

The Purpose of Trials

by Paul West

Trials and temptations are a necessary part of growth and maturity in God, and they can be used to refine and purify our hearts and build spiritual muscle.

Duration: 49:59

Scripture: Job 7:17-18, Job 42:5, Matthew 12:36, James 1:5, 1 Peter 1:6-7

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Trials And Testing"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of progressing in the school of God and not remaining stagnant in one's faith. He compares spiritual growth to advancing through different grades in school, highlighting the need to pass the tests and trials that God allows in our lives. The speaker shares a personal experience of losing a loved one and how it revealed a hole in his heart that needed to be filled with God's presence. He encourages listeners to prioritize spending time in the Word of God and seeking His ways in order to progress and grow spiritually.

Transcript

Can we bow before God for a short prayer. Oh Lord God We thank the father that we can come here tonight Expecting great things from thy hands Expecting to hear Thy voice Lord God In a transforming way Lord. Oh God All of us have heard sermons and we've been to Christian meetings and we've been to Bible studies Lord God and we've We've heard thy word being proclaimed countless times Oh God But father we pray that tonight something something special Lord will be worked out in our spirits upon the hearing of thy living word Something of eternal consequence Lord a A transforming grace Lord that can only come from thy hands not from the intellect of man from the words of man from the design of of a man such as myself Lord God and God thou knowest that I'm a base man.

I am so unworthy to to even stand here before thy people and Speak thy name Lord God But father I do so With full confidence in the blood of Jesus I Have no righteousness outside of the blood of Christ Lord And it is only by the blood Lord God that I can stand here tonight For father thou knowest the secrets of all of our hearts Thou knowest this heart of this preacher here Lord So father I pray thee Lord Wash me in the blood and stand beside me Lord in this pulpit And fill me with thy Holy Spirit Lord that I might be a true Representative of God and that we might hear from God And know thy ways Lord better leaving this place tonight than we knew before we walked in Lord Anoint my lips father We ask this Lord We unitedly agree And we pray this in Jesus name Amen I Wanted to talk tonight a little bit about the purpose of trials You

don't have to be a Christian very long to know that the Recognize that the walk with God The walk with Christ daily requires a Daily death to self And that the deeper we endeavor to go in God The more Obstacles we begin to face in the walk with God We are opposed by the world We're opposed by the flesh And we're opposed by the devil To trill it it's a Trinity if you will of opposition As man is a Trinity of spirit soul and body God is a Trinity a father son and Holy Spirit and our adversary can also be broken down into a Trinity of The world the flesh and the devil And the Bible is laden with References to trials and Tests And temptations that are Promised to come Into the life of every person of every woman of every man of every child who determines To progress in God to not just be a nominal Christian But to get into the deep things of God and to grow in God And I would say And I firmly believe that the only way to grow in God is through the endurance of trials and temptations And that's what I want to speak of tonight, and I want to use a few scriptures As a As as sort of a springboard if I may And I'm going to read these these three scriptures and You can you can follow along with me if you wish or you can just write them down for For later study but the first one and probably the most well-known one is found in the first chapter of James and Then James chapter 1 in verse 2 James the Apostle writing To the scattered 12 tribes And he says this he starts off this letter this is a You know New Testament scholars believe.

This is the first letter written in the New Testament James The brother of Jesus Christ the half-brother of Jesus Christ Have to you have to remember who's writing this this this is a man who grew up with Jesus in the same house as Jesus When Jesus was 16 17 those those years that are that are so Silent about in the Bible. We only read about when he was 12 at the temple, but then after that between 12 and 30 We really don't know we know that he Helped his father, and he's a carpenter, and he grew in wisdom and statue with God and man But that's about all that we really That the Bible divulges to us Well James knew What Jesus was doing when he was 27 28 and this? brother of our Lord Begins his message the only message that we have of his in the New Testament canon And he begins by saying my brethren Count it all joy When ye fall into divers temptations Knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing And this is very interesting verse 5 he goes straight from trials to wisdom Have you ever noticed that if any of you lack wisdom Let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not and it shall be given him He links wisdom with trials I Found that extraordinary As I was studying this and praying over this earlier this year And then we have that verse That awesome awesome verse in the first epistle of Peter First Peter chapter 1 and verse 6 Wherein ye Greatly rejoiced now.

This is Peter. This is the close. This was this was Peter one of Jesus's one of the The ones in the inner circle of Peter James and John think about You know Some of the times Peter shared and the things that Peter saw as he walked with the Lord Jesus Christ He saw him transfigured on the mount He saw him he saw him with Moses and Elijah he walked on water Then he he doesn't get he's like James not very far into his first letter of the first epistle That he wrote the only thing that we have written by him in the Word of God And he's talking about the trials of our faith And more specifically the fiery trials of our faith Let's go.

Let's let's read verse 6 wherein chapter 1 ye greatly rejoice Though now for a season if need be Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations Look at that if need be Between those two commas if you're reading the King James Version If need be So Temptations may be necessary Trials if need be if God ordains if need be what is the purpose of our trials? Why can't we always be? Happy and joyous and in good spirits Why do there has why why why does there have to be trials in our walk? Why can't we always greatly rejoice though now for a season If need be you're in heaviness through manifold temptations. Well, we can always rejoice That the trial of your faith Being much more precious than of gold that perisheth

Though it be tried with fire Might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the peering of Jesus Christ
And the last scripture that I'd like to read is found in the book of Job This is an incredible scripture Job
chapter 7 in verse 17 how many of you are familiar with that with Job 7:17? How many of us can find Job
7:17 In 7:18 in 7:18 what is man that thou shouldst magnify him in that thou shouldst set thine heart upon
him In verse 18 that thou shouldst visit him every morning and try him every moment That's remarkable
and try him every moment Brethren brothers and sisters of God do you ever Are you ever conscious of
this? That every moment of every day you're being tried by God That every word that comes out of your
mouth is tried by God and That the words of the Lord Jesus Christ are to be taken seriously That every
man will give an account Of every idle word thereof in the day of judgment Or does that just kind of glaze
over see we have right here God tries us every moment We're being tried right now. I'm being tried What
is the purpose of God's trying his children I Believe That when a person becomes born again He or she
enters into What I call the school of God and we are all in the school of God right now You're in the school
of God Joseph's in the school of God Some of this may not be in the same grade Because we still have
tests to take But just like in a secular university There are tests There is progression in the school of God
There is a progression from sixth grade to seventh grade to eighth grade to ninth grade and the tests get
correspondingly more More difficult, but as you also grow and mature in God You are able by the grace of
God to pass these exams To pass these exams But we all have exams The child in in third grade has an
exam to take to get the fourth grade they have to know I I don't know what the curriculum is now for third
graders, but When I was in school, I remember learning my multiplication tables And I had to learn the
multiplication tables And if you asked me at the time when I was learning multiplication and little division it
was tough for me But you talk to someone who's in twelfth grade You say are you in math? Yes, is it
difficult for you? Yes.

What are you doing in math calculus? It's correspond the tests are corresponding to your maturity level in
God And when tests come into our life We ought to rejoice. I What the world and what philosophy would
would would teach us and even many many churches and Pastors and preachers will say oh you've got a
financial burden in your life when you need to come and get prayer and gotta lift it and bless you in and No
Could it be that these are divinely prescribed trials And that God is watching and trying and testing And
that depending on how well we do on this test Determines if we progress to the next level in God You
know if you flunk a test in high school Say there's a well, I'll use myself as an example Those of you who
know me know that I'm a mortician and I have state boards I have to take If I flunk the state board guess
what I don't get my license. I have to retake the test and With and in the school of God If you don't pass a
test Well, God doesn't expel you from school But you have to take that test over again.

I Want to say this We shouldn't be yielding to the same temptations as we Yielded to two years ago one
year ago if you lose your temper, and you raise your voice at your wife One year ago you shouldn't still be
succumbing to that Though that was a test friend That was a test If you're telling if you told little white lies
two years ago And you cheated on your time card at work, or you took something from that you know in
your conscience Your conscience condemns you for it two years ago You repented and and and you got
right with God, and then you did it again, and you're cheating you're still doing it now Then you're what you
do is you're taking that same test over and over and over and over and over again And it's up to you. How
long you stay at that level in God the purposes of trials and Temptation Is to extract that which is in us
That ungodly that wickedness the lust of the eyes the lust of the flesh That's why the Apostle Paul could
say that nothing he knew nothing good dwells in him Nothing good Do you know how insidious how how?
Transparent how beguiling our hearts are the Word of God says that the heart above all things is wicked
That's also for people who are saved You still got it friend You still got it Just because you made a

commitment to the Lord However many years ago, and you felt the presence of God and and you and you begin walking with the Lord It doesn't mean that automatically all that dross all that filth all the stuff inside of you that was in you before It's just automatically scooped out and now you can walk and not worry about falling and tripping and sinning and and and In grieving God it's in there And if you don't believe that then I'm sorry yeah, I pity you That's the first step in Growing in God and getting serious with God and God I do not want to stay in the fourth grade I do not want to stay in the fifth grade I Know that God has tests for me and I embrace the tests because the tests signify progression But how we've been brainwashed to avoid the tests Someone going through medical school. He embraced.

He looks forward to the tests. He studies. He prepares himself for the tests.

He studies laboriously he racks his brain with with with mental retention of anatomy and Medical terms because he knows he's gonna have to regurgitate the time at the time of testing is gonna come when it matters But he's gonna be required To walk the walk On that test so to speak And he's gonna be tried on that test and he His whole purpose of being in medical school is to set that goal in mind. I have a goal And when he finally achieves that Stat and he can walk in confidently to the test because he's done the preparation. He studied the book And he sits down to take that test and he and he passes the test All the times of studying and all of that's forgotten as he progresses and in the coveted bestowal of doctor is laid on him and now he reaps the the financial rewards of of his years and years of of study and preparation Friends it's the same with God.

There are rewards in God there are Incredible rewards in God and in serving God for those that progress in the school of God You can remain a child all your life and die a fifth grader in God's school as I fear many do many do People go to their graves clutching their toys and their TV remote controls in there And doing the Sunday thing You can jump and weep and and shout in church and be in the third grade Because you're avoiding the tests the tests of God Peter says Peter likens the tests unto flaming flaming trials Peter says fire Fire is a wonderful element Fire is wonderful in that It's it's an element that that nothing can survive in a flame. That's living nothing that I know of no no No living organism can survive long in a flame of fire So fire destroys That which is living but fire can also be used to refine and purify Gold and precious metals Those of you who study the Word of God Know that the Word of God is likened as unto gold and the tongue of the righteous as as silver The purifying purging fire of God that that that that Purifies our tongue and the inner the inner Essence of who we are in God that can only be cleansed that can only be purged that can only be brought out and and purified by the by the fire of God But that which is living in us the lust the greed That perishes that's consumed If we handle the trial in the test the right way remember beloved God will never give us a test that he knows we cannot pass Your test corresponds to the level of maturity that you're in presently in the school of God Don't ever say God. I can't handle this you're calling God a liar God's Word said that you can't handle it because it's in your life right now obviously God allowed it to be there.

There's no excuse The only excuse you could have you haven't prepared The fire of God You know what else the fire fire can be used for And this is what this is what the Lord showed me When I was when I was praying over this and meditating over this earlier this year Is that fire can be used? to extract Let me give you an example You get a you get a pot of water You put some you get a pot you pour some tap water in it And you boil the water on a stove, and it's it's just boiling water, but what happens if You get a pot of water pour the water in it and put some potatoes in the water You cut up some potatoes put in there put like half a breast of chicken in There and you put the pot on the stove and now you begin to boil it What happens to that water? The last time I did that I saw some scum begin to rise to the surface of the water That scum

was always there. It was on the it was on the potatoes. It was dirt.

It's not it's it's nasty. It's filthy I scoop it out But it wasn't extracted until fire was involved until fire began to heat And I want to say that the same thing can be applied to us there are hidden motives in our hearts brothers and sisters And you will never know that until the fire of God is applied to your heart until the fire of God until you're put in a situation Where those impurities can be flushed to the surface that's God's purpose in trials That's God's purpose in trials. It's refining.

It's a refining process Why wouldn't we count it as all joy? We're being purified like gold When I believe that God has plans for every single one of his children But there's a process first there's a refining process And sadly I think many many children of God Deny that deny him that process in their life. It's too costly. It's too painful There's heaviness involved But the James say there's there's heaviness count it all joy But there's heaviness.

I'm not gonna lie. We're not gonna say that it's It's pleasurable, but it's necessary. I Wrote something down earlier And I wasn't going to bring this here today I I Just planned on preaching Extemporaneously to exposit scripture But as I was leaving this morning, I I just felt an urge that I was to I was to print this out This is from my My blog I have a blog on the internet, which is like a little website where and I print Scripture meditation that that the Lord will give me during my quiet times with Jesus, and I'll post it on my blog and and Some of my Christian brothers and sisters from other from other countries and other states will log on and read it and leave a comment and And I wanted to read this today and and and just Interpolate kind of between the sentences just give a little commentary because this touches on exactly what what we're talking about tonight and and I believe that When I wrote this down it was it was it was I just captured it in the Holy Spirit And I want to share it with you, and it's it's on James.

It's on the it's on the chapter 1 of James With the scripture verse that we just read that were That we're talking about now my brethren counted all joy when ye fall into divers temptations the various temptations counted all joy when you fall into Who wakes up in the morning and says I'm gonna fall today. I'm gonna deliberately. I am going to I'm planning on on on tripping over my foot and falling and and and Just in front of everyone and hit my head on the sidewalk Falls are usually They're not premeditated We don't know when the tests will come of God.

We fall into them Fall into divers temptations knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience Patience is a golden asset in the school of God But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect He's purging the dross out of our hearts He's molding us into the image of Christ we may be perfect and entire and whole Wanting nothing when God reveals Deceit and wickedness in our hearts and when he shows us the propensity that we still possess in sinning against him Instead of allowing condemnation to overtake us the Word of God says to count it all joy Satan would have us counted as all misery That God's mad at you You failed God Look what you're capable of You took that second. Look at that woman. You took that second.

Look at that guy And Satan's right there, isn't he? He's right there to accuse, but God says to count it all joy But Satan would have you counted all misery, but God would have you do the opposite As Believers we must keep a careful watch over our hearts We must be refreshed with the Word of God daily Cleansed and renewed and restored lest we react to what God has purposed for our lives in a counterproductive measure God's purpose for allowing temptable thoughts God does not tempt, but he allows the tempter When God allows the tempter to besiege the minds and the hearts of men the reason for this is to espouse

patience and endurance In his school the inner man's character is sharpened and bolstered through the withstanding of diverse trials and temptations That's how you get strong By enduring not avoiding by enduring resistance Resist the devil and he will flee Don't run away from him resist him hold your ground resist him That's how you build spiritual muscle We need to pray for strength for God to not lift the burden, but give me the strength to overcome Not to flee and take the test again next month Patience is a golden asset in the school of God God's handiwork in the lives of his children is a slow laborious and often wearisome process The wearfulness is on our part the result of an improper understanding of God's ways in an impetuosity To proceed to a place where God is not yet allowed We want to just progress right to the right to the 11th grade And we're still struggling with Addition and subtraction and see spot-run a a Man must be still in studious to grasp God's effectiveness Great growth in Christ calls for great long-suffering in the wilderness.

Do you hear that a Christian's long-suffering is Crucial if soulish impurities are to be extracted by the mentor of the Holy Spirit deep carnal motives lie lurking within our wicked hearts Rogue impulses that can never be flushed to the surface without the application of a purging flame of fire And these impurities must be brought to a cognizance and then mortified by the Spirit of God This process requires both fire and patience In the school of God's tests and trials and temptations are opportunities for growth There are opportunities for growth I Want to grow I want to grow in God And in the knowledge the glorious knowledge of his ways I Want to get beyond where I was last year where I was even last month.

I Want to get beyond that and I want to experience something more of God God is so much more But I know it has to begin in me Before I expect it to begin in my church Or it or in the lives of my brothers or my wife it must begin with me And the only way it can begin with me is if I Let the testing processes begin and I begin preparing For the tests at hand that God has promised will not overwhelm me This is why Saturating ourselves in the Word of God is everything I this is the one thing If this book is not the most priority in your life Then you will have problems on the exam on exam day Do you hear that? I'm just telling you straight up.

How it is you will have This is the textbook of God This is the book that the kindergartner uses and this is the book that the PhD uses God's you never outgrow God's Word God's Word just widens for you I'd like to Claim that word for myself, but that was actually spoken by Charles Spurgeon great preacher God you never outgrow God's Word God's Word just widens with your maturity it fits you This is the only way to prepare for the school of God This is all that we have this is all that we need it's more than enough. It's more than enough What priority does this have in your life? How eagerly do you seek to know the will of God you know God Is such that many times his his tests come they're surprise tests Remember in school Which show up on some days and guess what there's a pop quiz, and I'm not prepared I didn't know I don't know maybe the teacher mentioned it mentioned it last week Hey, there might be a pop quiz in the following week And I wasn't listening. I was doing my own thing I was drawing pictures or whatever doodling thinking about something that had Nothing at all to do with the class that I was in and I missed what she said And lo and behold I came into class the following Monday after a fun weekend of enjoying myself And there was a quiz that counted Like 30 points out of my grade And I flunked it I Well the Lord gives us pop pop tests.

We don't know it's a we don't know it's a pop exam until after it's and then God said that was a that was a That was a pop quiz son Lost my temper Have you been in the Word of God my son have you been reading my word? What did you do all weekend? Well I wasn't in the word This word is living It's not just words on a paper this word this word of God can transform your heart and prepare and and and and

transform you from a kindergartner to the doctorate level in God and It's all up to you. How long that takes There are people that are career students They it takes them nine ten years to complete a four-year school You know you know what I'm talking about and then there's those that breeze right through They know they're focused. They know what they want they have goals They're not fooling around they have goals in mind.

This isn't a this isn't a joke this isn't This isn't something That I can take lightly I Gotta get that degree. I've got to get that crown. I've got to get that And then the level of their commitment dictates how studiously they they endeavor to get through that course to obtain that which Their eyes are set upon Nothing stops them they will work two jobs three jobs to get through if they have children They'll they'll find a way to take care of their children and get through school When the freeloader sits at home with no children and no nothing partying with his friends, and he's got to repeat the first year of college Maybe he'll make it to the second year take a year off Little leave of what's it called Sabbatical take a little sabbatical go to Europe hang out Come back take a semester.

Oh Now he might have kids More distractions And it just piled all in the enemy, it's do you think Satan wants want you to grow up in God? No, of course not Do you think he wants you to become a prayer warrior? No, no, he doesn't Satan's greatest thing to the day we die will be to divert us from this book. I'm telling you if you don't If you don't if you don't believe that you're in a sad state this That means that you've never really decided to get serious with God's book You want to see the opposition of hell come against you you get you finally resolve that God. I want to know thee I Want thy presence in my life, and I want to know thee from thy word And I want to walk clean before God With a clean heart scoop that scum out of my heart God I don't care how hard set the fire to my heart to the to the to the kettle of my heart and Boil all those rogue impulses to the surface Lord.

I know that there's covetedness in me I know that there's lust in me. I know that there's a love of money in me I know that there's the love of and there's pride and there's greed There's unmortified desires Lord that are ungodly I Can't see them because I'm having a things are pretty fine right the devil's leaving me alone, so Yeah, I got a test coming up whenever I Don't have to pass it. I've got all my life to pass these tests, so what I slip up But when you finally resolve no God no enough's enough I'll do whatever it takes Lord.

God. I'll work two jobs. I want to progress in thee Father teach me thy ways That's it And you begin to endeavor to meet God in the morning The quiet time with the Word of God you wake up early So you have to go to work at 8 or 9 and you wake up you want to spend an hour with God with Jesus Meditating on the Word of God and that the presence of God with you that day Because you took time in the morning to get into the into wait on God You don't have to be doing that that long until you'll notice a shift in your life It's a diner.

It's in the spiritual God is a spirit Satan is a spirit There Will be a dynamic shift in your life and things will begin happening to you I Remember when I when I resolved to get to get serious with God And I prayed God God break me God God do thy will in my life Whatever it takes God you could have my house. You can have my car You can have my wife you can father you can you could you could put me wherever you want Lord God I just want you all for Jesus all for Jesus. Nothing matters, but Jesus and I was and I was Praying and I was just weeping at night to come to the place of absolute surrender as Andrew Murray would say Absolute surrender, and I had a I remember one day I came home, and I mean I Had this I had this dog that I loved And his name was smoky and my wife rescued him With Sean and I really grew So attached to this dog during those times.

I my wife, and I we don't have children and this dog just he He was everything to me. I didn't worship him or anything like that But he but I loved this dog and I remember when I got called up my National Guard unit got called up to go on hurricane relief when Hurricane Rita came and Hit the hit the Gulf Coast of Texas and up the Louisiana border And we had to go and help FEMA and hand out water and ice and food And I remember I missed my wife, and I longed for my wife but I also longed for my dog and he would greet me and and I Just remember And then one day I came home not long after praying God Take away anything everything Lord God, but I must have thee and I came home one afternoon and I'm in and I let the dog out and not ten minutes later. I hear a single gunshot in the distance From the neighbor's yard, and there's gunshots all the time where I live and people deer hunting or whatever But this time I stopped And I I thought of my dog I Said no, no, he'll be back.

Why would someone shoot my dog in? So two three hours go by and Never came back didn't come home starting to get dark or my wife Came home. This is about five hours now He would only be gone for 30 minutes at a time it's dark now and I said Smokey Smokey never came back. I let him out when I came home, and I didn't tell her that I heard a gunshot He never came back by 1230 that That evening we were we were both holding each other sobbing Because we knew he wasn't coming back And I remember getting up in the middle of the night and going into my office And getting down on my knees in the futon And crying why God why how could you allow this to happen? Oh God it hurts? My heart was breaking My heart was breaking and the Lord said Paul I allowed this to happen This is a test I Said no God no tests aren't like supposed to be like this no no no God.

I Feel like I've lost a person that I love And then God's I want to show you something and he showed me my heart And there's a big gaping hole in my heart That kind of looked like some of the trees that I saw during the hurricane relief where the the winds would extirpate these gigantic oaks and Fling them and the bigger the tree the larger the hole gaping with roots chaotic everywhere tore up massive holes in the ground I said the bond of my love for this dog the roots went deep in my heart and To have him gone like that in an instant Tore a hole in my heart And God said that was a part of your heart Paul That I wasn't in You have a you have a hole in your heart, and you have to fill that hole with something I Said Lord, I'll fill it with thee And God and then that's when the healing came And God filled that part of my heart And he taught me a very valuable lesson, and I grew since that day I've grown in the things of God that was a very painful test but it was a test nonetheless and I learned of the things of God, and I'll never be the same and that part is holy God It's now there are other parts of my heart that I don't know It's like the dark side of the moon. You don't know what's on the other side until God allows something to come in a tragedy And then as James says we use the wisdom to ask God for the wisdom Wisdom of God and God will show you what to do during those trials and fix And progress you Oh Lord Father God We thank Thee Lord That thou has revealed all things to us father and thy word Thou has shown us Lord God who we are in thee And that thy word is true and is to be trusted And we are never taken by surprise Lord God and To the point where we utterly fail Lord, and if we do fail It is not because of thee God, but it is because of The lack of preparation Lord that thou has told us ahead of time To get into thy word and to know thee Lord according to thy word Father it is my prayer that every soul here Lord would Take this message Home with them Lord And the next time The fire of God would be applied to their hearts in in any kind of divers temptation or Scenario Lord that they would remember The school of God and that they are being tested Lord As thy word says in Job you try man every moment Lord God let us never lose sight of thy eyes on us And thy school in the grades Lord And let us grow in this life that we have still father Some of us have another 20 years 30 years Lord God to To grow in the upper echelons of your university level father To know thee and to win the world for God And to impact our surroundings for God Lord God may it be so father Grow us all Lord We

ask this in Jesus name Amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16246.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paul-west/the-purpose-of-trials/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net