



A QUESTION OF CHARACTER

LESSON 2

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WORD FOR THE JOURNEY

- **Romans 12:1-2** Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
- Prove: *dokimazo*: to assay, test, or approve by refining
- **LEARNING GOAL FOR THIS CLASS:**
Learning to hear God and respond to Him in such a way that His purposes can be fulfilled in us
WHEN WE BEGIN TO DO THIS, WE WILL ENCOUNTER SPIRITUAL OPPOSITION
- We must learn to recognize the enemy

HOW THE BATTLE IS WAGED

- **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...

1. The warfare is spiritual with good defense

2. Speculation is involved (*logismos*: arguments) **destroy**

3. Lofty things (*hupsoma*: thing lifted up; high place) **destroy**

- **We are to guard our thoughts, making them a prisoner to the things that Christ has purposed for us** (some of these thoughts may be applauded by the

CONFORMING THOUGHTS

- Any thought that doesn't conform to the full lordship of Christ should be rejected
- **1 Peter 5:8** Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
Alert: *gregoreo*: keep watching; stay awake; be vigilant
Adversary: *antidikos*: against justice; opponent in court
Devour: *katapino*: swallow down; overwhelm
- **Romans 12:1-2** Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service of worship*. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may **prove** what the will of God is, that which is good and

THE NATURE OF TESTS

- **Exodus 15:22-25** Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah. So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" Then he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; and he threw *it* into the waters, and the waters became sweet. There He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them.
- **Tested:** *nasa*: to assay; to prove the quality of something
- **Exodus 15:26** And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians: for I the LORD am your

THE ARMOR

- **Trusting is a matter of faith; but we have been told that we have what we need**
- **Ephesians 6:10-12** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.
- Armor (offensive and defensive) is given by one covenant partner to another
- **1 Samuel 18:3-4** Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt

DWELLING ON FAILURE: PAUL

- **Philippians 3:3-6** ... for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.
- **Philippians 3:13-14** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

DWELLING ON FAILURE: PETER

- **Matthew 26:69-75** Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied *it* before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." When he had gone out to the gateway, another *servant-girl* saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." And again he denied *it* with an oath, "I do not know the man." A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Surely you too are *one* of them; for even the way you talk gives you away." Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man!" And immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

PREPARED TO DIE

- **Mark 14:31** But *Peter* kept saying insistently, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing also.
- **Mark 14:36-38** And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will." And He came and found them sleeping and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
- **John 18:3** Judas then, having received the *Roman* cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.
- **John 18:10-11** Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter,

KNOWING WHEN TO CHANGE

- **Luke 22:31-32** "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."
- Demanded: *exaiteo*: to ask for something for yourself
- **Luke 22:35-37** And He said to them, "When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They said, "No, nothing." And He said to them, "But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one. "For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS'; for that which refers to Me has *its* fulfillment "

OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT

- **Matthew 26:32** "But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."

- **John 21:15-17** So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs."

- He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep."

- He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."

- Grieved: *lupeo*: distressed, sorrowful

- Jesus: 2 x *agape*: last time *phileo*: Peter used *phileo* 3x

A MESSAGE OF RESTORATION

- The gospel is a message of restoration
- It is also a message of preparation: just being saved is not all God desires; God also desires discipleship
- False teachers and false religious sects are rampant within "Christianity" – cults that use the name of Jesus but don't understand the basics of God's plan for redemption
- **1 Timothy 6:20-21** O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly *and* empty chatter *and* the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge"— which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Grace be with you.
- **THE MORE WE UNDERSTAND GOD AND HIS PURPOSE FOR US, THE LESS LIKELY WE ARE TO FAIL**
- **WHEN WE DO FAIL, GOD WILL FORGIVE AND RESTORE WHEN WE COME TO HIM IN CONFESSION**