

Sermon Series: Living Successfully for God

11/9/25 “Being Tested,” Deut. 8, MEV

INTRODUCTION want to go through a hard time? God seemed closer in a hard time?

MAIN IDEA: Stay close to God in all seasons. How? Here are two things to do.

I. First, learn from Him in the hard seasons (40 yrs., 2-3, 16)

A. He may humble us...*cannot provide for ourselves*

1. we might suffer (3)

Exodus 16:3, NLT: “If only the LORD had killed us back in Egypt,” they moaned. “There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.”

2. our flesh comes out, we complain about Him

3. we turn to Him as He helps us

B. causing us to examine ourselves...proving us (2)

Prove: to test (usually to prove character or faithfulness)

Heart: the inner person; conscience, courage, mind, understanding (*Kohlenberger-Mounce*)

David Guzik: God tests us not because He doesn’t know what is in our hearts, but because we don’t know what is in our hearts.

2Corinthians 13:5, MEV: Examine yourselves, seeing whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.

1. we learn how true our faith is...*whether we will hold to God or turn away*

2. we discover false images we have of ourselves

• I’m godly... *I’m a finished work—oops!*

• I’m awful... *not as bad as I believed*

C. teaching us spiritual principles (*live by every word of His*)

1. that we need to know

2. that we can follow/practice/remember

ILLUSTRATION: Judges 3:1, 4, NLT: 1 These are the nations that the LORD left in the land to test those Israelites who had not experienced the wars of Canaan. **4** These people were left to test the Israelites—to see whether they would obey the commands the LORD had given to their ancestors through Moses.

ILLUSTRATION: Matthew 4:2-4, NLT: 2 For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. **3** During that time the devil came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” **4** But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” [*Satan was tempting Jesus to turn from God*]

ILLUSTRATION: 2017-2018

II. Second, remember Him in the good seasons (12-18)

A. at one time we might have relied heavily on Him

B. but when life gets good, we forget Him

1. we disobey Him (11)

2. we become proud, forgetting His deliverance (14)

3. we take credit for all we have (17), despite the fact that all we have He has given (18)

C. forgetting Him opens us to idolatry, leading to death (19)

1. less dependent we are on Him, more likely to turn

2. our lukewarmness opens us to sinful habits, idols

3. our love turned cold is attracted to other things

ILLUSTRATION: new believers come every week; years later stop coming

CONCLUSION: I look back at hardest times of my life with longing—God blessed me; in easy times, I must work harder to stay close

ALTAR: difficult season? Come forward to receive prayer

Good season? Draw near to be hot for God