

# When Faith is Tested



#2165 0812 15W

Our faith can fail because it is a serious struggle against sin, self, and Satan—the battle will continue until the Lord returns. Jesus said to Simon *Luke 22:31-32* “Behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” We should pray for our family, friends, and loved ones—because Satan wants to destroy their faith too.

The battle is an on-going struggle against the forces of the evil one, who wants to destroy us forever. Hell is too horrible; Heaven is too marvelous; and eternity is too long to even think about losing this struggle for the soul. *1 Timothy 6:12* “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.” No one can afford to lose this battle!

Jesus followed the Scriptures as an example for us—faith in the Father every day for everything. Since the world hated Him, it will hate anyone else who conducts their life according to New Testament teaching. A Christian life of faith in God, is in conflict with worldly life of trust on self.

*2 Corinthians 10:4-5* “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” Our goal is to be in obedience to the Scriptures, because Reve-

*lation 2:11* “He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

When our faith is tested, we must be willing to believe, and ready to trust God. *John 3:18* “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” The battle rages on, so we take *Ephesians 6:17* “The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,” and live according to Bible teaching.

Satan is assisted by a multitude of agencies to dissolve our faith—the entertainment world is made up of program directors, film producers; magazine and book publishers, and television executives who make programming decisions. It is a battle for control of the mind. Satan scored a major victory with the invention of television, but today a multitude of hand-held devices and tablets can be used in wrong ways to corrupt our thinking and defile our conscience.

From unscriptural commercials, pop-ups, to information on a new drug, or trailers of the latest film, Satan will get his message across and advance his agenda—somehow, someway, or with some smart-phone app. The devil wants people to desire the wrong things, the wrong person, the wrong clothes, or the wrong anything—just so it opposes the Word and follows the world.

All that goes through the eye-gate has the potential to influence—our thoughts, decisions, or desires—that is the serious part. Very subtly, but very continuously, messages through various mobile devices and social media are influencing us; getting our attention; and changing our thoughts to those of the world.

From specials to ads to programs on every imaginable subject, the viewer will see, hear, and can easily be influenced by worldly themes and conduct—resentment, greed, disrespect, profani-

ty, immorality, violence, hatred, rage and revenge—all against God’s will and plan. What is promoted and portrayed on television, in films, on smart-phone screens, and many other means of communication today, is almost always in opposition to Bible teaching.

It is a serious struggle with an evil opponent, and anyone who is not alert, is in danger of finding out too late, that Satan won the battle for their soul. The devil’s power was destroyed on the cross, but he does not want anyone to *know* that—and even if we *do* know it, we still have to *believe* it for that Atonement work of Christ on the cross to benefit us and keep us in His will.

A converted life of faith in God is a learning process under His teaching. We should eliminate distractions, and turn down the volume, so we can *hear* God’s voice. *Mark 4:24* “Take heed what ye hear,” and Jesus followed that with *Mark 4:25* “For whoever has, to him more will be given.”

Jesus said to get rid of anything that causes unscriptural thoughts, because if our eye, our hand, our feet, or our mobile device leads us to sin, it would be much better to be *without* them, than to *keep* them, to keep *sinning* with them, and *Matthew 5:29* “be cast into hell.”

Jesus said *John 12:36* “Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light.” He told us not to have treasures on earth *Matthew 6:19*, and if we had laid-up assets on which we trust, we should *sell* them and *give* the money to charity. When we follow His advice on that issue, we are compelled to trust God in faith.

Satan is determined to have our soul, and he will use anything, anyone, or any device to get it. He exploits greed, which leads to covetousness, then to idolatry—a *very* serious sin. The devil wants people to strive for more and more, but never saying *enough*; never saying thanks, Lord. Satan hides his identity by making suggestions to

our mind—his *voice* can be mistaken for our *logic*. He is always disguised and may even be *2 Corinthians 11:14* “transformed into an angel of light.”

Satan tries to convince people that happiness is purchased with *money* and contentment is found in *things*—but no one ever proved that to be true. Satan is *evil* and out for our *soul*. It is an intense spiritual battle, so the apostle *Jude 1:3* “found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith.”

Satan has many names *Revelation 12:9* “The great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.” A serpent slips in unnoticed as Satan slips into our mind undetected. His only desire is *John 10:10* “to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.”

Satan wants our faith to be tested and to fail. It is a continuing battle of detection, resistance, and defense. Jesus said that Satan *John 8:44* “was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.” Any thought, suggestion, or *attitude* that is against Bible teaching, is from the devil.

Satan began his career of lying in Eden. *2 Corinthians 11:3* “I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” Pure devotion to Christ is a faithful trust on the power of God—to heal our body without medication; to supply daily needs without Welfare checks; and to protect our children without guns, gates, or security systems.

Satan does not confront us in recognizable form. He can be disguised as anyone, anything, any plan, or any device—something that takes us outside God’s will. Satan wants to test our faith so we will doubt our trust on God. In whatever form he attacks, we must be ready to defend with

“It is written” *Matthew 4:4*. Our life is to be lived according to the Word—every day.

This battle intensified when Jesus was born on earth, because God’s Lamb would be Satan’s downfall. Through Herod, the devil tried to destroy the Savior before Jesus would be a serious threat to his power, but God enabled His Son to *Matthew 2:13* “flee into Egypt.”

The amount of unspeakable crimes against humanity over the centuries could never be counted, and it would be no surprise if God gave the command for His Son to return today—bringing judgment on a world of violence, wickedness, immorality, evil, corruption, and sin.

This spiritual battle for our soul did not end with his one defeat *Matthew 2:13*. *Matthew 4:1* “Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” That same devil, with the same lie, confronts us today with the same intention to steal, kill, or destroy our faith in God. *Luke 4:13* “When the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.”

The devil wants people to be interested in the wrong books; to entertain immoral thoughts; to desire worldly entertainment; to seek unscriptural fellowship; or to use some social media site in a wrong way in order to defile our conscience.

If we draw close to God, we will move away from the world. Narcissism is an excessive interest in one’s self—it is prevalent today. Satan has been using his wicked system for centuries, so this rampant pride and self-importance is no mystery. Self always exalts *self*; but we are to glorify *God*—and never bring attention to ourselves. Entertainment and social media promotes narcissism—it is all about *self* and nothing about *God*.

Satan uses the *Once Saved; Always Saved* delusion to have people live in sin and still think they are saved. We are secure only *in Christ* and never *in sin*. If Satan can deceive someone to

accept *eternal security* or *perseverance of the saints*, he has a good chance of destroying their soul. His dark forces have been hiding the light of God’s Truth, because the world *John 3:20* “hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.”

Living by faith includes visible fruits of the Spirit—*Galatians 5:22-23* “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” It means acting from divine love, helping the poor, praying for people, trusting God every day, using devices in a scriptural way, and thanking Him for the many blessings already received.

When our faith is tested, we must call on God to help us by the power of His Spirit—then our faith will not fail and we will win the victory. *1 Corinthians 15:57* “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

*John 17:15* “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” Our prayer each day is for the inspiration of faith to trust God because *Romans 14:23* “whatever is not from faith is sin.” We need God’s protection from Satan’s attempts to destroy our faith. *Luke 22:32* “I have prayed for thee [Simon], that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

God’s love, mercy, and grace will keep our faith strong when it is tested—if we *want* His help and if we *ask* for His Spirit. No matter what type of temptation is encountered, or what pressure we are under to do what is wrong, God’s help is by our side. When our faith is tested, we must *James 1:12* “persevere under trial, because when we have stood the test, we will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.”



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