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Are We Trusting God or Testing God?

by Doy Moyer

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" **(Matt 4:5-7)**

Jesus quotes from **Deuteronomy 6:16**, where Moses is recounting the struggles of the children of Israel as they came out of Egypt and began to murmur and complain about not having water. They were not trusting God to take care of them, but instead tested God to try to force His hand. These two ideas tend to run counter to each other: if we are not trusting God, we will likely be testing Him. If we are not submitting to God, we may indeed be trying to manipulate Him to do what we want.

Jesus applied this principle to the situation He was facing. In the case of the devil tempting Him, it was not about wanting water and thinking to go back to Egypt; it was about whether or not God would keep Jesus from harm if He jumped off the pinnacle of the temple. The principle was the same, and it had to do with how He would handle a test of His own. The devil even quoted Scripture to make his case (just because Scripture is used is no guarantee it is being applied correctly).

Testing God can happen in a number of ways. We might be testing whether or not God will keep us safe in a certain circumstance, so we put ourselves in unnecessary danger. We might wonder if God will provide for us in some way, so we purposefully refuse to make reasonable provisions. We can even be testing God through our constant worries about daily provisions **(see Matt 6:24-33)**.

The open door for testing God appears to be when we ourselves are tested, tempted, and perhaps frustrated. If we get sick, for example, and are tempted to give up, how will we handle that? Will we shake a fist at God and think that if He really loves us He will make it go away? Will we put ourselves in His hands and rest on the notion that this situation may be a way to glorify God and influence others for good?

Trusting God does not mean that we do not need to plan, make provisions for the future, or take precautions in dangerous situations. It does mean that we do the best we can with what we have in line with what we know to be His will, make appropriate provisions, then not worry about it. We know that in whatever happens, He will take care of us **(cf. 1 Pet 5:5-6; Phil 4:4-7)**.

There were times when God's people were at serious risk. Daniel trusted God when threatened concerning his prayer life. Daniel's friends trusted God under threat of being cast into a furnace. Paul trusted God under threat of imprisonment and death. There are multiple examples. They were not throwing caution to the wind, but they were ready to suffer for the Lord.

Motivation is a key. Am I just trying to make some point, or am I truly trying to glorify God and show my love for others? Am I trying to bring attention to myself, or am I really pointing others to the Lord because I care about them? Am I testing whether God will do something for me in the time-frame I desire, or am I trusting that God will work things out in His own time and in His own way? Am I demanding some kind of sign to appear just as I say, or am I content to know that God is able to do far more abundantly beyond anything I can ask or think **(Eph 3:20)**?

My faith must not be conditioned so that it is strong only when things go the way that I think they ought to go. Instead, I must trust God no matter what the circumstances of life may bring. In the end, if I trust Him, I know that He will make it

work out in the best possible way. For those who love Him and seek His will, He makes things work for the good, even when what is happening is not what we might prefer (**cf. Rom 8:28**). Suffering for the cause of Christ is included (**cf. 1 Pet 4:1; Phil 3:10**).

When Paul faced particularly dangerous circumstances, he considered himself delivered by God "from the lion's mouth." Yet he also saw that there was ultimate deliverance coming: "The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (**2 Tim 4:18**)

Commit to trusting God and reject the testing mentality. "And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may go well with you..." (**Deut 6:18**)

Judgement Day Surprises

Lowell Sallee

The Bible says, "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*" (II Corinthians 5:10). The Day of Judgment has been appointed, "*...in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained*" (Acts 17:31). Jesus said, "*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*" (Matthew 7:22-23). Jesus is teaching that **some are going to be surprised on the day of judgement**. Some that will be surprised:

1. the **Atheist** will be surprised on the day of judgement that there really is a God. Those who have refused to believe in God, give heed, "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*" (Psalms 14:1). "*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork*" (Psalms 19:1). A day of BIG surprise is coming for the atheist.

2. **Jews** that have denied Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the Son of the Living God. The apostle Peter said, "*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*" (Acts 2:36). The resurrection of Jesus proved Him to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4) as well as the testimony of the Holy Spirit. "*But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name*" (John 20:31). There's a BIG surprise awaiting the unbelieving Jew.

3. **Denominational folks** will be surprised that: 1) there really is just "*one body*" (Ephesians 4:4), that is, one church; 2) baptism really is for the "*remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38; 22:16); 3) that faith only is dead (James 2:17, 19-20, 24, 26); 4) and that there really is an eternal hell (Matthew 25:34, 41, 46).

4. some **Christians** will be surprised on that great day that even some of them won't be going to heaven (Matthew 7:21-23).

5. the **Faithful** will be surprised that heaven is much more beautiful than was ever imagined (Revelation 21:1-4).

My friend, there is no excuse for any of us to be disappointedly surprised on that great day, for we have God's Word to study and know what God expects of each one of us (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3). Read, study and obey His Word before it's too late.