



GROWING IN CHRIST
One Day your Test can
become Your Testimony

NorthRidge Church
Pastor Harold Butler
October 18, 2026

Acts 13 & 14 Testing Produces:

1. _____ (Perseverance): Romans 5:3, James 1:2-3
Don't pray for patience PRACTICE IT...
2. _____ Romans 8:18
3. Awareness of the _____ of God: Heb. 13:5 Matt.
28:19-20 Isa. 41:10

Tests are the _____ to move us to the next step.

Growing in Christ ... Romans 12:1-2

Spiritual growth begins when we continually surrender ourselves to God and allow Him to transform our minds.

_____ isn't adding more religious activity; it's yielding more of yourself to Christ. It...

- I. Begins with _____ (v.1) Rom. 6:13, 16, 19; 2 Tim. 4:17
- II. _____ Renewing the Mind (v.2) Acts 14:2; Titus 3:5
- III. Produces _____ (v.2) Rom. 1:28, 1 Tim. 4:17, 1 John 4:1

So What ...

Only God's _____ produces transformed believers.

_____ Christians never stop growing.

The mature believer _____ God's will because his thinking has been transformed.

Those who choose to stay _____ will never mature.

You have a story of God's faithfulness that somebody else needs to hear. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Some of the mercies of God:

- Justification from the guilt and penalty of sin.
- Adoption in Jesus and identification with Christ.
- Placed under grace, not law.
- Giving the Holy Spirit to live within.
- Promise of help in all afflictions.
- Assurance of a standing in God's election.
- Confidence of coming glory.
- Confidence of no separation from the love of God.
- Confidence in God's continued faithfulness.

Appointment with God – Prayer Focus

THE SWEET AROMA OF PRAYER...AND GOD'S POWER

When prayers feel lost in difficult seasons, Scripture reveals a different reality; they do not vanish. Gathered in golden bowls before God's throne, every prayer rises as a sweet-smelling aroma, fully valued and savored by the Creator.

*The twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp and **golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints. Rev. 5:8***

An angel with a golden censer stands at the altar. He is given much incense (the prayers of all God's people) which is then infused with fire from the altar and hurled to the earth; ...*"and then came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. Rev. 8:3-5"*

The fire on the altar was originally lit by God Himself and was never allowed to go out. It represents God's absolute holiness. When your prayers are mixed with this fire, it's symbolic of God purifying your weak, imperfect words and infusing them with His perfect and holy will. The altar fire also represents the power of the Cross and the Resurrection. Our prayers become backed by the work of Jesus and they return to earth with authority because they are stamped with Christ's victory. Symbolically, thunder echoes the authoritative voice of God. Lightning brings divine illumination and breakthroughs. Earthquakes shake and shift unmovable situations.

Place your prayers into the golden bowl. Leave them in God's hands, knowing He sees and values them. Welcome the "fire", asking God to purify your motives and align your requests with His perfect timing and power. Keep praying, as the heavenly bowls fill and God's fire responds. Submit the outcomes to God. Leave your time of prayer with absolute confidence that God is actively working behind the scenes and that His response will shake things up with breakthroughs, divine directions, and shifting circumstances.

Do these scriptures impact how you will pray today?



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Acts 13 & 14 Testing Produces:

1. **Patience** (Perseverance): Romans 5:3, James 1:2-3
Don't pray for patience PRACTICE IT...
2. **Perspective**: Romans 8:18
3. Awareness of the **Presence** of God: Hebrews 13:5 Matthew 28:19-20 Isaiah 41:10

Tests are the **Catalysts** to move us to the next step.

Growing in Christ ... Romans 12:1-2

Spiritual growth begins when we continually surrender ourselves to God and allow Him to transform our minds.

Growth isn't adding more religious activity; it's yielding more of yourself to Christ. It...

- I. Begins with **Surrender** (v.1) Romans 6:13, 16, 19; 2 Timothy 4:17
- II. **Requires** Renewing the Mind (v.2) Acts 14:2; Titus 3:5
- III. Produces **Discernment** (v.2) Romans 1:28, 1 Tim. 4:17, 1 John 4:1

So What ...

Only God's **Mercy** produces transformed believers.

Healthy Christians never stop growing.

The mature believer **increasingly recognizes** God's will because his thinking has been transformed.

Those who choose to stay **on the bench** will never mature.

You have a story of God's faithfulness that somebody else needs to hear. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

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