

The Four Defining Tests Of Life

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: **I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me...**” Philippians 4:8-14 (NKJV)

I. Introduction

- o **The condition:** “Jesus said, “According to **your faith** will it be done to you.” Matthew 9:29
- o **The path:** “These **trials** will show that your faith is genuine. It is being **tested as fire tests and purifies gold**—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.” I Peter 1:7 (NLT)

“Trials teach us what we are; they dig up the soil, and let us see what we are made of.”

--- Charles Spurgeon

“We are always in the forge, or on the anvil; by trials God is shaping us for higher things.”

--- Henry Ward Beecher

“All our difficulties are only platforms for the manifestations of His grace, power and love.”

--- Hudson Taylor

II. Navigating the Gauntlet of Life’s Trials

1. The _____ test.

Key question: How will I _____ in my journey?

“What I want from you is your true thanks; I want your promises fulfilled. **I want you to trust me in your times of trouble**, so I can **rescue you** and you can give me glory.” Psalm 50:14 (TLB)

“My people have done two evils: They have **turned away from me**, the spring of living water. And they have **dug their own wells**, which are broken wells that cannot hold water.” Jeremiah 2:13 (NCV)

“...If you are walking in darkness, without a ray of light, **trust in the LORD and rely on your God.**” Isaiah 50:10 (NLT)

2. The _____ test.

Key question: How will I _____ in my journey?

*"You should **stop trusting in people to save you**, because people are only human; they aren't able to help you." Isaiah 2:22 (NCV)*

*"At my first courtroom defense, no one came to my support, but **everyone deserted me**. May it not be held against them." II Timothy 4:16*

*"But **blessed are those who trust in the LORD** and have made the LORD their hope and confidence." Jeremiah 17:7 (NLT)*

*"...you will know I am the LORD. Anyone who trusts in me **will not be disappointed**." Isaiah 49:23b*

3. The _____ test.

Key question: Will I keep my _____ in life?

*"**If you make a promise to God, don't be slow to keep it**. God is not happy with fools, so give God what you promised. It is better not to promise anything than to promise something and not do it." Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 (NCV)*

*"But let your '**Yes**' be 'Yes,' and your '**No**,' 'No..." Matthew 5:37 (NKJV)*

*"...The wise man will find a time and a way **to do what he says**." Ecclesiastes 8:5 (TLB)*

4. The _____ test.

Key question: What (or whom) will be _____ in my life?

*"Your heavenly Father already knows all of your needs, and **He will give you all you need** from day to day **if you live for Him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern**." Matthew 6:33*

*"This is what the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "If you **come back to me** and **trust me**, you will be **saved**. If you will be calm and trust me, you will be **strong**..." Isaiah 30:15 (NCV)*

*"God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive **the crown of life** that God has promised to those who love Him." James 1:12 (NLT)*

*"In the secret of God's tabernacle no enemy can find us, and no troubles can reach us. The pride of man and the strife of tongues find no entrance into the pavilion of God. The secret of his presence is a more secure refuge than a thousand Gibaltars. I do not mean that no trials come. They may come in abundance, but **they cannot penetrate into the sanctuary of the soul**, and we may dwell in perfect peace even in the midst of life fiercest storms."---Hannah Whitehall Smith*

Answer Key:

1. *pressure----handle stress*
2. *people---handle disappointment*
3. *persistence---commitments*
4. *priorities----first*