

THE LITMUS TEST FOR MATURE FAITH

By: Fountain Hendricks

Daniel 3:17-18

Mature faith is measured by how you handle pressure and stress during **UNEXPECTED** times. Your faith can be as small as a mustard seed. However, you do not want it to remain the size of a mustard seed.

You want your faith to grow. You want your faith to develop. However, the only way for your faith to grow is to **TEST** it by putting it under pressure.

Pressure reveals how strong and stable your faith is. It is easy to proclaim what you believe. However, it is hard to stand for what you believe when you are under pressure.

THERE ARE MANY TYPES OF PRESSURES THAT TEST OUR FAITH. HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES.

- **PEER PRESSURE:** Peer pressure is when you are **HIGHLY COMPELLED** to do something against your values to please people.
- **BUSINESS PRESSURE:** Business pressure is when you **FEEL FORCED** to practice unethical behavior to increase profits or productivity.
- **FAMILY PRESSURE:** Family pressure is when you **FEEL GUILTY** to do something for your family that you are against.
- **ETHNICITY PRESSURE:** Ethnicity pressure is when you feel the **BURDEN** to represent your heritage as a minority in a group of majorities.

- **POLITICAL PRESSURE:** Political pressure is when you **CARRY THE WEIGHT** of making decisions based on affiliation instead of righteousness.

Your faith matures when you are forced to choose between righteousness and outside pressure. The selection of righteousness is evidence that your faith is growing. Every time you choose righteousness over outside pressure you will be tested again with more at stake to lose.

With every test comes a price tag attached! For example, one test may cause you to sacrifice time. Another test may cause you to lose friends.

Another test may cause you to lose money. It goes on and on. Until your faith matures to the point that you realize that nothing is more fragile than your faith, your faith needs developing!

MATURE FAITH WILL NEVER ABANDON GOD!

Remember Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? These three Hebrew boys had mature faith. They refused to bow to the golden image of king Nebuchadnezzar. They put their lives on the line to honor King Jesus.

The three Hebrews boys believed that God would deliver them from the fiery furnace. Yet, they were so committed to God that even if God did not deliver them they still believed in His purpose and decision.

Daniel 3:17-18 says, "If you throw us into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from the furnace. He will save us from your power, O king. But even if God does not save us, we want you, O king, to know this: We will not serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."

Mature faith is not subjected to circumstances nor is it conditional. Mature faith is stable in its convictions. Whether a person is going through good times or tough times, their faith **NEVER** changes.

If you waver in your faith it needs developing. If your faith is weary it needs developing. If you compromise your faith it needs developing. God puts you through tests so your faith can be solid. As Kingdom citizens we are **ONLY** called to fight one type of fight and that is the "**GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH.**"

1st Timothy 6:11-12 says, "But you, man of God, run away from all those things. Instead, live in the right way, serve God, have faith, love, patience, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, grabbing hold of the life that continues forever. You were called to have that life when you confessed the good confession before many witnesses."

Continue to fight the good fight of faith. Go through the Lord's tests with pleasure. Embrace the challenges God puts you through.

This is the **GOOD** fight that is worthy of your energy, time and resources. Building your faith to the point of maturity will **GUARANTEE** God's approval. When the Lord is pleased with you He will not withhold no good thing from you.

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