

A Survey of Genesis

Part 10

“Tested and True”

Joseph Turner was a famous English painter who invited one of his friends to his studio to see his most recent painting of “A Storm at Sea”.

Upon seeing the painting, his friend said to him **“It is wonderful, how did you make it look so real?”**

The Artist said that he went out to the coast of Holland and asked a captain to take him out to sea upon the arrival of the next storm.

As he entered the ship, the storm was already brewing, so he asked the captain to bind him to the mast of the ship.

“The storm raged with such fury that at times I longed to be back within the safety of the ships cabin where the waves could not blow over me.”



“But being lashed to the mast, I could do nothing but endure the storm.”

“Not only did I see the storm in it’s raging fury, I felt it, as the winds and waves buffeted my body I became a part of the storm.”

It was after going through the storm that I returned to my studio and painted the picture that you see...”

It is because of those storms that we go through in our life, **as the winds and the waves beat upon us**, that we realize that **all we can do is to surrender to the storm** and allow our self to become a part of the tempest.

While in the storm, we long for a place of peace and safety, but we endure...

When it is all over, it is then that we can return and paint the picture for others of what we have been through, and encourage them in their own storms..

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

4 **who comforts us in all our tribulation**, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Long before you and I had ever gone through our first storm, Jesus endure a tempest upon himself that none of us could imagine...

A storm brought upon Him by the very fires of Hell itself, from the adversary of all adversaries...

Matthew 4

- 1 Then Jesus was led **up by the Spirit** into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil
- 2 And when He had fasted **forty days and forty nights**, afterward He was hungry..
- 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "**If You are** the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."



In the literal Greek language: The "If" here in verse 3 is actually "Since" you are the Son of God; "Jesus you are the creator, why don't you use your powers to turn these rocks into bread?"

- ☞ **There are these large stones** in the Judean wilderness that look like big loaves of bread.
- ☞ **Jesus was so hungry** after 40 days of no food, that even the rocks began to look like loaves of bread to him.
- ☞ **Jesus is the Creator** All that He has to do is speak the word and one of those stones could become hot buttered bread.
- ☞ **Doctors say** that days 1-3 your body is using up whatever food there is in your intestines, it takes about 3 days for all of this to be gone.
- ☞ **During this first 3 days**, you experience intense gut wrenching hunger pains, headaches, body aches, even joint pain, as your body is being rid of all of the toxins that have been built up inside you.
- ☞ **From day 4-39**, the body starts to feed on the stored fat in your body.
- ☞ **From about day 4** all hunger stops, and you have no desire for food at all.
- ☞ **This can continue** for another 3 weeks or so, Most people will not experience any hunger at all, until around the 40th day of a fast
- ☞ **Doctors say that at about 40 days**, there no longer is any stored nutrients in your body and so it begins to die.



As we find Jesus here at the end of 40 days of a fast, He is literally dying...

Matthew 4

- 1 Then Jesus was led **up by the Spirit** into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil

Why would the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into a desolate place where He would be tempted by satan to sin?

- ☞ **The word “Wilderness” here in verse 1**, is not the wooded kind of wilderness that we see up in our mountains of Northern Arizona.
- ☞ **Wilderness means:** “Desolate”, “Barren”, not a tree, a blade of grass, nothing but sand, rocks and dirt.

If the Father loves Jesus, and If He loves us, then why does he permit us to go into barren places like this, where we are tested?

- ☞ **If the Father really cares about us**, why does He allow pain and suffering and loss to come into our life?
- ☞ **Can’t the Lord stop all of the pain** from coming into our life, now that we belong to Him and are trying to serve Him?
- ☞ **Yes He can**, and **yes He will**.
- ☞ **But at the present time** the Lord allows pain and suffering and loss in our life so that our foundation can be tested.
- ☞ **So that we might really see** where we stand eternally.
- ☞ **Because I can tell you from what I am going through right now, when you lose your best friend in a single day, your foundation is tested.**

Many years ago, the Cod fishermen on the East coast had began to ship their frozen Cod to all parts of the world.

They found out early in the process though that there was a problem...

In the freezing process the Cod lost all of it’s wonderful flavor.

One guy had a great idea, ship the Cod live in tanks of saltwater...

The fish arrived at their destination OK, but their meat had become soft and spongy.

So, they came up with the idea of placing in the tank with the Cod, **the natural enemy of the Cod, the Catfish.**

The catfish chased those poor little Cod all over the tank right up until they got to their destination.

The Cod were firm and fresh and had that wonderful flavor they had hoped for.

Sometimes, it is necessary for the Lord to allow is to have a Catfish come into our life once in a while and chase us around a little.

- ☞ **If He didn’t** we would just sit around and get mushy.
- ☞ **But He doesn’t allow us to be tested** beyond what we are able to bear, He knows just how much we can take before we will snap, and He wont let it go that far.

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, **who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able,** but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

And when you are going through those times, Jesus promised that He would be right there with you...

Hebrews 13:5

For Jesus Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you.

There have been many of you wondering how I am able to go through this time of Losing Elsie.

- ☞ **Well first of all,** I didn't lose her, **I know exactly where she is.**
- ☞ **I was there** when Jesus came and got her and took her home.
- ☞ **I have lived my life** believing what Jesus said:

John 14:1-3

1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.**

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself;** that where I am, there you may be also.

January 28th, Jesus came for Elsie because her place was ready, she had finished the race, she had completed all that the Lord planned for her life..

I was looking into Elsie's eyes and holding her hand when she took her last breath and I saw how graciously and tenderly the Father took Elsie by the hand and lifted her out of her pain and suffering and made her perfect.

- ☞ **It was the greatest thing** that I have ever experienced in my life, **to see the one that I love the most, be taken by my Father, and made perfect.**
- ☞ **I will never forget** what it is like to leave this earth and go home, and let me tell you, I can't wait for my day to come...

But until then, I need to stay here and encourage all of you in your own walk, and help you get ready for your own Home Going...Amen.

Philippians 1:21-24

21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.

23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having **a desire to depart and be with Christ,** which is far better.

24 Nevertheless **to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.**

Do you know why sometimes you hear a pastor teach and it is powerful and it hits you right in your heart and it changes you?

- ☞ **Other times**, a pastor delivers a message to you from the Word of God and it doesn't have the same power or effect upon you.
- ☞ **Do you know why?**
- ☞ **It is not because of the man** or his abilities.

A sermon born in the mind can only reach other minds.

But a sermon born out of your heart where the fires of pain, suffering and loss are born, will touch other hearts and burn into their lives, power, encouragement, and faith.

Why did the Father allow me to feel the deep anguish and deep loss of my best friend?

- ☞ **So that when I came back to this pulpit this morning**, I would have something born out of my own heart to touch your heart and effect your life.
- ☞ **So that when you are suffering** and you come here to be encouraged and find hope, you will know that I have been there, and I know what it feels like.

There is a tremendous difference between reading the words in the Bible and living the words in the Bible.

- ☞ **I never understood** the words that Paul wrote in Philippians 1:21-24 *about a desire to depart and be with Jesus verses a desire to stay here so that I can encourage you in your walk*, **as much as I understood them when I went through this with Elsie.**
- ☞ **When she was coming out of her body** and going home, how much I wanted to go with her.
- ☞ **To see my Lord face to face**, and to be with my best friend and see her for the first time perfect and healthy, **Yes I wanted to go.**

But then I thought of all of you, who I also love very much. And because the Lord has been so good to allow me to suffer much loss in my life, I can understand your life, and all you are going through, and perhaps I can help you to also finish your race as well as Elsie finished hers.

When you teach someone out of Gods Word, it may not always come from personal experience.

But when you have lived through what the Word of God says, and people know that you have lived it, and you are still standing up and loving the Lord and trusting Him and serving Him... That testimony will change people's lives.

That is why Jesus came to earth, to live through everything we will go through and still trust the Father and still love the Father, and still love you...

So that you would know that you are going to make it...I am going to make it...we are going to make it together...because the Love of the Lord will not fail us AMEN?

James 1:2-4

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

3 **knowing** that the testing of your faith produces patience.

4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing

James said "**Knowing**" that **this testing** will produce in us things that will someday make us perfect...can you count that all joy.

- ☞ **There is no joy in the trial itself**, but the person who knows Jesus, also knows that **the trial has a good purpose, that the Father Does love us...**
- ☞ "**Knowing**" that **the trial has a good purpose**, and will end with a good result, CAN YOU LOOK AHEAD TO THAT AND HAVE JOY?
- ☞ **Hebrews chapter 12** says that when Jesus was faced with the horror of the Cross, He despised it, He hated it, but He decided to endure the Cross because of you...

Hebrews 12:1-2

1 ... Jesus, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame...

The "**Joy set before Jesus**", was seeing you go through all of the trials of your life, and still trust Him, still cling to Him, still love Him.

- ☞ **When Jesus is at his lowest**, weakest point, that is when satan comes to Him to tempt Him.

Matthew 4

3 Now when **the tempter** came to Him, he said, "**Since You are** the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

4 But He answered and said, "**It is written**, `Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

Notice satan's name: "**The Tempter**", that is what he does, that is what he is good at.

- ☞ **He studies you** to see what your weaknesses are.

Job 1:8

Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you **considered** My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

The Hebrew word that the Lord used here in Job chapter 1 for “Considered”, is “Leb” (Labe) To search out the heart, study the feelings, and the will and even the intellect.

- ⊕ **The Lord is asking satan** if he has closely studied Job.
- ⊕ **It is the Hebrew term** that you would use to describe a Military General that is studying his enemy for his weaknesses, so he knows where to attack.
- ⊕ **Satan studies you**, he knows better than you do, the very things that will just get you right into your flesh.
- ⊕ **Do you know** how he knows?
- ⊕ **The things that really bug you**, or the things that make you maddest, or irritate you, these are the things that you are weakest in, and he will bring to you.

The only way you can overcome the flesh in these areas of your weakness, **is by prayer, the Word and by saying “NO”** I’m not going to get mad, irritated, I’m not going to let this bug me...”.

- ⊕ **It is in these areas** that you are weak in that he comes to tempt you.
- ⊕ **Not after** you have had a good nights sleep.
- ⊕ **Not when** everything in your life is going good.
- ⊕ **He comes** when you are at your weakest.

How do we handle those moments when we are the weakest and satan comes to tempt us?

- ⊕ **The same way** that Jesus took care of the tempter...
- ⊕ **By the Word** of God.

Matthew 4

- 5 Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,
6 and said to Him, "**If You are** (AGAIN—SINCE YOU ARE) the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: `He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, `In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.' "
7 Jesus said to him, "It is written again, `You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

Now if you are really paying attention here, you have noticed something.

- ⊕ **The Bible speaks of 3 areas** of our life that we will find that we will be tempted in.

1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world

1. The Lust of the Flesh.
2. The Lust of the Eyes.
3. The Pride of Life.

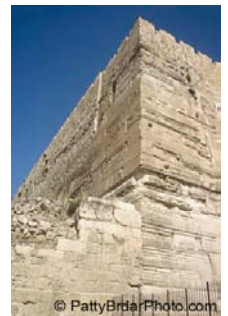
In the beginning, at the Garden of Eden, these were the same 3 areas that satan came to Eve to tempt her.

Genesis 3:1-6

1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”
2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;
3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ”
4 Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.
5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (**satan appeals to eves flesh, the Lust of the Flesh**)
6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, (**The Lust of the Eyes**) that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise (**The Pride of life**) , she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Here as satan has tempted Jesus flesh with using His power as God to turn the Rocks into Bread, it was the Lust of the Flesh.

- ☞ **Now Jesus is taken by satan to Jerusalem** to the Temple and told to “throw Himself off the temple”, that God said in His Word that he will catch Him...
- ☞ **This is the pride of life**, to pride fully test whether God will do what He has already said He will do in His Word.



Matthew 4

5 Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,
6 and said to Him, "**If You are** (AGAIN—SINCE YOU ARE) the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: `He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, `In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.' "
7 Jesus said to him, "**It is written again**, `You shall not tempt the Lord your God.

Jesus didn't have to test the Father to see if He would keep His word, Jesus believed what the Father said and that was enough...

Satan, don't tell me to do something in my own pride, I don't need to do anything, IT IS WRITTEN... **The Lord will do what He said He will do!**

- ☞ **What is going to happen to me** now that Elsie is gone on ahead to Heaven?
- ☞ **The Lord is going to bless** my life.
- ☞ **The Lord never takes away** that He doesn't give back much more.
- ☞ **Check it out** in your Bible.
- ☞ **Every time** someone who lived for and trusted the Lord suffered loss, they ended up getting back even more, because the Lord is FAITHFUL.

Elsie and I were called by the Lord to leave Sacramento, our church family that we loved, our home, our job, everything, and the Lord gave us an even more loving church family here in Winslow.

- ☞ **He gave us** a beautiful home in Heber.
- ☞ **He blessed us** in ways we never thought possible.
- ☞ **When the house in Heber burned** in the Wildfires, He gave us an even better house here in Winslow.
- ☞ **When Elsie died on the operating table 3 years ago**, He brought her back to life to show me His mighty power.
- ☞ **Then the Lord graciously gave Elsie and I 3 more years together**, when many of you came to join us here.
- ☞ **We had time to prepare for Elsie's departure**, we had 3 more years together, we went to Florida to see our kids, we went to Kauai on a wonderful vacation, we got to enjoy 3 of the most wonderful years of our lives together in those 3 years...

And then Jesus did His best work ever in Elsie and my life, , He took my Baby home and healed her, the one thing that Elsie need the most...WHAT A GOOD GOD WE SERVE.

So here, Jesus is undergoing the second temptation that all of us also undergo, the Temptation of the Pride of life.

- ☞ **When you are faced** with a terrible set of circumstances in your life, what will you do?
- ☞ **Will you pride fully try to handle it yourself**, or rely on your own resources?
- ☞ **Or will you fall upon** what the Word of God has already said?
- ☞ **This is what Jesus did, He is God, He could have called ten trillion angels to the rescue if He wanted.**
- ☞ **But instead**, Jesus just quietly turned to what the Word of God has already said.

That is what I have chosen to do in my situation, I hope that you will too in your day of need.

- ☞ **I have a 30 year record** of the faithfulness of the Lord in my life.
- ☞ **Not once** when satan and this world has thrown at me everything they could, has the Lord ever failed to come through for me.
- ☞ **He will come through for you**, if you will just trust Him.

Matthew 4

8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and **showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.**

9 And he said to Him, "**All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.**"

10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, `You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

11 Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

The final Temptation that Jesus endures was one that all of us endure almost daily:

- ⊕ *“The Lust of the Eyes.”*
- ⊕ **We tend to believe** what our eyes tell us.
- ⊕ **We walk by what we see**, not what we know.
- ⊕ **That is** our fallen nature.
- ⊕ **But there is a new Spiritual nature inside of us** that is speaking to us right now, “Don’t trust in what you can seem trust in what God said.”

satan tells Jesus that He doesn’t have to go the way of the Cross, there is a shortcut to getting all that He wants, just fall and worship satan and Jesus will receive all the power and glory he will ever need...

- ⊕ **Did satan have the authority** to give Jesus all the kingdoms of the world?
- ⊕ **Were they** satan’s to give?
- ⊕ **Yes**
- ⊕ **Remember that in the garden**, the Lord gave dominion of the entire earth to Adam.
- ⊕ In the fall, Adam lost his dominion to satan.
- ⊕ **It remains** under satan’s dominion until the present day.
- ⊕ **That is why it is wrong to blame God** for all of the horrible things that happen on the earth, it is not Gods fault.
- ⊕ **It is Adams fault**, he gave satan dominion over the earth, the results of his dominion is seen everyday in the horrible things that happen.
- ⊕ **This is not the world** that the Lord wanted for us.
- ⊕ **But there is coming a day** when the world will again come under the dominion of Jesus, and then righteousness will reign.
- ⊕ **God is still sovereign** and still reigns over the universe, so **He gives a limited dominion to satan over earth.**
- ⊕ **You remember in Job chapter 1**, the Lord greatly limited what satan was able to do to Job...
- ⊕ **Never the less**, satan, the Bible says is the “*God of this world*”.
- ⊕ **He is** the “*Prince of the power of the air*”.

2 Corinthians 4:4

...whose minds **the god of this world** has blinded, who do not believe

Ephesians 2:2

...in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to **the prince of the power of the air**, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

So you, don’t trust what your eyes see, don’t trust what your heart tells you, because remember your own heart will deceive you into thinking and feeling things that are not true.

Jeremiah 17:9

“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”

Who can know what is really in your heart? Not you, but the Lord knows, and He has told you the truth in His Word, that is what you can trust.

- ☞ **In moments like my own**, when suddenly someone that is the very best part of your life is gone home, **there is a great hole right in the middle of you**.
- ☞ **There are more emotions and feelings** than you can possibly imagine unless you have lost someone yourself.

So, I was faced, and I am faced everyday with a whirlwind of emotions that come right out of my heart.

- ☞ **But I will not trust** in what my heart is telling me.
- ☞ **I will trust in** what the Lord has already said in His Word.

The Lord gave these verses out of 1 Corinthians 15, the resurrection chapter, to me, during this time that I have based everything that I will do in the days ahead upon.

They are the verses that I have held on to as the hope for what happened to Elsie and what will happen to me someday...

The first part, verses 50 - 57, gave me a tremendous amount of encouragement for what happened at the moment of Elsie coming out of her body and going home.

Verse 58 is my encouragement for what to do now in my own life...

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed—**

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

55 “O Death, where is your sting?

O Hades, where is your victory?”

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But **thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Therefore, since I have this hope, **that Elsie was changed**, she was made perfect, she is home, and when Jesus returns for all of us at the Rapture, Elsie will be coming with the

Lord as will all those who have already gone on ahead of us...Now what do I do until then, what do you do until then?

1 Corinthians 15

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord**, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

I am going to be Steadfast, Immovable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord...because we don't have any time to waste Jesus is come for all of us soon.

Two weeks ago Saturday, I saw firsthand just how fast the Lord can come for us...so I am going to be found by Jesus being about His business...

How about You?

Are you stinting on the fence, not really serving the Lord yet with all of your heart?

- ☞ **Have the problems** and the pains of life stopped you from moving on.
- ☞ **Has fear prevented you** from stepping out to serve the Lord here in our church, Hey **I really need you right now, there are some big shoes to fill that Elsie left.**
- ☞ **It is time to get off the fence** and lets move forward together and "Abound in the work of the Lord, together, OK?"

Fence Sitter

There was a large group of people standing near a huge fence

Jesus stood on one side of the fence, on the other side stood satan.

Jesus began calling people in the large group one by one to come to His side of the fence, satan also calling out to the crowd to come to his side of the fence.

As each person heard the voices calling out to them, they made up their own mind as to which side they would go to.

This continued on for a long time until Jesus had gathered around him a group of people from the larger crowd, as did Satan.

But one man joined neither group. He climbed the fence that was there and sat on it. Then Jesus and his people left and disappeared. So too did Satan and his people. And the man on the fence sat alone.

As this man sat alone on the fence, Satan came back sometime later, as though he was looking for something which he appeared to have lost. The man said, "**Have you lost something?**" Satan looked straight at him and replied, "No, there you are. Come with me."

"But", said the man, "I sat on the fence. I chose neither you nor Jesus."



"That's okay," said Satan. "I own the fence."

Jesus went into the Wilderness and all the trials of that desert experience and yet he was **Tested and True**...I have been into that wilderness and I want to be found also being Tested and True, and I hope that all of us together will continue to be about our Fathers Business and be found by Him as Being Tested but still True when Jesus comes for us...