Nine Tests Every Christian Must Face

Lesson One
The Wilderness Test

Deut. 8:2 (NLT) Remember how the Lord your God led you through the wilderness for forty years, humbling you and testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would really obey his commands.

Deu 8:2 (KJV) And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

Deut. 8:3 (NLT) Yes, he humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna, a food previously unknown to you and your ancestors. He did it to teach you that people need more than bread for their life; real life comes by feeding on every word of the Lord.

Deut. 8:16 (NLT) He fed you with manna in the wilderness, a food unknown to your ancestors. He did this to humble you and test you for your own good.

Deut. 8:17 (NLT) He did it so you would never think that it was your own strength and energy that made you wealthy.

The word “wilderness” is defined as a desert place; a place uncultivated or lived in; a state of disorder

mid-bawr'

From H1696 in the sense of driving; a pasture (that is, open field, whither cattle are driven); by implication a desert; also speech (including its organs): - desert, south, speech, wilderness.

Wildernesses are places of:

- Difficulties – Attempting to accomplish but having trouble. Like maybe riding an old 84 Low Rider from here to Indiana! Not impossible but difficult right?

- Pressures – Pressures of this world when we know we should be doing something different. Have to make the trip in 14 hours or less!

- Insufficient resources – No tool bag with you!
• Oppositions - Of this world against us when we speak out boldly for God’s Glory! You see a state trooper every 10 minutes!!

• One of the questions most asked in Church is “Why”.

**We ask why…**“**why is this happening to me.**”

- It is asked when bad things happen to good people.
- It is asked when great effort produces only poor results.
- It is asked when the expected success is delayed.
- It is asked when the wicked prosper while the righteous struggle.
  “**and we wonder WHY the test, when we try to do our best...**”

• People tend to deal with difficulties better if they understand that what they endure serves a purpose.

It is always easier to deal with the situation if we understand what the outcome will be! Amen? Carpal Tunnel Surgery! Working out brings discomfort and maybe even pain but the healthy outcome makes it worth it! Amen?

• Knowing that the trials of their faith are not pointless makes the enduring bearable.

**Romans 8:28 (NLT)**

*And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*

**Why the Wilderness Test:**

To humble us
To prove our Character
To teach us that we need more than bread
To discipline us for maturity or self-control
To reveal to us that it was not our own strength that made us prosper

**The test occurs**

So that we would not forget God.
So that we would learn to trust God.
So that our faith in God would grow stronger
So that we would have a platform from which we could minister to those who are around us. “**I UNDERSTAND or I’VE BEEN THERE**”
How God tests us:

He allows us to **LACK**
He supplies our need in a manner in which we are **not FAMILIAR**. (Ravens feeding Elijah)
He allows us to be **DEPENDENT**
He allows us to be **STRESSED**
He allows us to suffer **PAIN**

God is more interested in our CHARACTER than He is our Comfort.

Man cannot see his weaknesses until circumstances reveal it.

Impatience is revealed when something hinders our progress. (Car going 10 MPH below the speed limit and is IN FRONT OF YOU!)

Pride is revealed when we are forced to do something menial. (Changing a diaper!)

Stubbornness is revealed when we are forced to do something that we do not desire.

- Our lack of faith is revealed when we are required to do more than **what we are able**. (God is able!!)

- **Idolatry** is revealed when we are required to sacrifice those things that matter to us.

- **Immaturity** is revealed when we can’t have our way

- **Self-Will** is revealed when we are required to do something against personal ambitions.

- **Self-Centeredness** is revealed when we are forced to serve others

Matthew 12:35 (KJV) *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.*

**Testing is**

- Inevitable
- Continual
- Necessary
- Productive
- Influential
- Crafted by God
**Dangers of the Testing**
People become DISILLUSIONED (to cause somebody to realize that an ideal is false or a belief is mistaken)

People become DISTRAUGHT (extremely upset and distressed)

People become DISTRACTED (preoccupied or lack of concentration)

People become ANGRY

People become BITTER

People become HARDENED (Tougher! Harder for us to reach!)

A thought to Ponder: Only two men were promoted to becoming a king without the struggle of **THE WILDERNESS**.

- King Saul— who was consumed by jealousy
- King Solomon— who was consumed by his own passions

While the TESTING is universal, how we respond is left entirely up to us.

**And in CLOSING:**

**Blessings of the Wilderness Test**

We see the SUPERNATURAL work of God.
We receive ASSURANCE of the care of God
We receive assurance of the POWER of God.
We receive assurance of the FAITHFULNESS of God.
We are transformed by a RENEWING of our minds.

- We will become mature Christians.
- We will develop the ability to endure.
- We will lack in nothing.

_Jam 1:2_ Consider [it] all joy, my brothers [and sisters], whenever you* encounter various trials,

_Jam 1:3_ knowing that the testing of your* faith produces patient endurance.

_Jam 1:4_ But be letting that patient endurance have a perfect work [or, full effect], so that you* shall be perfect [or, mature] and complete-lacking in nothing.

- Our effectiveness and successes depend upon our responses to the various trials or tests we go through.