

DOCTRINE OF TESTING

- I. Introduction.**
- A.** To test indicates a process employed to evaluate or examine the integrity or capability of that being tested.
 - B.** The process of testing is a means to prove or validate such integrity or capability.
 - C.** Testing is a necessary part of the Christian experience. Jam.1:2; 1Pet.1:6 cf.2Cor.2:9; 13:5-6; 1Pet.4:12
 - D.** Even Christ was repeatedly tested at the 1st Advent. Mat.16:1; 19:3; 22:18,35; Mar.8:11; 10:2; etc.
 - E.** There are two primary reasons why testing is necessary:
 - 1.** It produces patience necessary for the maturity adjustment. Jam.1:3-4
 - 2.** It validates +V (faith) providing a tangible standard of critiquing oneself in the CWL. 1Pet.1:7
 - F.** Often testing includes suffering and sorrow in the Christian experience. 1Pet.1:6b
 - G.** Testing is to be differentiated from temptation.
 - H.** Temptation is a solicitation to do evil, whether from within (the STA) or without (overt) or both.
 - 1.** Ex. of overt: Jesus tempted by Satan. Mat.4:1ff
 - 2.** Ex. of within: Pursuit of wealth. 1Tim.6:9 cp.Jam.1:14
 - 3.** Ex. of combination: Sexual deprivation in marriage. 1Cor.7:5
 - I.** All temptations are part of testing, but all testing is not necessarily temptation.
 - J.** God tests believers, but is not the sponsor or author of temptation. Jam.1:13
 - K.** Temptation comes from one of three sources, the STA, the world and Satan.
 - L.** Testing comes from both God and man.
 - 1.** Of man by God: Gen.22:1 “*God tested Abraham*” cp.22:12 “*Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me*” (Abraham’s Ph₂ blessing for passing the test). Exo.15:25 “*...and there He tested them.*” (Exodus and bitter waters of Marah).
 - 2.** Of man by man: To test one’s intentions; Gen.39:7-10, the wife sought to arouse Joseph’s STA and Joseph sought to arouse the norms and standards of her conscience; neither was successful. To test one’s faithfulness in grace application (2Cor.8:8) and dependability and faithfulness to BD (2Cor.8:22). To test one’s doctrinal integrity; 1Kgs.10:1, the Queen of Sheba tested Solomon.
 - M.** The area of testing believers should avoid is to test God. Heb.3:8-9

II. Vocabulary.

A. Hebrew:

- 1.** נָסָה – nasah; to test, prove, put to the test, tempted, tried.
- 2.** בָּחַן - bachan; to examine, try, assay, test, proved, tried.
- 3.** בִּחַן - bochan; a testing, tested.

4. **צָרַף** - tsaraph; to test, refine, smelt; used for refining mind and heart, Psa.26:2

B. Greek:

1. ἐκπειράζω – ekpeirozo; used 4x; to put to the test, try.
2. πειράζω – peirazo; used 39x; to make proof of, to tempt, test, tried, examine.
3. δοκιμάζω – dokimazo; used 22x; to approve, prove, test, examine.
4. δοκιμασία – dokimasia; hapax; a testing, proving.
5. δοκιμή - dokime; used 7x; the result of trial, proving, approval.
6. δοκίμιον – dokimion; used 2x; means of proof, testing.
7. δόκιμος – dokimos; used 7x; tested, approved.
8. ἀδόκιμος – adokimos; used 8x; as a negative; not standing the test, rejected, fail the test, disqualified, worthless.

III. Categories of testing.

A. Things that can be tested.

1. God's plan for Messiah and salvation. Isa.28:16
2. Volition. Zec.13:9
3. The truth of what one hears. Job 12:11a
4. The value of what one eats. Job.12:11b
5. Weather conditions. Luk.12:56a
6. The conditions of history as to determine the spiritual condition of a nation or direction of history. Luk.12:56b
7. Animals. Luk.14:19
8. The truth of God's will and BD. Rom.2:18; 12:2
9. The communicating spirits claiming to represent God. 1Joh.4:1 cf.1The.5:20-21

B. Men testing men.

1. The Queen of Sheba tested Solomon. 1Kgs.10:1
2. Jesus tested Philip. Joh.6:6
3. Paul testing those under his charge. 2Cor.8:22
4. Testing Deacons before they assume office. 1Tim.3:10
5. Believers testing themselves before participating in the Lord's Table. 1Cor.11:28
6. Believers testing their Ph₂ applications. Gal.6:4

C. God testing men.

1. As God is omniscient, he does not test man in order to acquire knowledge. Job 11:11; Psa.94:11; Isa.46:9-10
2. God tests +V and -V determining future blessing or cursing. Psa.11:4-7
3. God tests volition of believers to manifest obedience or disobedience. Exo.16:4; Deu.8:2
4. The testing is designed to get the believer's focus on the importance of the spiritual over the physical. Deu.8:3
5. The testing teaches believers to rely upon God's grace and serves to demonstrate His power, veracity and goodness. Deu.8:15-18

6. God permits false communicators to espouse false doctrine to believers to demonstrate the depth of the believer's love for God. Deu.13:1-3
7. The ultimate test upon men will be demonstrated during Daniel's 70th week. Rev.3:10

D. Man testing God.

1. This is generally not a good thing.
2. To test God is an anthropopathism, as He is perfect and immutable and cannot be truly tested.
3. Men test God with –V and refusing to believe what He says, slandering His veracity calling Him a liar. Num.14:22; Heb.3:9
4. The Exodus generation is a notable example of believers testing God. Psa.78; Heb.3:7-19
 - a. They rejected the divine viewpoint. Psa.78:10
 - b. They lost focus on God's work of grace towards them in the past. Psa.78:11-16
 - c. They rejected living grace as provided by God opting to satisfy their fleshly appetite. Psa.78:17-20
 - d. Failure to believe God under GAP and faith-rest is revealed as the ultimate cause. Psa.78:22
 - e. God continued to provide for them, demonstrating His grace, but riddled them with Divine discipline. Psa.78:23-31
 - f. Their perpetual unbelief eventually led to the sin unto death. Psa.78:32-33
5. Clear evidence that the believer is testing God is a constant whining and complaining about God's provision. Exo.16:2-7; 17:2-7; Psa.106:24-25
6. Maladjustment to God's provision evidences a lack of contentment in turn suggesting God's provision is not good enough. 1Cor.10:5-11
7. To test God is to place Him under *Operation Scapegoat*.
8. Either we believe God, orient to His word acclimating to our niche or we test God in unbelief. Heb.3:11,19
9. Ananias and sapphire are notable examples of early CA believers that tested God. Act.5:1-10
10. Legalism is another avenue believers use to test God. Act.15:10
11. One area God approves the believer testing Him is in the issue of giving and temporal prosperity. Mal.3:10
12. This testing is designed to prove God's word via application that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Act.20:35

IV. Christ was tested.

- A. By Satan. Mat.4:1-10
- B. By men. Mat.16:1-4; 19:3-9; 22:15-21, 35-40; etc.
- C. By God. Isa.53:10 cp.28:16

V. Kinds of testing.

- A. Testing occurs both in the physical and spiritual realms. 2Cor.11:23-29
- B. Testing in the physical realm may be classified as:

1. The “too much” test. Exo.16:13-20 esp.vs.20
 2. The “too little” test. Exo.17:1-7
 3. The “wrong kind” test. Exo.15:22-25
- C. Noting overlap between physical and spiritual testing, the spiritual is examined and proved through:
1. Living grace tests including issues related to your job, house, car, finances, etc. Mat.6:25-34
 2. Persecution from negative family, friends, co-workers, etc. Mar.4:17
 3. Normal common human problems (CHP’s). 1Cor.10:13
 4. Intense situations out of the norm of CHP’s. 1Pet.4:12
 5. Health tests including the death test. 2Cor.4:16
 6. Direct solicitation to evil. Mat.4:1-10
 7. The prosperity test. Gen.13:2ff; Ecc.2:1; 1Tim.6:17-19
 8. The 4 walls test of no social life to include tests relating to separation, dating, RM/RW, etc. Psa.25:16; 68:6; Rom.11:3; 2Tim.4:16
 9. The test of lupe that comes from those that are or have gone negative. Rom.9:2; 1Cor.7:15-16; Phi.3:18-19
 10. Testing of others. Eph.3:13; 1The.3:1-5
 11. The patience test. Jam.5:7-11
 12. Testing by the religious crowd in their testing of God. Act.15:10
- D. Testing can be categorized as “mosquito” or “elephant” tests depending upon their magnitude or repetitive nature.
- E. Some tests are temporary with others lifelong. Ex. David’s test of no peace in his household as DD residue from operation Bathsheba. 2Sam.12:10-12

VI. Testing applied to the believer.

- A. Believers should be put on notice that the Christian way of life (CWL) is saturated with testing. Act.14:21-23
- B. Believers should be informed that testing can come in almost any form and that it is not limited in one particular area. Jam.1:2; 1Pet.1:6
- C. Believers should not be shocked by the form or intensity of testing recognizing anything can happen. 1The.3:3; 1Pet.4:12
- D. Testing is the natural phenomenon occurring in the CWL designed for spiritual advancement for any that intends to make the maturity adjustment. Rom.5:3-5; Jam.1:2-4
- E. The immediate result is evidence that +V exists as manifested in ongoing perseverance. Jam.1:3
- F. The remote result naturally brings about the state of spiritual maturity. Jam.1:4
- G. Those that acclimate to testing applying sound doctrine are promised SG₃ with those holding to the end promised the wreath of life. Rom.5:2-3; Jam.1:12; 1Pet.1:7; Rev.2:10
- H. The formula for memorizing is BD + testing + application = Divine good.
- I. The believer’s Divine good will then be tested at the Bema. 1Cor.3:13
- J. This is the impetus behind the +H the believer is to have in testing. Jam.1:2; 1Pet.1:6,8

- K.** With +V to BD, the believer is able to see the value of our testing and keep things in perspective. Job 23:10; 1Pet.4:13-16
 - L.** The believer is to recognize that God provides sufficient grace to pass each test. 1Cor.10:13 cp.2Cor.12:9
 - 1.** No one faces unique tests.
 - 2.** God does not test beyond our doctrinal ability always providing the doctrine to pass the test and always ultimately delivers. Cp.Jam.1:5
 - M.** We have a High Priest that identifies with us in our tests and intercedes on our behalf before God. Heb.2:17-18; 4:15-16
- VII.** Reasons believers do not pass tests.
- A.** Tests are ultimately passed or failed based on our orientation to BD.
 - B.** A breakdown in the GAP system is a foundational hazard for failing tests.
 - C.** Lack of assembly and the assimilation of BD dooms one to failure. Heb.10:25 cp.Hos.4:6
 - D.** Unbelief in the teaching further destines one to failure in testing. Heb.3:12,19
 - E.** Lack of prayer and doubt directly affects the outcome. Jam.1:6-8
 - F.** Mis-acclimation to and/or arrogance to one's niche. Jam.1:9-11
 - G.** STA fear is a common denominator in failure to faith-rest further causing failure in certain tests. Cp.Mat.10:28-31; Luk.12:22-34
 - H.** Failure to generally isolate the STA.
 - I.** Failure to test the spirits and operate under human viewpoint in testing. 1Joh.4:1
- VIII.** Conclusions.
- A.** Testing is a reality of the CWL.
 - B.** If we intend to pass our tests and allow testing to advance us spiritually, we must be oriented to the POG and applying BD in FHS to the test.
 - C.** We should be sensitive to other's testing around us without being meddlesome or invading another's privacy. 1Pet.4:15
 - D.** If aware of another believer's testing, we should be willing to help him bear his burden if possible. Gal.6:2
 - E.** This attitude and willingness models the attitude of Christ. Phi.2:5-8
 - F.** Corporately, the local church is to apply towards those under testing. Gal.6:10; Heb.3:13
 - G.** Sharing our tests with others in the local church provides others with opportunity to pray on our behalf and in some cases may provide even the resources through BD or physically as deliverance from our tests.
 - H.** Human viewpoint, energy of the flesh and other STA activity are never the answer to handling tests.
 - I.** God is aware of concerns and needs for believers and will reward applications towards tests with SG₃. Gal.6:9
 - J.** The mature believer does not resent their tests but has come to recognize the necessity of testing and the value of such in the CWL. Rom.5:3; 2Cor.12:9-10; Jam.1:2-12; 1Pet.1:6-9