

How Do We Know We Are Truly Serving God?

Being a new Christian since August 6, 1995, I have found that when you serve the Lord with all of your heart, mind and soul there will be trials and tribulations. God will also try and test our hearts to show us where we stand with him. It is not a life of leisure and bliss. Your family, friends and the world will come against you if you truly seek and serve the Kingdom of God. For the Word of God states those facts in many scriptures. Yes we can have love, peace and joy in Jesus Christ as we walk to serve him, but we will suffer in our service as he did if we are truly serving God. *Luke 12:49-53* **49** "I have come to bring fire to the earth, and I wish that my task were already completed! **50** There is a terrible baptism ahead of me, and I am under a heavy burden until it is accomplished. **51** Do you think I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I have come to bring strife and division! **52** From now on families will be split apart, three in favor of me, and two against--or the other way around. **53** There will be a division between father and son, mother and daughter, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law." (NLT)

Listed below are some of the scriptures relating to the above statements. Please take the time to read and pray to God that you may understand what the scriptures are saying.

Acts 14:22 **21** After preaching the Good News in Derbe and making many disciples, Paul and Barnabas returned again to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia,**22** where they strengthened the believers. They encouraged them to continue in the faith, reminding them that **they must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.** (NLT)

Romans 5:3-4 **3** We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us--they help us learn to endure.**4** And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. (NLT)

Romans 8:17 **17** And since we are his children, we will share his treasures--for everything God gives to his Son, Christ, is ours, too. **But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.** (NLT)

2 Corinthians 1:5-7 **5** You can be sure that the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. **6** So when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your benefit and salvation! For when God comforts us, it is so that we, in turn, can be an encouragement to you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. **7** **We are confident that as you share in suffering, you will also share God's comfort.** (NLT)

2 Corinthians 4:10 ¹⁰ Through suffering, these bodies of ours constantly share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. (NLT)

2 Corinthians 7:10 ¹⁰ For God can use sorrow in our lives to help us turn away from sin and seek salvation. We will never regret that kind of sorrow. But sorrow without repentance is the kind that results in death. (NLT)

Philippians 1:29 ²⁹ For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. (NLT)

1 Thessalonians 1:6 ⁶ So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord. (NLT)

1 Thessalonians 2:14 ¹⁴ And then, dear brothers and sisters, you suffered persecution from your own countrymen. In this way, you imitated the believers in God's churches in Judea who, because of their belief in Christ Jesus, suffered from their own people, the Jews. (NLT)

1 Thessalonians 3:2-3 ² and we sent Timothy to visit you. He is our co-worker for God and our brother in proclaiming the Good News of Christ. We sent him to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith, ³ and to keep you from becoming disturbed by the troubles you were going through. But, of course, you know that such troubles are going to happen to us Christians. (NLT)

2 Thessalonians 1:1-6 ¹ This letter is from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. It is written to the church in Thessalonica, you who belong to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ² May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. ³ Dear brothers and sisters, we always thank God for you, as is right, for we are thankful that your faith is flourishing and you are all growing in love for each other. ⁴ We proudly tell God's other churches about your endurance and faithfulness in all the persecutions and hardships you are suffering. ⁵ But God will use this persecution to show his justice. For he will make you worthy of his Kingdom, for which you are suffering, ⁶ and in his justice he will punish those who persecute you. (NLT)

1 Timothy 4:10 ¹⁰ We work hard and suffer much in order that people will believe the truth, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and particularly of those who believe. (NLT)

2 Timothy 2:3-9 ³ Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ And as Christ's soldier, do not let yourself become tied up in the affairs of this life, for then you cannot satisfy the one who has enlisted you in his army. ⁵ Follow the Lord's rules for doing his work, just as an athlete either follows

the rules or is disqualified and wins no prize. ⁶ Hardworking farmers are the first to enjoy the fruit of their labor. ⁷ Think about what I am saying. The Lord will give you understanding in all these things. ⁸ Never forget that Jesus Christ was a man born into King David's family and that he was raised from the dead. This is the Good News I preach. ⁹ And because I preach this Good News, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained. (NLT)

2 Timothy 3:12 ¹² Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. (NLT)

2 Timothy 4:5 ⁵ But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at bringing others to Christ. Complete the ministry God has given you. (NLT)

Hebrews 10:31-34 ³¹ It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. ³² Don't ever forget those early days when you first learned about Christ. Remember how you remained faithful even though it meant terrible suffering. ³³ Sometimes you were exposed to public ridicule and were beaten, and sometimes you helped others who were suffering the same things. ³⁴ You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail. When all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew you had better things waiting for you in eternity. (NLT)

Hebrews 11:35-38 ³⁵ Women received their loved ones back again from death. But others trusted God and were tortured, preferring to die rather than turn from God and be free. They placed their hope in the resurrection to a better life. ³⁶ Some were mocked, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in dungeons. ³⁷ Some died by stoning, and some were sawed in half; others were killed with the sword. Some went about in skins of sheep and goats, hungry and oppressed and mistreated. ³⁸ They were too good for this world. They wandered over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground. (NLT)

James 1:2-4 ² Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. ³ For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything. (NLT)

James 5:10-11 ¹⁰ For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. Job is an example of a man who endured patiently. From his experience we see how the Lord's plan finally ended in good, for he is full of tenderness and mercy. (NLT)

1 Peter 1:7 ⁷ These trials are only to test your faith, to show that it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold--and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold. So if your faith remains strong after being tried by fiery trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. (NLT)

1 Peter 2:18-21 ¹⁸ You who are slaves must accept the authority of your masters. Do whatever they tell you--not only if they are kind and reasonable, but even if they are harsh. ¹⁹ For God is pleased with you when, for the sake of your conscience, you patiently endure unfair treatment. ²⁰ Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing right and are patient beneath the blows, God is pleased with you. ²¹ This suffering is all part of what God has called you to. Christ, who suffered for you, is your example. Follow in his steps. (NLT)

1 Peter 3:13-17 ¹³ Now, who will want to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don't be afraid and don't worry. ¹⁵ Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if you are asked about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. ¹⁶ But you must do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak evil against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. ¹⁷ Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong! (NLT)

1 Peter 4:1-2 ¹ So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you are willing to suffer for Christ, you have decided to stop sinning. ² And you won't spend the rest of your life chasing after evil desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. (NLT)

1 Peter 4:12-14 ¹² Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead, be very glad--because these trials will make you partners with Christ in his suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing his glory when it is displayed to all the world. ¹⁴ Be happy if you are insulted for being a Christian, for then the glorious Spirit of God will come upon you. (NLT)

1 Peter 4:16 ¹⁶ But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his wonderful name! (NLT)

1 Peter 5:8-10 ⁸ Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. ⁹ Take a firm stand against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your

Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are. ¹⁰ In his kindness God called you to his eternal glory by means of Jesus Christ. After you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. (NLT)

Revelation 3:19 ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. (KJV)

I have heard some preachers preach and write that God will not test us. That is an incorrect statement for God does test us. Please study the scriptures listed below. The trials and tests from God are for our own good. From the trials our faith and patience grows to serve God fully in all things he requires of us.

Job 23:10 ¹⁰ But he knows where I am going. And when he has tested me like gold in a fire, he will pronounce me innocent. (NLT)

Psalms 17:3 ³ You have tested my thoughts and examined my heart in the night. You have scrutinized me and found nothing amiss, for I am determined not to sin in what I say. (NLT)

Proverbs 17:3 ³ Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the LORD tests the heart. (NLT)

James 1:12 ¹² God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. (NLT)

Psalms 66:10 ¹⁰ You have tested us, O God; you have purified us like silver melted in a crucible. (NLT)

Daniel 12:10 ¹⁰ Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined by these trials. But the wicked will continue in their wickedness, and none of them will understand. Only those who are wise will know what it means. (NLT)

Jeremiah 12:3 ³ But as for me, LORD, you know my heart. You see me and test my thoughts. Drag these people away like helpless sheep to be butchered! Set them aside to be slaughtered! (NLT)

Hebrews 11:17 ¹⁷ It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, (NLT)

Psalms 139:23 ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. (NLT)

In conclusion remember:

1 Peter 1:17 ¹⁷ And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites when he judges. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time as foreigners here on earth. (NLT)

John 12:48-50 ⁴⁸ But all who reject me and my message will be judged at the day of judgment by the truth I have spoken. ⁴⁹ I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me gave me his own instructions as to what I should say. ⁵⁰ And I know his instructions lead to eternal life; so I say whatever the Father tells me to say!" (NLT) Amen.

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