

Joyce Meyer: The Answer Key to Pass Your Tests in Life

Have you ever prayed for patience, and then you experienced a difficult time or a challenge? Or maybe you asked God to help you be more loving and encountered more people who are hard to love? A lot of times we pray for a promotion, or something better in life, without realizing we're actually asking for a test.

James 1:12 (NIV) says, "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

I've learned through my own journey in life that you can't have a testimony of God's goodness and fulfill your God-given potential without first having a test. Being abused by my father for so many years was very painful and difficult, but God has redeemed my pain. Now He's using it for His greater good, and I want to encourage you that if you let Him, He will do the same for you.

Emmanuel, God With Us

In our tough times, it's easy to feel like we've been abandoned. But it's important to remember that one of the many names of God, Emmanuel, literally means "God with us."

When going through a test, I often turn to Psalm 139:7-8 (NIV) for comfort. It says, "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there."

God is always with us—everywhere we are, at all times. And He will never leave us, nor forsake us (see Deut. 31:6). God doesn't promise to instantly deliver us from everything when

we want to be delivered from it, but He does promise to be with us in it.

If you're hurting right now—if you've lost a loved one, if you've lost your job, if you're struggling financially, if you're heartbroken over a breakup, if you're sick and experiencing physical pain—no matter what you're going through, God understands. God knows right where you are, and He feels everything that you feel.

The God of Redemption

When we're going through a test, it's easy to forget we have a Savior who took on human form. He suffered the same trials and temptations that we face, and He understands what you're going through today.

While He doesn't promise to take away all of your problems, if you invite Him into your life, He will redeem them and do something good through them. In fact, God takes what the world would throw away and turns it into something beautiful. He promises to give us His "beauty instead of ashes ... joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair" (Isa. 61:3, NIV).

Matthew 19:26 says that God is able to redeem any difficult situation, including yours.

The Purpose in Your Times of Testing

Tests are good because they bring out our weaknesses and show us where we need to improve. And we can only be prepared to move on to better things after we've passed them.

When God spoke to me more than 40 years ago and said, "You're going to go all over the world and teach My Word," I thought for sure I'd be on my way the next day. But there were many years when God had to work in my life, preparing me for that ministry through a variety of tests before it could come to

pass.

If you're going through a test, ask God to help you persevere, do what's right and continue to trust that it's leading you to something better for your life. You can be sure God will use you, whatever your situation may be.

Tests Increase Your Faith

James 1:2-3 says, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance."

God is faithful, and the more experience you have with Him, little by little, the more you learn to trust Him. So each time you pass a test, your faith gets a little bit stronger.

I remember when God spoke to my heart and said, "Joyce, I always want you to remember this: However many people I let you help, that's how many people you can hurt." In that moment, I realized I had no business being in a position of leadership until I passed my tests, grew in my relationship with Jesus and developed the character to love others the way God loves me.

I want to encourage you today to allow the tests in your life to do the same thing for you. You may be hurting right now, but God is working for your good—and He is with you every step of the way. {eoa}

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