

THE FOUR TESTS OF LIFE

BACK TO SCHOOL SERIES

Pastor Kevin Cummings – August 9, 2026 – Part #1

Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19

- Every test is an _____ to trust God more deeply.
- There is a _____ for every test. (I Peter 4:12)
 1. God uses tests to direct me (Jonah 1:1-4)
 2. God uses tests to inspect me (Deuteronomy 8:2)
 3. God uses tests to correct me (Psalm 119:71)
 4. God uses tests to protect me (I Peter 3:17)
 5. God uses tests to perfect me (Romans 8:28-31)

I. The test of a _____. (v. 8)

“Unless you change, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Matt. 18:3

- A. This is the _____ test. (Genesis 12:1-5)
1. God wants us to follow Him even if all the details aren’t worked out.
 2. God wants us to follow Him no matter the obstacles.
 - Our age can be an obstacle to us following God.
 - Our family can be an obstacle to us following God.
 - Our possessions can be an obstacle to us following God.
 3. God wants us to obey Him immediately.

B. A genuine believer will _____ without knowing where.

II. The test of _____. (v. 9-10)

- A. This is the _____ test.
1. God wants us to live our lives on His promises, not explanations.
 2. God wants us to understand our identity. Not only who we are, but whose we are: *“in Christ”* (Ephesians 1:1-20)

- I am a son/daughter of the Most High King. (Romans 8:17)
- I am a saint. (Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:1)
- I am a super conquer. (Romans 8:28)

B. A genuine believer will _____ without knowing when. (Psalm 27:14; 37:7; 38:15)

III. The test of an _____. (v. 11-12)

A. This is the _____ test. (Genesis 17:1-5; 18:9-14)

B. A genuine believer will _____ without knowing how.

IV. The test of a _____. (v. 17-19)

A. This is the _____ test. (Gen. 22:1-14)

1. God wants us to remember that He has a right to make any demand from us whether we understand it or not.
2. There is nothing wrong with asking God why as long as we trust His answer. (Psalm 10:1; 42:9; 43:2; Matthew 27:46; Acts 4:25; Romans 9:20; II Timothy 1:12)

- B. A genuine believer will _____ without knowing why.
- Five words to remember when you are in the middle of a test:

“This is what the Lord says, ... this thing is from me.” I Kings 12:24

“But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God.”

II Corinthians 1:9

ACTION POINTS:

- 1.) If you have figured out all the where’s, when’s, how’s and why’s of life, you are not _____.
- 2.) The key to passing life’s tests is not knowing every answer but _____ when you don’t.
- 3.) Unless you have _____ with Jesus Christ, you will never pass the tests of life

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Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19

- Every test is an opportunity to trust God more deeply.
- There is a purpose for every test. (I Peter 4:12)
 1. God uses tests to direct me (Jonah 1:1-4)
 2. God uses tests to inspect me (Deuteronomy 8:2)
 3. God uses tests to correct me (Psalm 119:71)
 4. God uses tests to protect me (I Peter 3:17)
 5. God uses tests to perfect me (Romans 8:28-31)

I. The test of a major change. (v. 8)

“Unless you change, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Matt. 18:3

- A. This is the where test. (Genesis 12:1-5)
1. God wants us to follow Him even if all the details aren't worked out.
 2. God wants us to follow Him no matter the obstacles.
 - Our age can be an obstacle to us following God.
 - Our family can be an obstacle to us following God.
 - Our possessions can be an obstacle to us following God.
 3. God wants us to obey Him immediately.
- B. A genuine believer will follow God's leading without knowing where.

II. The test of delay. (v. 9-10)

- A. This is the when test.
1. God wants us to live our lives on His promises, not explanations.
 2. God wants us to understand our identity. Not only who we are, but whose we are: *“in Christ”* (Ephesians 1:1-20)

- I am a son/daughter of the Most High King. (Romans 8:17)
- I am a saint. (Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:1)
- I am a super conquer. (Romans 8:28)

B. A genuine believer will wait for God's timing without knowing when. (Psalm 27:14; 37:7; 38:15)

III. The test of an impossible situation. (v. 11-12)

- A. This is the how test. (Genesis 17:1-5; 18:9-14)
- B. A genuine believer will expect God to act without knowing how.

IV. The test of a senseless tragedy. (v. 17-19)

- A. This is the why test. (Gen. 22:1-14)
1. God wants us to remember that He has a right to make any demand from us whether we understand it or not.
 2. There is nothing wrong with asking God why as long as we trust His answer. (Psalm 10:1; 42:9; 43:2; Matthew 27:46; Acts 4:25; Romans 9:20; II Timothy 1:12)
- B. A genuine believer will trust God without knowing why.
- Five words to remember when you are in the middle of a test:

This thing is from me.

“This is what the Lord says, ... this thing is from me.” I Kings 12:24

“But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God.”

II Corinthians 1:9

ACTION POINTS:

- 1.) If you have figured out all the where's, when's, how's and why's of life, you are not living by faith.
- 2.) The key to passing life's tests is not knowing every answer but trusting God when you don't.
- 3.) Unless you have a relationship with Jesus Christ, you will never pass the tests of life