

## FIVE TESTS WE MUST PASS TO BE A FRUITFUL DISCIPLE - PART 2

LOF4

TO SUMMARISE THE PART 1 -

Ps Roy covered the first 3 tests (out of the 5) that we must pass to be a Fruitful Disciple.

TODAY WE'RE GOING TO COVER THE REST OF THIS: [5 TESTS YOU MUST PASS FOR YOU TO BE FRUITFUL IN YOUR LIFE.](#)

### TEST #1 - PROBLEMS / TRIBULATION TEST.

"The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have **problems.**"

THE FIRST TEST THE ENEMY TEST YOU WITH IS CALLED **PROBLEM / TRIBULATION TEST.**

WHEN PROBLEM, PRESSURE COMES....DO WE SAY "**WHY ME**" STRAIGHTAWAY?  
WE NEED TO GET RID OF THE "**QUIT SPIRIT**" WITHIN US.

LIKE THE BIBLE IN HEBREWS SAYS....

- **WE ARE NOT THOSE WHO DRAW BACK!!**  
BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT WE NEED TO PRODUCE ENDURANCE...  
SO THAT AFTER WE HAVE DONE THE WILL OF GOD.... WE WILL RECEIVE THE PROMISE!!
- THERE IS NO QUIT SPIRIT IN **MY FAMILY!**
- THERE IS NO QUIT SPIRIT IN **MY BUSINESS!**
- THERE IS NO QUIT SPIRIT IN **MY MINISTRY!**
- THERE IS NO QUIT SPIRIT IN **MY MARRIAGE!**

THE WORD SAYS, THERE IS **GREAT REWARD** BEHIND THIS TRIBULATION.

### TEST #2 - THE OFFENSE TEST

THE SECOND TEST THAT THE ENEMY ALWAYS SEND TO EVERY DISCIPLES OVER AND OVER AGAIN IS..... **THE OFFENSE TEST.**

THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST POTENT DECEITFUL TACTICS OF THE ENEMY.

- *ARE WE GOING TO LET OFFENCE TAKE US OUT FROM THE CALLING OF GOD?*
- *ARE WE GOING TO LET OFFENCE / PERSECUTION THROUGH PEOPLE ROB OF OUR GREATER CALLING?*

A MATURE DISCIPLE KNOWS HOW TO **DISCERN** OR "**LOOK BEYOND**" AN OFFENSE.

- THAT THE TRUE ENEMY IS **NOT** THE PERSON OFFENDING OR HURTING US..... BUT THE DARK SPIRIT BEHIND IT.
- THAT THE GOAL IS SO MUCH BIGGER THAN JUST DRIVING US OUT FROM CHURCH, OR CONNECT GROUP, OR MINISTRY..... BUT TO DERAIL US FROM GOD'S PURPOSE AND CALLING IN OUR LIFE.

### TEST #3 - THE LURE OF WEALTH TEST

**THE LURE OF WEALTH** - IT MIGHT NOT BE STRONG ENOUGH TO DESTROY THE CALLING OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE, BUT IT'S STRONG ENOUGH TO DISTRACT YOU FROM IT.

HERE'S THE TEST,

**IF WE'RE NEVER HAPPY WITH WHAT WE HAVE NOW, WE WILL NEVER BE HAPPY WITH MORE.....**

- *IT WILL DRIVE US OUT OF GOD'S CALLING / COMMANDMENT FROM US.*
- *WE WILL REPLACE GOD WITH MORE JOB & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.*
- *WE WILL LEAVE SUNDAY CHURCH FOR A DOUBLE-PAY JOB.*

OUR PRIORITIES REVEAL WHO'S OUR LORD --- WHETHER TRULY GOD IS OUR LORD, OR MAMMON IS.

**MATTHEW 6:21 "FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE YOUR HEART WILL BE ALSO."**

AND WE CANNOT SERVE BOTH GOD AND RICHES (MAMMON) - **NOONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS.**

- GOD IS NOT TESTING US BY HAVING TO BE POOR, LACK IN ANYTHING....
- HE WANTS US TO BE BLESSED.  
HE'S ADDRESSING OUR HEART.

### Mark 4:16-20

These likewise are the ones sown on **stony ground** who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when **tribulation** or **persecution** arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

Now these are the ones sown among **thorns**; they are the ones who hear the word, and **the cares of this world, the lure of wealth, and the desires for other things** entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

## TEST #4 - THE CARES OF THIS WORLD TEST

THE GREAT EXTRACTORS.

THIS TEST IS DESIGNED TO DIVIDE AND BIND THE MIND.... THROUGH:  
**DISTRACTION, ANXIETIES, BURDENS, WORRIES.**

1 PETER 5:6-8 (NKJV)

6 THEREFORE HUMBLE YOURSELVES UNDER THE MIGHTY HAND OF GOD, THAT HE MAY EXALT YOU IN DUE TIME, 7 CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM, FOR HE CARES FOR YOU.

8 BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT; BECAUSE YOUR ADVERSARY THE DEVIL WALKS ABOUT LIKE A ROARING LION, SEEKING WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR.

Throughout the history, Christians have to fight through "Divided Minds" and often found to have **WAVERED** between two extremes:

- **COMPROMISING WITH THE CULTURE**
- **Or REMOVING THEMSELVES FROM IT (ISOLATION)**

Neither extreme is healthy.

*Either we become unfruitful Christian (constantly compromising or playing with fire), Or we become "weird", irrelevant Christian who does not relate to the world --- but after all, we live in this world, and we are 'sent' into the world to be the light.*

To be a EFFECTIVE OR FRUITFUL DISCIPLE OF JESUS.....

We need to pass this 4th test of **CARES OF THIS WORLD**

That we are not being so ingrained in the "CULTURE" that we are Unproductive for Christ.

The Bible is clear...

**OUR LIFESTYLE SHOULD REFLECT GOD'S HEART RATHER THAN THE WORLD'S INFLUENCE.**

THE WORLD WILL KNOW THAT WE ARE CHRISTIANS BY **OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER**, AND BY OUR **OBEDIENCE**..... NOT BY HOW WELL WE IMITATE THE WORLD AROUND US.

OSWALD CHAMBERS once noted that **A SINNER...WHO IS NOW SAVED BY GRACE, "PROVES HE IS FORGIVEN BY BEING THE OPPOSITE OF WHO HE WAS"**

HE NO LONGER RESEMBLES THE SINFUL WORLD THAT USED TO SWAY HIS HEART.

**DO WE CHOOSE TO STAND APART, OR DO WE CHOOSE THE BLEND IN WITH THE WORLD??**

CARNAL OR FLESHLY CHRISTIANS GIVE GOD "HIS DUE"..... A FEW HOURS ON SUNDAY.....THAT'S IT.... I'M BEING A CHRISTIAN / BELIEVER, I'VE DONE MY FAIR SHARE OF DUTY....

BUT THEY FORGET GOD'S CALLING TO "COME OUT FROM AMONG THE WORLD AND BE SEPARATE?"

## IS THE WORLD INFLUENCING YOU? OR YOU ARE INFLUENCING THE WORLD LIKE GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO?

Here's how we evaluate ourselves....

- *What does our mental media diet consist of?*
- *Who do you follow in your social media, who do you find so-called inspiration from?*
- *Who do you hang out with?*
- *What, and who do you listen to?*
- *Is your heart set toward the things of God or the world's influence?*

A quick summary of your LIKES and POSTS on INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK (Social Media platforms) will reveal a great deal on this.

**Does our speech, our action, our social media posts..... reflect more of the fruits of the HOLLYWOOD, or the Fruits of the HOLY SPIRIT? =)**

**Do we choose friends who complement our worldly lifestyle..... rather than friends who challenge us to live for God.**

### Walking in the Spirit

<sup>16</sup> I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

<sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: <sup>19</sup>adultery, <sup>19</sup>fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup>envy, <sup>19</sup>murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

The things of the world are exciting, and the things of God are dull?

Let's be clear here: **THE CARES OF THIS WORLD WILL DRAW YOU AND ME AWAY FROM OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IF WE ALLOW THEM TO.**

## 1 CORINTHIANS 7:34-35 (NKJV)

<sup>34</sup> THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WIFE AND A VIRGIN. THE UNMARRIED WOMAN CARES ABOUT THE THINGS OF THE LORD, THAT SHE MAY BE HOLY BOTH IN BODY AND IN SPIRIT. BUT SHE WHO IS MARRIED CARES ABOUT THE THINGS OF THE WORLD— HOW SHE MAY PLEASE *HER* HUSBAND. <sup>35</sup> AND THIS I SAY FOR YOUR OWN PROFIT, NOT THAT I MAY PUT A LEASH ON YOU, BUT FOR WHAT IS PROPER, AND THAT YOU MAY SERVE THE LORD WITHOUT DISTRACTION.

We cannot be fruitful.....when we still care about the things of the World, more than the things of the Lord.

**“That you may serve the Lord without distraction”** ---- we cannot do that while we’re trying to please the World at the same time trying to please God!

When Jesus said that we are **“THE SALT AND LIGHT OF THE EARTH”** ....

- He was saying that we should have a **PRESERVING AND CLEANSING EFFECT** ON THE CULTURE...
- We should bring a **PURIFYING ASPECT** to all areas of life.
- **LIGHT DISPELS DARKNESS**; It Does Not Cater Or Adjust To It.

LEARN TO **BRING OUR BURDENS TO THE LORD** --- NOT TRYING TO FIND ANSWERS / SOLUTIONS FROM CHASING THE THINGS OF THE WORLD.

LEARN TO **CAST OUR CARES, OUR WORRIES TO JESUS** --- BECAUSE HE CARES FOR YOU!

AS YOU CHOOSE **PURSUING THE THINGS OF GOD**, OVER THE THINGS OF THE WORLD.....

- *YOU WILL BE SERVING GOD WITHOUT DISTRACTION!*
- *YOU WILL LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST OF GOD’S PURPOSE*
- *YOU WILL EXPERIENCE BLESSINGS!*
- *BLESSED MIND, BLESSED SOUL, BLESSED LIFE.*

AND ALL THE THINGS THE WORLD CHASE SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU AS YOU PUT GOD FIRST!

## TEST #5 - THE LUST (FOR OTHER THINGS) TEST

### OVERCOMING THE WRONG DESIRES

DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD.

PAUL SAID IN **1 COR 9:27** : **I’D BEAT MY BODY AND MAKE IT MY SLAVE SO THAT I MYSELF WILL NOT BE DISQUALIFIED.**

The Greek word for **LUST** is TO HAVE A **GREAT DESIRE** FOR SOMETHING.

The Desire becomes all consuming.

Being consumed with anything takes time away from the Word and causes it to be choked out of your life.

Your time gets spent chasing stuff instead of searching the Word.

## TWO KINDS OF LUST

- It's okay to be passionately consumed with certain areas.
- There is a 'lust' which is godly and one which is ungodly.

What was Jesus consumed with for example?

**JOHN 2:17 (NIV)**

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

**Jesus was consumed with the will of God for His life.**

**John 4:34 (NIV)**

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

**He was about His Father's business from an early age.**

**Luke 2:49 (NKKV)**

49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

**Jesus carried this desire for the will of God right up to the very end of His life.**

This is desire or 'lust' placed in the right area.

The word LUST itself is positive or negative based on context.

- We often only think of the word lust in its negative form.
- Mostly in the negative context, lust is viewed as sexual.

The Greek word for 'desire' (in [Luke 22:15](#)) is the same Greek word for the 'lust' of other things (in [Mark 4:19](#).)

In one place, the word for lust is positive, in the other its negative.

## THE LUST WHICH SIDETRACKS AND CAUSES FRUIT TO NOT GROW IN YOUR LIFE, IS ZEAL GONE WRONG.

But here's the differentiating point.

The lust which pulls you off, sidetracks you, and causes fruit to NOT grow in your life... is misplaced desire or zeal gone wrong.

**Galatians 4:18 (NKJV)**

18 But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.

The point is you can 'lust' in a good sense which will bring forth fruit in your life. And you can 'lust' in a negative sense which will choke off the Word in your life.

If you read through **PSALM 119**.  
**DAVID 'lust' for the Word of God!**

#### **PSALM 119:20**

20 My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.

#### **PSALM 119:33-37**

33 Teach me, Lord, the way of your decrees, that I may follow it to the end.

34 Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

35 Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.

36 Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.

37 Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.

**VAIN THINGS** would include the **negative form of 'the lust of other things.'**

- David asks the Lord to turn his eyes away from these vain things.
- All throughout this 119th Psalm David expresses **his desire or 'lust' for God's Word.**

David is a good example of a man who had wealth yet had his priorities in order and his life produced rich fruit for God.

#### **Psalm 119:46–48 (KJV)**

46 I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, And will not be ashamed. 47 And I will delight myself in thy commandments, Which I have loved. 48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; And I will meditate in thy statutes.

#### **Psalm 119:72 (KJV)**

72 The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

#### **Psalm 119:97–98 (KJV)**

97 O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day. 98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: For they are ever with me.

#### **Psalm 119:148 (TNIV)**

148 My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.

#### **PSALM 119: 165**

Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.

### **THE OVERCROWDING PROBLEM.**

#### **MARK 4:19**

And the cares of this world, and the lure of wealth, and the lusts of other things **entering in**, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

YOUR HEART IS THE PLACE WHERE THE WORD ABIDES.

IT IS THE PROPER ENVIRONMENT FOR THE WORD OF GOD TO GROW.

THE STATE OF YOUR HEART IS THE SOIL THAT WILL DETERMINE WHETHER THE WORD WILL HAVE ANY CHANCE TO GROW, TO BE FRUITFUL.

We study, we meditate and seek to understand God's Word so it can become rooted in our heart.

But the overall problem with the three thorns that we have discussed:

**THE CARES OF THIS WORLD, THE LURE OF WEALTH, and THE LUST OF OTHER THINGS IS THAT THEY CAUSE AN OVERLOAD IN YOUR HEART.**

THE SEED OF THE WORD COMES IN AND STARTS TO GROW .....

- BUT IT "IS CHOKED" OR SMOTHERED IN THE DEADLY COMPETITION WITH SOME OR THE OTHERS OF THESE THORNY GROWTHS.
- THE RESULT IS THAT THE SEED OF THE WORD BECOMES "UNFRUITFUL" IN THE SENSE OF BEING UNABLE TO PRODUCE FRUIT.

THE FAULT IS AGAIN NOT WITH THE GOOD SEED BUT WITH THE SOIL.

THE PROBLEM IS NOT 'ONLY' WHAT WE FEED INTO OUR SPIRIT.  
BUT WHETHER WE HAVE SPACE FOR THE SEED TO GROW.

- ALL THOSE **THORNS** ARE REFERRING TO **THE OVERCROWDING PROBLEM.**
- TOO MANY THINGS THAT DISTRACT OUR LIFE, AND CHOKE US UP..... TAKING UP SPACE IN OUR HEART..... THAT WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH ROOM FOR THE WORD OF GOD TO GROW!!

THAT'S WHY WE MUST BE CONSTANTLY ON GUARD FOR THESE AREAS....

SO WE CAN PROTECT THE GROUND WHICH BRINGS FORTH FRUIT UNTO GOD!!

**WE NEED TO FIGHT THROUGH THIS OVERCROWDING PROBLEM**

**PREOCCUPATION PROBLEM**

- *Preoccupied with WORRIES, MONEY, PLEASURES, AMBITION....*
- *Preoccupied with OTHER THINGS, other than GOD.*

MATTHEW 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

- The secret is getting first things first and keeping it that way.
- The secret is simplifying your life so you don't have so much preoccupation with things.

**THREE TYPES OF GROUND = THREE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT**

The three types of ground can also represent stages of development in a believer's life.

**The first stage is WAYSIDE GROUND.**

- This is the understanding stage.



- A believer first has to come to a personal understanding of the Word of God.
- You can't apply what you don't understand.
- So the Word tries to come in, but was stolen straightaway!

### The second stage is STONY GROUND .

- It has a hardening effect.
- This is the **TRIBULATION and or PERSECUTION / OFFENSE stage.**
- Here the enemy comes against the believer with tests and trials trying to dislodge the Word you have come to understand.
- The attempt is to try and make the Word unreal in your life.

### The third stage is THORNY GROUND.

- It has a choking effect --- we become overcrowded
- The Word of God got choked / overcrowded with **CARES OF THIS WORLD, LURE OF WEALTH, AND LUST FOR OTHER THINGS.**
- Choking the Word means that the Word has grown and developed some roots, but other things are allowed to grow alongside it.
- They all fight for the sun, the spotlight.
- These thorns overshadow the Word and the Word eventually dies off.
- This is the personal stage where every disciple has to control himself and his urges.
- He has to bring his own flesh in line with God's Spirit.

First, we must **APPLY YOURSELF TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD.**

Second, we must **OVERCOME THE ENEMY WITH THE WORD.**

Third, we must **OVERCOME YOURSELF FOR THE WORD.**

Then we shall see fruits and multiplication in our lives.

CHURCH....

WHEN WE LEARN TO HAVE **THESE 5 THINGS CONQUERED.....**

IT WILL BE THE MOST **PROSPEROUS** LIFE, THE MOST **FRUITFUL** LIFE YOU HAVE, IN YOUR FAMILY, IN YOUR BUSINESS, IN YOUR MINISTRY.....

**BECAUSE WHAT'S IN YOU, WILL COME OUT OF YOU.**

YOU GUARDED YOUR HEART, AND OUT OF IT FLOWS THE ISSUES OF YOUR LIFE.

THE ENEMY TRIED TO STEAL THE WORD TO MAKE ME UNFRUITFUL.

- BUT WE RECOGNISE IT, WE SEE IT, AND WE CHOOSE TO FOCUS ON THESE AREAS AND WORK TO HAVE A GOOD SOIL.....
- WE WILL BE FRUITFUL!

COME ON RECEIVE IT!

30-60-100 FOLD IN EVERY AREA OF MY LIFE, I WILL MULTIPLY!

## **DISCUSSION GUIDELINE**

### **FIVE TESTS WE MUST PASS TO BE A FRUITFUL DISCIPLE:**

**TEST #1 - THE PROBLEM / TRIBULATION TEST.**

**TEST #2 - THE PERSECUTION / OFFENSE TEST**

**TEST #3 - THE LURE OF WEALTH TEST**

**TEST #4 - THE CARES OF THIS WORLD TEST**

**TEST #5 - THE LUST (FOR OTHER THINGS) TEST**

- Which is the stage / test where we are still tempted and struggling with?
- How are we going to intentionally & practically overcome and pursue victory in this area?
- Also share any experience, stories of how you have overcome any of these 5 stages of test to encourage and empower one another.