not overlooking, excusing, minimizing, or taking the blame for the wrong.

Forgiveness is not waiting for an apology. It's a command, not an option.

*Joseph said to them, Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Genesis 50:19-20*



Each unfortunate situation is like a knife: take it by the blade or the handle.

## 5. The test of diligence. Fire is purifying idleness.

*For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12*

*"In all labor, there is profit..." Prov. 14:23*

"A primary purpose of work is to develop character. While the carpenter is building a house, the house is also building the carpenter. Skill, diligence, manual dexterity, and judgment are refined... A close friend has a sister who has been supported by her parents for more than 30 years. She has never had to face the responsibilities and hardships involved with a job. As a consequence, her character has not been properly developed and she is immature in many areas of her life." Howard Dayton, the founder of Compass Financial Ministries

*"Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall." Genesis 49:22 NIV*

Be a fruitful vine, not a dry tumbleweed.

If you are near the wall, find your well.

There are walls you can't break; you have to climb them.

Don't just go through life, grow through life.