

Testing and Proving

by John Follette

John Follette emphasizes the importance of testing and proving in the Christian life as a means of character development and spiritual growth.

Scripture: Genesis 2:17, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 4:15, James 1:13, 1 Peter 1:7

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Temptation And Testing"

Description

John Follette emphasizes the importance of always dealing with God and not engaging in direct conflict with the devil, relying on Jesus as our Elder Brother and High Priest. He explains how God uses testings and provings to build our character and manifest the life of Christ in us, cautioning against falling into temptation which leads to defeat and death. Follette highlights the necessity of testings and provings in our spiritual growth, as God works to develop us and bring us into victory and life in Him through these challenges.

Transcript

I always deal with God. I never deal with the devil. We say: "I defy the devil!" It takes the LORD to rebuke him! He is loose, but God is back of him. I get right behind Jesus; He is my Elder Brother. He will take me through, and He is my glorious High Priest Who intercedes for me. I am conscious of the devil, but I know better than to get into a squabble with him.

My garden has something besides roses in it. It has a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and a serpent. God had to have the tree, because He is building a man. Who takes possession of the tree? The enemy does tempting to divert us. In the Name of Jesus, refuse it! Character is built through a law of testing and proving. Nature is a gift. We have to do with the shaping of character, but we don't have to do with the nature that God gave us. Accept the law of testing and proving if the life of Christ is to be manifested. Grow like Him, and grow with Him. We are only safe when we choose the will of God.

All life, wherever it is manifested, is a manifestation of God. It may run in terrifying channels, and it may be used to horrible destruction, but every bit of life and power that is manifested, is of God. He is the one Who originates life. The devil uses it, and misuses it, terrifies the world with it, and he swings it out in all kinds of fashions, but he is not the author of it, for he has life originally from God.

What would have happened if Adam and Eve had refused the subtle arguments of the enemy? They would have met another tree. Why? Because the strength of that which they had gained in the first testing

would have had to go through a crucible, and come out tested. The tree was to build them, and to release, not destroy them. If they had not failed, they would have had enough trees, (testings) to do something. It would have perfected them, and brought them through to a lovely glorification, as it did the Last Adam, Jesus, on the Mt. of Transfiguration.

I want to help you with this question of trouble, trials, testings, and provings. Since our lives are full of them, we should not be disturbed if we can't pray them all out of our pattern. Because, if we are consecrated spirits, dedicated to God, He is very familiar with every bit of the paraphernalia that is thrown into our life pattern. He knows it before we do. He never permits anything to come, unless it touches Him first. Even the devil can't touch us unless God permits him. God knows all about it. That should encourage us if the testings and provings come -- they have to come as a part of our economy as Christians.

I will show you a reason for the necessity of testings and provings by going back to Genesis. "And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." In Hebrew, "life" is plural; "lives". Why? The minute that breath of God strikes this human creature, who is made to function with God On that level, he would have that life flowing in two directions. In its first direction, it is to flow back again to God, and make this man a unit -- one with God. He is created of God, and he is created for God. His life (lives) becomes a spiritual manifestation, and also a physical manifestation, and his body begins to function. His life (lives) strikes in two directions:

- 1 .It brings this creature into a conscious relation with God. Keep this communion open; keep that alive.
- 2 .It is responsive to the world, because it has the life of God in it, which brings him in contact with the physical things of this world as well.

Everything in him responds, because of the life element which sets free ten thousand things that are hidden in him. They were never, never manifested in Adam --they never had a chance, but they were them.

God made man with two trinitys:

1. Spirit, soul, body.
- 2 .Personality; consisting of intellectual gifts; emotion al reactions; power to choose.

God is working all the time in those two trinitys. We have the power of the will to choose, and character is built under a law of testing and proving.

We have no life in ourselves; we are dependent; therefore we must go daily to the Tree of Life, which symbolizes Christ. (Matt. 6:11) There are two forces in terrific conflict. The enemy hates God. He took one-third of the hosts of heaven with him. God told Adam, "This is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; keep away from it, for in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall die. I will give you all the knowledge of good and evil that you need. I have all you need, and I will give to you. But that tree is a strange thing, and I am not explaining it to you -it is a tree symbolizing the knowledge of good and evil. I don't want you to be awakened to that. That is Satanic! For in the day that you do, you shall die."

Death was not in the thought of God at all -- translation was. "You keep your power of choice in Me, and say, 'Yes' with Me." -- Now God planted that tree before the devil got in there. "When the power of choice comes, keep choosing with Me." Sin erased the spiritual aspect of Adam's being, and he became

sub-normal; psychic; intellectual, and body conscious, and the majority of people are subnormal to this day.

"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Did He say: "You will go to hell?" No. We know there is hell and all that, but that isn't His proposition. He is coming to a proposition of life and death. It was an issue of life and death there in the garden. That issue has never changed. Theology changes; doctrines will change; church creeds will change; their philosophy will change, but God never changes. We go right back to the garden, and there it is; a law of testing and proving, with the issue - life and death. He still works on that basis today.

God cannot be tempted, nor does He tempt anyone. But God tests us, and proves us, because we are His workmanship; He wants to develop us, and bring us into a place of victory and life in Him. He can only do it through the law of testing. Temptation is always unto defeat and death. Testing is always unto strength and life.

Always remember when we meet this tree, don't have a united prayer meeting where all of the saints come with their axes, all ground and sharp with the Word of God, full of faith, and they say, "Now in the name of the Lord, we will deliver this poor saint," and we chop his tree down! But they say, "The tree has the devil in it!" Well of course, where would the devil be? He's in the tree. "Oh, Lord, kill the devil." "I can't! I want him. He is My shepherd dog, he is running around after the sheep, getting them in line. I am not going to destroy the very instrument that I am using.

How will I ever get hold of Job? Can you imagine God, saying, "We'll go down tonight, and politely say, 'Dear Brother Job, there is something I have to say unto thee, and I really want you to understand this, Job -..you are thus and so, but I think I can help you.'" How silly that would be! The Lord uses the devil to get at Job.

He says, "No tree; no temptation has beset you, but what is common to man, but God has with the tree which He has made, also made a way of escape:' He makes the situation, and He makes a way of escape, but we always want a short-cut through. "He hath also with the testing made a way of escape, that ye may endure it." Through the testing, God will be glorified in us.

He can only make us mature saints through a life process. I want you to be students of the Word, students of life, and students of what God is doing; how He does it, and why He does it. Then we become what I call spiritually intelligent. Why do we have testings? Why do we have discipline? To release, and build this wonderful Christian character through our intelligent cooperation with Him, saying, "I Choose with God."

I can give my whole life as a testimony of the Truth that I impart. Whoever gets anything from God without having a hard time? The great artist, Van Gogh, is an example: His Master Teacher told him, "I am glad you have to paint on an empty stomach; nothing in this world, worthwhile, has ever been done comfortably." Nothing worthwhile has ever been done comfortably, and nothing worthwhile that we have to give is due to a comfortable habit. -- "Measure thy life by loss, and not by gain..."

Don't let the glory of this present victory blind you to what is down the road, or around the corner, because the Lord is going to test the strength of this victory. The strength of this victory will be tried out again and again and again. He tries us continually in order to develop our spiritual strength.

Usually in a test, even a long one, we become too involved and localized, and the pressure makes us so present conscious that at times we lose all sense of proportion. But after a while we get quiet, and look back, and get a perspective and view we missed before. So I am seeing now (3 yrs. later) at least a little of why things have to come our way.

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