

Review

- The Glory of God
- Creation As Communication (The Kingdom of Heaven is Like...) Matthew 13
- Created To Be a Creature
- Our Relationship To God
- Idolatry and Ingratitude (Romans 1:18-21)
- Self-Denial and Creation
- Tithing and Giving
- What Happens When God Tests You

So how do we reconcile this? – 2 Approaches

1.) **Comparative Approach** – Put God on scales

2.) **Integrated Approach**

a.) We love God Supremely

b.) Now we're free to love creation as creation (not an idol)

How do we do that?

Examples – Adam meeting Eve, Giving Christmas gifts, Vicki's Bang Bang Shrimp

c.) We don't set the gift and the giver in opposition to each other (scales)

The Bible teaches both, so how do we do both?

- Because the Bible repeatedly tells us to spend time in creation – think about (Adam), meditate (Psalm 104), “love your neighbor,” God wants us on Earth
- The **majority of our time** should be spent living the **Integrated Approach**
- The **Comparative Approach** is used as a **test** to make sure we love God Supremely (Do you put God at the top?)
 - Sometimes God will test you
 - Trials, tribulations, difficulties, tragedy, suffering, pruning (makes you stronger)
 - Sometimes you need to test yourself
 - Self-Denial
 - Examples – Fasting, sacrificial giving, doing without something and replacing it with God

What Happens When God Tests You?

Genesis 3:1-6

Genesis 22 :1-13 – fear of God: **unbeliever** – judgement, separation from God

believer – phroneo, “mindset”

Matthew 4:1-11 – offered everything, but God (Is heaven, with all of it’s glorified stuff, enough without God there?)

What Happens When God Tests You?

We will be tested:

2 Timothy 3:12 – Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted

Acts 14:19-22 – But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, **they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.** But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and **saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.**

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What Happens When God Tests You?

We know it's coming, but actually losing things test us like nothing else can. It forces us to put God and His good gifts on the scales.

2 Timothy 4-16-18 – At my first defense **no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me.** May it not be charged against them! **But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me,** so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. 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.

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Psalms 27:10 – **For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in.**

What Happens When God Tests You?

How do we handle suffering and the loss of God's good gifts in a way that honors and glorifies Him?

Job 1; 2:11-13

- Satan accuses Job of idolatry
- God tests Job
- Although suffering makes us choose our SUPREME love (phroneo) for God, that doesn't mean we stop loving His gift
- It doesn't mean it doesn't hurt when it's torn away
- It's OK to mourn the loss of God's gifts

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What Happens When God Tests You?

Romans 1:18-21

- Loving and enjoying God's gifts expands our mental capacity to understand God
- It expands our hearts to understand His character and His love
- It stretches us to grow (Ex. - dog, honey, etc.)
- Our love for God's creation makes us love God more and makes us mature

What Happens When God Tests You?

But God has other ways to make us grow to love Him more. When God takes away the good gift, it expands our hearts and minds like nothing else can. Ways that are only possible through loss.

1 Peter 1:6-7 – In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, **you have been grieved by various trials**, so that **the tested genuineness of your faith**—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

James 1:12 – Blessed is the man **who remains steadfast under trial**, for when he has **stood the test** he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

What Happens When God Tests You?

Joe Rigney

A right understanding of gifts allows us to really care when God takes them away.

- Job's response – why did Job grieve so much? Because he loved God's gift that much
- It produces real sorrow and real anguish, and God is not offended
- But it never leads to cursing God. Because we know that the horrific loss is stretching our heart and soul beyond what we think we can bear.
- So that we rest most deeply in Him

What Happens When God Tests You?

How are we to face our ultimate loss, our own death?

Philippians 1:18-23

Death is not the end for the believer

2 Corinthians 5:1-5

What Happens When God Tests You?

All the best joys here will actually be there (heaven), only glorified! Nothing good is ever finally lost.

Mark 14:25 – Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

Revelation 22:1-3 – Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.

What Happens When God Tests You?

God is not teaching us about Him through His creation, to then throw that all away when we get to heaven. So what is our hope?

Romans 8:18-23