

11 CALIFORNIANS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

TEN: TEST

Either with a group or on your own, use the following questions to explore Bible passages and apply insights from the video session.

What stood out to you from the video?

Read 2 Corinthians 13:5-14

1. Describe a time you either did very well or very poorly on a test. How did you feel while you were taking the test? What was your experience when you learned the result?

2. On a piece of paper, list out current ways by which people evaluate themselves. What are the measures by which you evaluate yourself? Are these measures healthy? In contrast, what measures does the Lord use to test us?

3. As we learned in the video session, the Greek word for "test" means "to be tested in battle." How can we become "tested in battle?" What is the goal of becoming "tested in battle?"

4. Describe a time when you witnessed a person lose a battle. How did they respond? How did they pick themselves back up to try again?

5. What are some ways by which the world prevents us from honestly testing and proving ourselves? What does the world have to gain by doing this?

Read James 1:1-18

6. According to these verses, why does our faith need to be tested? What do we receive when we are tried by difficult circumstances in life?

7. Why does James go to great lengths to state that the Lord does not tempt us? What is the origin of our temptation? How does the Lord use our temptation to refine us and test us in battle?

8. How has your faith been tested in your life? What are some battles you have had to conquer in the past? How did they form you into the person you are today?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Psalm 139:1-24

9. Why does King David reflect upon the infinite knowledge of God before asking Him to test and search his thoughts?

10. What might we learn from these verses about the kind of relationship we ought to form with the Lord? What kind of familiarity did David have with the Lord that we might lack?

A PRAYER OF EXAMINATION

During his ministry, Ignatius of Loyola practiced a prayer at the end of each day called the Examen. He would use this simple method of prayer in order to review his day and examine himself:

1. Take some time to breathe and enter into the presence of God. Feel the warmth of His love and mercy surround you.
2. Give thanks to the Lord for the good things you experienced during the day. Express your gratitude to the Lord.
3. Review what took place over the course of the day. Ask the Lord to help you see yourself the way that He sees you—without shame and as a beloved child.
4. Reflect on where you may have fallen short. Do not dwell on any mistakes with shame, but instead, notice them and ask the Lord for forgiveness.
5. Determine to listen to God's call during the next day and meditate upon the person that God is calling you to be. Close your prayer however you see fit.

***Fight for the Gospel to transform
your heart and to transform this
world... fight in the little things.
Fight when you're tempted to sin.
Fight when you're too tired to pray.
Fight when you are nervous about
sharing Christ with a friend... fight
to understand... fight to resolve
your uncertainty... fight to share
your struggles... fight to stand up...
fight to move forward... fight for
every scrap of courage you can
muster... fight to find what God has
called you to do.***

KYLE WELCH
