

2-3-19 Message
THREE AREAS EVERY CHRISTIAN WILL BE TESTED IN

Matthew 13:2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

Matthew 13:3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

Matthew 13:4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

Matthew 13:5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

Matthew 13:6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

Matthew 13:7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

Matthew 13:8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

Matthew 13:9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 13:18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

Matthew 13:20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

Matthew 13:21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

Matthew 13:22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Matthew 13:23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Intro: One of the most discouraging things that we face in Christian work is the spiritual wash outs that abound. It takes character to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. The word Disciple itself means to be a student (literally from dis- "apart" (see [dis-](#)) + capere "to take, take hold of," from PIE root [*kap-](#) "to grasp.")

*The Root and Meanings of **Discipline**. **Discipline** comes from *discipulus*, the Latin word for pupil, which also provided the source of the word **disciple** (albeit by way of a Late Latin sense-shift to "a follower of Jesus Christ in his lifetime").*

The idea of being a disciple has the concept of being under discipline or rigorous study. Raymond Edmond wrote in his book called the discipline of discipleship:

Discipleship means "discipline!" The disciple is that one who has been taught or trained by the Master, who has come with his ignorance, superstition, and sin, to find learning, truth, and forgiveness from the Saviour. Without discipline we are not disciples,

It takes character to stay faithful to the Lord.

It takes character to finish your course for the Lord.

It takes discipline to endure.

It is hard to find people who stick to things even in the world. Let alone to stay faithful to the Lord. Character is not something that just comes automatic when you get saved.

I remember when I was a freshman in music school. There were about 100 freshmen in my class and the head of the music department got up and said point blank that there will only be about 10 of you that will graduate in this program. I looked around and saw over 100 students in that orientation class. And sure enough when I graduated, there were only about 10 of us that were getting diplomas that year.

The truth is that we are involved in so much more of a program than a college program. We are in an eternal life program. It is sad to say there are all too many wash outs for the Lord.

When Jesus chose the 12 Apostles they were with him continually. It was not just a small Bible diploma they received, they went everywhere with Christ and received intensive training and teaching. But even with all that training, 1 of the 12 washed out spiritually. Judas was called the son of perdition. It was during Judas' betrayal of our Lord that the twelve went through the deepest trial of their faith and in fact Jesus said that during that time Satan would seek to sift the disciples like wheat.

So it is that we too will be tried in our Christian faith. If it is not so than the Bible is not true.

If we are truly serving the Lord Jesus Christ and are true disciples, then what the Bible says about trials and problems will take place.

THERE IS THIS PROMISE:

II Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

I Peter 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

I Peter 4:16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

I Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

I Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

I Peter 5:9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

I Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

NOTE THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES CONCERNING SUFFERING:

1. No human being can avoid suffering, suffering is the result of sin.

If we try to avoid suffering, then we ultimately, will pay later and will suffer anyway.

The rich man in Luke 16 chose a life of unrighteousness and avoided making any sacrifices that would inconvenience him and cause suffering on his part.

Luke 16:25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

It is better to suffer and sacrifice willingly and enjoy the blessings of God for choosing to suffer to do right, or you can compromise for the present, choose the way of sin, and you will suffer far more in the future.

Judgment must begin with the house of God. Suffering starts with God's people.

2. Every person that washes out spiritually does so because they are not willing to suffer to do what is right, or when they do what is right instead of being rewarded they suffer for it and then they become offended and say, what is the use, it is not profitable to serve God.

Without exception this is the reason that people do not endure in their Christian walk.

So Job could have said, I have served God and look what it has gotten me.

Job:	Could have said this.
Moses:	Could have said this.
Disciples:	Could have said it also.

We are conditioned to think and believe that when we do right we will be rewarded and when we do wrong we are punished.

Every child is taught this in school, there is a reward and punishment system.

However, the greatest test of a disciple in the area of faith is to see if he will do right even if he has to suffer for doing it. **THOUGH ULTIMATELY HE WILL BE REWARDED! BUT ONLY AFTER HE HAS SUFFERED A SHORT TIME.** The rewards may not even come in this life. God uses a modified reward and punishment system but it is based off of faith and not this life only.

III. EVERY CHRISTIAN WILL BE TESTED IN THE AREA OF SUFFERING AS THEY STEP OUT IN FAITH AND TRY TO SERVE GOD WITH GREATER ZEAL AND VIGOR:

II Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

The persecution comes in many different forms.

In the message I am going to share the three areas in which every Christian will have to face suffering if they are going to step out and try to be a true disciple of Christ. Jesus gives the three areas of suffering in the parable of the sower and the seed. In the parable 3 out of 4 who profess faith in Christ are unfruitful and barren. The reason why is that they could not endure the

suffering that was thrown out at them. If you are going to be fruitful you need to endure these things.

I remember when I got saved in 1974. The engine in my van was blown, I was stuck in my brothers apartment. I quit my job at the bar and was pretty much without transportation without a job. When I got saved I called Peter Accardi and told him the same thing that happened to him happened to me. When he came home for Thanksgiving and Christmas break he gave me a Bible for a Christmas gift. I think after I got that Bible I read it through in about a month. After reading the Bible through I was convinced that I was probably going to have to deal with some severe persecution. You read about it from the story of Cain and Abel, to Job, to the Prophets, and then in the New Testament it just doesn't let up. I resolved that I was going to have to suffer big time to be a Christian. In fact, my dad found out I got saved and came into my brothers apartment where I was staying and took my Bible. When I looked for it and couldn't find it I asked my dad if he took it and he said he did and said he burned it. When I went into his house to see, I found it on his bedroom dresser and I just took it back.

Truth is stuff like that was the worst suffering I had. I had my whole family pounce on me at a dinner one time. After they yelled and screamed at me for leaving the Catholic Church and becoming "A Holy Roller", they got it out of their system and everybody sat down and ate Grandma's spaghetti and meatballs and all was forgotten. Truth be told, we do not suffer in this great country like so many other great saints had to suffer before us.

This whole nation was founded on sects of persecuted Christians from all over the world.

But mark it down, EVERY Christian will be tested.

THERE WILL BE THREE AREAS OF SPIRITUAL TESTING:

I. EVERY CHRISTIAN WILL BE TESTED IN THE AREA OF DOUBT AND IN THE AREA OF UNDERSTANDING AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

Matthew 13:18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower..

Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

I want you to note that the greatest obstacle that anyone faces in the realm of spiritual battles is in the realm of the mind.

The hardest part of our being to discipline is the mind.

The hardest part of our being to control is our thought life.

Doubt stands in opposition to faith:

How sure are we that this is the Word of God and is to be followed no matter what?

How sure are we that God's word is without error and if there is a lack it is in us and not the word of God and the doctrine of Christ?

1. Testimony: I was tried in the area of offences:

I went to Bible College in the summer of 1976. It was a bit of adjustment for me that first year. I started school late August early September, then I got a call Oct 20th that my father had a stroke and went into a coma. He was unconscious for 3 1/2 weeks. During that time we fervently were praying for his salvation. Then Sat.. Nov 13th I got the news that he had passed away.

I have to admit, I really didn't understand what God was doing.
And yes I had to admit I was a bit offended things did not work the way I thought they should.

After all the funeral arrangements, and the dust settled I went back to our little trailer and sat at the kitchen table and prayed. I asked the Lord to help me understand what I was to do. Then I just flipped my Bible and opened it up to the gospel of John Chapter 6:

John 6:66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

John 6:67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

John 6:68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

John 6:69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

John 6:70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

John 6:71 He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

John 7:1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

If in the course of this life when something happens that we cannot understand can we not give God the benefit of our doubts and say that our love for him will transcend these doubts?

Is there anything in this book or the teaching of Christ that should offend us?

Why is it that when God's preacher is preaching from this blessed book people get offended?

Psalms 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

It was then that I sat down and wrote the Scripture Chorus we sang this morning. "TO WHOM SHALL WE GO.."

2. *There are many things in the Christian's life that may perplex our minds and bewilder us but these are but the fiery darts of the enemy.*

I don't understand why people will put up with false teaching and doctrine and will not endure sound doctrine:

This perplexed Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 5:30 A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land;

Jeremiah 5:31 The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

Jeremiah thought of quitting:

Jeremiah 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

Sometimes God will allow us to experience things in this life that just perplex and baffle our minds. NO ANSWER. NO EXPLANATION. Just plain old offensive to our souls and life! Mark it down, this will be one test that you must face in this life as you travel through your pilgrimage from here to eternity with Jesus.

What was the difference between the multitudes that were offended and went away from following Jesus, and Peter and the other Apostles who stayed with our Lord? The difference was they really had saving faith in our Lord while the others had nothing!

II. THE SECOND AREA EVERY CHRISTIAN WILL BE TESTED THROUGH IS THE AREA OF TRIBULATION AND PERSECUTION.

Matthew 13:20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

Matthew 13:21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

Notice this tribulation and persecution comes BECAUSE OF THE WORD.

When we take a stand on the Word of God it is then that we will suffer persecution and tribulation.

IN THIS WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TRIBULATION:

1. TRIBULATION:

Circumstances will at times come upon us and we may wonder at times what is happening, but remember that Satan can bring tribulation into our lives. Job had tribulation.

Death in the family.

Loss of assets.

Loss of goods.

Loss of health.

2. Persecution:

The devil somehow has the ability to stir up people to be our enemies.

Consider Paul the apostle.

Consider Job, enough that he loss everything. The devil made his three friends accuse him.

Self first saved; relatives in Hazelton ganged up on me, and read me the riot act, called me a holy roller, literally yelled at me for what seemed an eternity. Cursed at me, swore at me, threatened me, threatened to disown me. My grandfather actually had my brother and I on his will to inherit his house but after I got saved he took my name off the will.

Did not Paul say, Philippians 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

Dear friends got upset at me and cussed me out.
One family member was drunk and slapped me in the face when I witnessed to him.

III. THE THIRD AREA EVERY CHRISTIAN WILL BE TESTED IN IS THE AREA OF CARES AND RICHES OF THIS WORLD.

Matthew 13:22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Mark 4:19 adds: and the lusts of other things choke the word.

NOTE WHAT THE CARE OF THIS WORLD IS:

What is the care of this world?

Mark 4:19 And the **cares** of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

NOTICE IT SAYS THE CARES OF THIS WORLD AND THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES CHOKES THE WORD:

There is not a Christian that cannot have more in this world if they would not just back off of their Christian convictions and standards. As Christians we need to prioritize our lives - in the area of spiritual things.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God the Bible says.

1. Priority #1 Assembling ourselves together.

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

What is the business of God?

Grocery store man does business in the store.

Mechanic does his business at the garage.

The doctor has his clinic.

GOD'S PEOPLE MEET AT THE CHURCH. It is where we do God's business with God.

Business involves dealing with the Word of God, Prayer, & Worship of God.

If you have a business in the world you actually have two businesses. One is the church, the other is what you do to make money. Paul did that. He made tents and he preached. I do that, I work on pianos and I pastor a Church. But God's business is the most important business. I get a lot of my suppliers get upset at me that I do not do more business with them. That is going to happen but I am not going to let the cares and riches of this world choke out my fruitfulness for the Lord.

2. We should prioritize our finances:

God's tithe should come first. The first check I write out each week is my tithe and offering to the Lord. It is the first fruits of my finances.

3. Prioritize our Personal Devotional Life & family Devotional life;

Family devotions and prayer should be a regular activity. One of the things I miss the most about not having children anymore in the home is the regular family devotions we used to have. If you have children in your home do you have regular devotions with them? You should.

4. Pray for a Job that would give you liberty to take care of these priorities.

I work so I may be free to serve without hinderance.

Can't understand people that have talents but won't invest them in the Lord's work.

I often see a Church filled with contractors and plaster falling off the church ceiling. People with New Cars but have no burden for seeing the church get a a new vehicle.

Before I built my house I waited for two things: Church renovated and the church mortgage paid off.

God's work must come first.

CONCLUSION:

Some would say oh preacher, I am not going to step out and get too spiritual. I don't know if I can handle these things.

WAIT, remember Jesus said:

Luke 14:27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Luke 14:29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

Luke 14:30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Remember, Jesus went to the cross to purchase to himself a people:

II Corinthians 5:14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

II Corinthians 5:15 And that he **died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them**, and rose again.

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus suffered once on the cross for the the sins of the world.
Jesus does not need to be offered up again and again.
Our suffering is not perpetual. If that were the case I would not serve God.

We have the promise that after we have suffered a short while we will reap.

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

I Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.