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1-13-2025

## GROWTH THROUGH TESTS

We all have had days when we just did not get anything to work right. It seems like it starts when we get out of bed and continues on until the day is over. These days are test days my friends. Anytime we ask God to change us or to make us more like him, the tests will come. This is how we grow.

When these things happen how we react determines whether we pass the test or not. You might say “they made me so angry,” but in essence, you chose to get angry. You might say “everything I do is wrong,” but in reality, you do a lot of things that are right. It isn’t the big things that prove where we are on our walk with God. It is the little things we react to. It is so easy to fall into Satan’s traps that he sets.

We often find that we have a lot more flesh that needs to die than any of us thought we had. Crucifying our flesh daily does not mean that we actually kill ourselves, it means that we choose to put the flesh under the control of our spirit. It takes practice, but it can be accomplished.

James 1:19 says, **“Wherefore, my brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”** As we practice these three things, we quickly learn what needs to change.

Every person that wants a more intimate walk with God will go through the pruning process. We need to prune what we speak, what we hear, and our reaction in anger. If we don’t prune these areas, you can be sure God will!

When something no longer bothers you, then you know that you have passed the test. Does it happen overnight? I wish! No, it does not. Just like growing from an infant to an adult takes a long time, so does our maturing with God take time. If you fail, you get to take the test again until you have learned it.

It is an awesome thing to know that God never gives up on us. He is very patient. Our goal is to be fruitful in our walk. Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Gentleness, Kindness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance are the results of putting the flesh under the control of our spirit. When you struggle, you are not alone, but God will help you if you are truly willing to want to change.

Remember, it does not happen overnight for us, so we must be willing to give others some slack (grace- undeserved favor) also on their walk with God. If you have failed the test and fallen and skinned your spiritual knees, God will clean you up if you let him. He gives us new mercies every morning. (Lamentations 3:22-23.) He is faithful to help us!