



Dgroup Discussion Guide for August 14, 2016

Pass or Fail

What is worse: test or temptation? That is a trick question, as the two actually come from the same word: *peirasmós*. Both are functions of the context: it is a test when used with a positive connotation, and a temptation otherwise. Tests are a solicitation to righteousness that are meant to draw us to God, while temptations are a solicitation to sin that tend to bring us away from God.

Many of us do not like tests; after all, while we get a 50% chance of success, it also means a 50% chance of failure. Unfortunately for us, they are inevitable. God does not promise that He will not have tests in life, but He does promise that He will see us through it. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:13, ***No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.***

Once you begin to internalize and process a thought that is given as a test, it becomes a temptation that sets us up for sin. When tests become temptations, it leads to transgressions. James 1:14-15 says, ***But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.***

Tests are good for us; they are meant to strengthen our faith. 1 Peter 1:6-7 says, ***In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*** Therefore, the Bible tells us that we are to embrace God-given seasons of testing. 1 Peter 4:12-13 says, ***Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.***

How, then, do we pass the tests that are to come?

1. Pray

Prayer puts our dependence on the Lord, and without prayer, we fall *prey* to temptation. Matthew 26:41 says, ***Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*** This is something that even Jesus prayed about when he taught his disciples how to pray.

1. Flee

In order to prevent succumbing to temptations, Timothy tells us to flee from them, just as Joseph literally ran out of Potiphar's house when his master's wife tried to convince him to come to bed with her. It is not enough to simply distance yourself from temptation; the Bible says that we must run from it. 2 Timothy 2:22 says, ***Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.***

1. Trust





Hebrews 2:18 says, ***For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.*** We can trust Jesus to empathize with us during our periods of trials,

because He himself has gone through those periods. We must also trust that these difficult seasons are given to us by God to strengthen our faith. As James 1:2-4 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. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**

The Bible promises us tests, but the greatest test that we will encounter is that concerning our faith. 2 Corinthians 13:5 says, **Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?** Failing this test does not just impact our lives here on Earth, but our eternity. Therefore, we must examine ourselves to see if we really have Christ in a position of lordship over our lives. James 1:12 says, **Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.**

APPLICATION:

Patiently listen as God reveals where you can apply the passage’s lesson in your life. Write down specific action points to what He has revealed to you.

	<p>Time for a heart check.</p>
	<p>Rate yourself according to what we have learned in the book of Genesis. Pass or Fail.</p>
	<p>After the lessons from the book of Genesis, have I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved in my trust in God’s will for my life. 2. Improved in my understanding of how to be a recipient of God’s blessings. 3. Improved in my faith in God’s faithfulness. 4. Improved in my understanding of God’s word.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Improved my desire to intentionally disciple my family. 6. Improved in my desire to make my marriage a testament of God’s power to transform lives. 7. Encouraged me to reach out to others and share God’s story of love.

PRAYERS:

Lift all the things that you learned back to God. Share your thoughts to Him. If He is impressing a sin in your life, confess it to Him. He is always ready to forgive.