

How Passing Your Tests Leads to Promotion

Do you feel like you're going through a time of testing in your life? Are you struggling with a situation you're tempted to just avoid, ignore or run away from because it's too hard to face head-on and overcome?

We all go through hard times and have to make the choice to either trust God to help us deal with them and get through them or give up and give in to them. But if we give up, we won't experience God's best for us. We won't get promoted in any area of life.

Prerequisite for the Test

God only knows what it took to get me from where I started to where I am today. It was hard to come out of the mess I came out of, being abused for so many years, and to let God change my attitudes and teach me all the things I try to teach people from God's Word. Trust me, everything took longer than I thought it would—and it was a lot harder than I ever thought it would be.

I went through so many things that, looking back now, I think, *How in the world did I do that and get through it all?* But I can tell you that I am grateful for every single thing I went through, because in the process I learned so many things that developed my character and prepared me to be a leader in ministry today. And the truth is, if I had never learned those lessons, I would not be—nor should I be—in the position that I'm in today.

I clearly recall the day God spoke to my heart and said, "Joyce, I always want you to remember this: However many people I let you help, that's as many people as you can hurt." I had zero business being in a position of leadership until I

passed my tests, became rooted in my relationship with Christ and developed the character needed to keep me there.

Whenever I see a young person quickly promoted to a key position of leadership, it concerns me, because if you don't have the character to go with the kind of attention that comes with leadership, all you're going to do is create a mess. You see, God promotes us after we pass our tests—not when we run away from them, ignore them or avoid them.

God is faithful to help us do what we need to do to pass our tests when we keep our eyes on Him and trust Him. And just as He's faithful to us, we need to be faithful too.

Who's Fit for a Promotion?

In 1 Timothy 3:10, the apostle Paul tells Timothy how to determine who is fit to be a leader: "Let them also be tried and investigated and proved first; then, if they turn out to be above reproach, let them serve" (AMP). You build trust in someone when you see how they respond to different situations over time and are tried through various circumstances.

The truth is, the only way you're really going to know what you will do is to go through some things and be faithful. Stick with things, don't give up and run away, and don't blame everyone else for your problems.

Faithful men and women of God humble themselves under the mighty hand of God and trust Him to promote them when He knows they are ready for it (1 Pet. 5:6).

Now, that sounds really spiritual, so I want to make it practical: You're going to be under some human authority that you probably don't think always treats you right and that you probably don't always agree with. And God is going to ask you to serve faithfully in that position with a good attitude even when you're told no and you disagree.

But Proverbs 28:20 says, “A faithful man shall abound with blessings.” It’s important for us to be excellent and to do the best we can in every area of our lives so we can “abound with blessings” from God.

So be faithful during your tests, right where you are. If you will do what God is telling you to do—faithfully—then there’s no person on earth and no devil in hell that can keep you from the destiny He has planned for your life. God will promote you when you pass your test!

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