

The Testing of Our Faith: Truth

by
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The testing of our faith necessary to produce Christian character so that we “lack nothing” as mature Christians is always, and in all circumstances, a test of whether we will receive, believe, and act on the revealed truth, promises, and commands of the Lord, or turn away in offended unbelief or direct disobedience.

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4 NASB

Our assumption is that “tests” and “trials” are primarily about those difficult circumstances in which our physical health, our relationships, or our financial well-being is in jeopardy. But the testing of our faith always begins with believing God. Will we believe and then act on the revelation of His truth, His promises, and His commands, or will we yield to the temptation to reject His truth, His promises, and His commands? That is the testing of our faith, and it always begins with either believing or rejecting the revelation of God.

As Laodiceans, and especially as Charismatic Laodiceans, our assumption that we are spiritually rich and that we are already “lacking nothing” (of the Christian character, the empowerment of grace, or the revealed truth, promises, and commands of the Lord), is proven to be a lie though the fact that we are still divided, still spiritually poor (lacking abundant manifestations of active faith), still spiritually naked (revealing the sinful man rather than the glory of Christ), and still spiritually blind (lacking in revelation and the appropriate response to revelation).

Laodicean believers (and if you do not identify with us, see [Who Are The Laodiceans?](#)) obviously struggle with receiving and believing His truth, because we are divided by “every wind of doctrine,” trusting our intellects, our seminary training, our denominations, our religious authorities, and our Bible experts (who all disagree with one another) instead of seeking the revelation of truth directly from Him.

How did we get to this place where the opinions of men and the confidence we have in our own intellects has become more important than the revealed truth, promises, and commands of the Lord?

It is undeniably in contradiction with what He has told us.

“But you are not to be called rabbi ... (teacher) ..., for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers. And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ.” Matthew 23:8-11 ESV (inserts and emphasis are the author’s)

This passage itself produces a major test of our faith. The temptation to sin by ignoring the full implication of what the Lord is saying to His divided Laodicean church in this passage is **HUGE**. Will we receive and believe His Truth (deliberate capital “T”), even if it contradicts

what we have been taught in our seminary, our denomination, and our church fellowship, or will we turn away from the hard teaching that comes from Him?

This is a particularly difficult temptation for prophets, pastors, teachers, elders and others who have an investment of reputation or a literal job related to a particular denomination, ministry, doctrine, or interpretation of scripture.

When confronted with a truth that challenges what we already believe and teach (in disagreement with all those who believe and teach something different) the temptation (to sin) is fueled by the assumption that what we already believe and teach is correct. This then becomes a barrier to truth, and, even if we were confronted with His physical presence, we would reject all teaching that does not comply with what we already believe to be true.

As Jesus taught in the synagogue of Capernaum shortly after feeding the five thousand and walking on water, He gave a hard (difficult to receive and believe) teaching to all those who were following Him.

“I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” John 6:53 NIV

“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.”
John 6:56 NIV

On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?” John 6:60 NIV (emphasis is the author’s)

From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.
John 6.66 NIV

The temptation of believers who are confronted by a “hard teaching” that disturbs our religious comfort level or our religious investment is to **turn away** from the revelation of truth by the Teacher, because the truth disrupts our Laodicean (Phariseeical) reliance on religious traditions and the babel of men only partially enlightened by revelation.

Some Laodicean religious traditions even teach that revelation was only given to the original apostles of the Lord, and using the term “revelation,” in regard to the ordinary believer is a sacrilege. Yet, no one comes to the Lord without it, and no one can walk by faith without it.

The word, transliterated in the Greek is *apokalupsis* (Strong’s #602), and it means to disclose or manifest something otherwise hidden.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 1 Corinthians 2:12,13 NASB

As Paul demonstrates, we cannot believe in our hearts (our unique spirit-mind connection) unless the Holy Spirit supernaturally reveals the truth, promises, or commands of the Lord to us. These truths, promises, and commands are not revealed by the Pope, the prophet, the pastor, the teacher, or the Bible expert. They are revealed by the Holy Spirit, our Counselor, the Spirit of Truth, who is the Lord, our one true Teacher.

At best, all we can do is to be good administrators of His gift. At worst we are teaching false doctrines, false practices, and false interpretations of scripture, even doctrines of demons.

So...what is the appropriate response when we are confronted with a hard teaching, the **testing of our faith** that challenges our religious traditions, our assumptive beliefs, practices, and interpretations of scripture, and our investment in denominational dogma, ministries, reputations, and occupations?

Paul said that the Bereans were more “noble” than the Thessalonians because they examined the scriptures to see if what he was saying was true. This willingness to prayerfully examine the text and context of scripture when our doctrine, practices, and interpretations of scripture are challenged by a hard teaching is “noble.” And few there are in the Laodicean church of today who are “noble.”

One religious tradition that assaults itself against the true knowledge of God is the assumption that unity is only experienced as an imputed position in Christ or as ecumenical unity. Ecumenical unity, though, is a work of the flesh to bring about a sense of “unity” without having to surrender our assumption that what we believe and practice is perfect truth and without having to conform to the revealed will of the Lord.

***"The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity,...(Why?)... so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."** John 17:22,23 NASB (insert and emphasis is the author's)*

What is it that the world sees now, brothers and sisters? It is not unity in the spirit. What the world sees is a full blown manifestation of the Laodicean church assuming that it is spiritually “rich” and lacking in nothing of the Christian character or empowerment by grace, but manifesting that it is spiritually poor (without abundant manifestations of active faith), that it is spiritually naked (revealing the sinful man, rather than the glory of Christ), and that it is spiritually blind (lacking revelation and an appropriate response to revelation).

The Lord's promise to the Laodicean church and all who are included in that definition, is not that He will rapture us away in glory before we have to face tribulation, but that He will spew us out of His mouth if we do not repent from our Laodicean way of blending truth with error and not knowing the difference.

This is the initial testing of our faith. Will we receive, believe, and respond to the truth revealed by the Lord, or will we yield to the temptation to turn away from the hard teaching that contradicts our own intellectual understanding or contradicts what other spiritual authorities in our lives have told us to believe?

I do not judge truth on the basis of pure intellect or on the basis of emotion, but I have noticed my responses. For some reason He frequently causes me to present a “hard teaching” that offends many. But if I am challenged in my teaching I do not take offense. I yearn with all my heart to know the truth and only the truth, and I have a Berean spirit. Therefore, my response, when challenged, is to prayerfully examine and re-examine the text and context of scripture until the truth is confirmed both in my heart and my mind.

At times that which I already believed is confirmed, but at other times a revelation of truth takes the place of error.

This testing of our faith in receiving truth is described by Paul as warfare:

*For though we walk (live) in the flesh, we are not carrying on our warfare according to the flesh and using mere human weapons. For the weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood], but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of **strongholds**... (the fortresses of unbelief and religious traditions devoid of revelation described as)... **refute arguments and theories and reasonings and every proud and lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One)**... 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 Amplified
(insert and emphasis are the author's)*

Yet, I am aware that there is still much of His truth, promises, and commands that I am either unaware of or have not responded to in obedience.

But when He confronts me with His truth and asks me, ***Does this offend you? Are you going to turn away, too?***, I will respond as Peter responded. "No, Lord, to whom would I go? You have the words of eternal life."