

Chapter 2

The TIME Test

The purpose of The Time Test is to give the person being tested an opportunity to grow in faith. God want us to learn to trust Him for His timing and provision instead of manipulating the out comes to fit our current state of immaturity.

We all want what God has for us-and we want it right now! You know how it is after you've just started believing God for something. Perhaps you've been in a church service and have gotten excited about something God said He was going to do in your life. You dance, you shout, and you rejoice! You are determined to keep believing for that promise to come to pass-however long it may take!

But a few weeks go by. Then a few months. Before long a year passed-and the thing you were believing for still hasn't come to pass. What the flesh tends to do at this point is to get you discouraged. This is because we hate waiting. That's just human nature. We hate waiting in line. We hate waiting in traffic. We hate waiting for anything.

So with every day that passes, your flesh starts telling you that what you're believing for isn't going to happen. And then-because you really do want what God promised-you begin to think, What can I do to fix this? How can I make it happen?

A lot of people have made their situations worse because they came up with their own plans to fix their problems. In their heads that little clock was ticking, and their minds started to tell them God might not come through. So instead of being patient enough to wait for God's best, they settled for less.

Sometimes God will allow us to face certain situations to show us we have to wait for Him. This is what I call THE TIME TEST. Galatians 6:9 says. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. The Amplified Bibles say it this way: And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint.

The purpose of THE TIME TEST is to give the person being tested an opportunity to grow in faith. God wants us to learn to trust Him for His timing and provision instead of manipulating the outcome to fit our current state of immaturity. There is only one questions on THE TIME TEST: Will you be patient long enough to allow God to work out your situation in His timing, or will you resort to your own way of doing things because you don't want to wait?

THE TIME TEST is designed to teach us that we have to start using our faith to get us into our due season. We can't try to make something happen in our own strength simply because we want an answer right now.

IS LIFE PASSING YOU BY?

Single person, will you wait for God to send you His choice as your mate? Or will you listen to your flesh screaming, I want somebody! I want to be with somebody! I'm tired of being by myself! I feel like life is passing me by?

It's so sad when people flunk THE TIME TEST in the area of relationships. They reach out and grab somebody just so they won't be alone, then find themselves married to Mr. Right Now when Mr. Right finally walks by. Then they're mad as fire! Instead, if you're single you could decide to pass THE TIME TEST by being patient. You could keep doing all the things God has been talking with you about instead of telling yourself, I've got to be in a relationship right now!

Have you noticed that whatever you've been waiting for seems to show up faster when you get busy? Say you're at home waiting for someone to pick you up. If you're at the front door looking out the window and checking your watch every two minutes, it will seem like they're taking forever. However, if you get up and start cleaning the house, put a load of clothes in the washing machine, and take care of other chores, the person will seem to show up in no time.

While you're keeping busy, the person you've been waiting for rings the doorbell or blows the horn. You end up having to scamper to get out the door. It takes the same amount of time either way, but it doesn't feel as long when you're not sitting around preoccupied with how long you're waiting.

David knew the importance of waiting for God's appointed time. He wrote these words while fleeing King Saul, who was trying to kill him: My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. Ps 31:15 Obviously David wanted deliverance right away. But notice that before he asked God to manifest His victory, David said, my time is in your hand, God. Then he said, Of course, I'd like to have the victory right now, but I'm willing to wait as long as I need to. I'm giving this situation to You. I put the timing in your hands. Work this out in the time you know is right for me.

The Message Bible says it this way: Hour by hour I place my days in your hand, safe from the hands out to get me. Every single hour of the day we can say, as David did, God I give this hour to you. The moment we start trying to put all the pieces together and figure out what we're going to be doing five years from now, ten years from now, fifteen years from now, that's when the pressure shows up. This

is especially true of single women. Everybody starts telling you, You're in your thirties now. You have only a few more years to still have children. That's pressure! I'm not saying this is easy to deal with. I'm a man. I have no idea how tough it is mentally to face this reality. But you must still understand this, young lady- it's even tougher to face the consequences of rushing out and jumping ahead of God!

With THE TIME TEST we learn that if we try to rush things, all we end up doing is jumping out of one pot of pressure into another. That won't solve the problem. The situation will only get fixed when we slow down, trust God, and continue doing His Will until we see the victory manifest. If you rush ahead of God and try to make things happen on your own, you may get married and have children but have to raise those children by yourself because the marriage didn't work out. What's age to God, anyway? Sarah was ninety years old when she gave birth to Isaac. I know you're not planning to have children when you're ninety, but you must have that level commitment to wait on the Lord's timing. You must be determined to pass THE TIME TEST and not jump ahead of God. If you get ahead of God, you'll find yourself in worse trouble later on.

EVERYTHING HAS A SEASON

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Tells us, To everything there is a season, and time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast stones away, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and time to refrain from ; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

No matter how much we try to manipulate things to make this the appointed season for our promise to manifest, we can't rush things if we're waiting for God's anointing and sanction. No matter how big a hurry we may be in, God is not going to hasten things along. He waits until the timing right. Galatians 4:4 says God sent forth His son in the fullness of time. Think about that for a moment. Don't you know that God could have brought Jesus on the scene through Sarah? He could have called Sarah to be the virgin who gave birth to His Son. But God has perfect time for everything. If He waited for the right time to redeem the world, you'd better believe He's going to wait for the right season to manifest whatever

you're believing for. You just need to be willing to wait for His perfect timing and trust Him.

We all have seasons in our lives. When it's your season, you will bring forth good fruit, and nobody can stop the flow of God's anointing on your life except you. I like to say, When it's on you, it's just on you. People can be mad at you. They can dislike you. They can be jealous because you were promoted. But so what? When God promotes, there's nothing anybody can do about it. God doesn't ask permission. All He ask is that you be patient and pass **THE TIME TEST**-just be in the right place at the right time and be doing what He told you to do.....

FLUNKING THE TIME TEST

Don't be like Abraham when he was waiting for the child God promises. God told him to look at the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore because that was how numerous his seed was going to be. Abraham was seventy five years old when God first came to him and made this promise. We might ask, Why didn't God do it right then? If Abraham fathered a baby at seventy-five years of age, wouldn't that be enough of a miracle? Evidently Abraham wasn't ready to receive the promise of God. He left Ur of Chaldees and flunked the first test coming out of the gate because he took Lot with him when God told him to leave his family. Then when went into Egypt, he flunked another test because he was afraid God didn't have enough power to protect him. It's clear the Abraham wasn't ready for his promise to manifest yet.

Eleven years after God promised Abraham he would be the father of many nations, he still had no child. Then Sarah came up with a grand idea. We don't have a child yet and we've been trying, she says....So why don't you take my young servant, Hagar, and sleep with her, and then when she give birth, we'll take that baby as our child. Maybe that's what the Lord intended. Abraham being the great man of faith that he was, say Good idea! So he took Hagar as his wife and lay with her, and she became pregnant. But after Hagar conceived, she began to feel superior to Sarah and started to mock her. So Sarah did what every woman has the prerogative to do-she changed her mind. Sarah told Abraham to get Hagar out of the compound. Abraham was eighty-six at this time. Remember, when we flunk **THE TIME TEST** by trying to make things happen ourselves, not only do we have to take the same test again, but we also delay the process.

Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was given another shot at **THE TIME TEST**. Thirteen years of this man's life went by because he went ahead of God and tried to bring the promise to pass in his own timing, Abraham and

Sarah tried to manipulate the situation because they felt God wasn't moving fast enough....Abraham had to wait because he needed to work out some internal issues. He had to learn to trust God, and that lack of faith was causing the manifestation of his promise to be delayed. If he had dealt with those heart issues when he was seventy-five or eighty, God may have given him Isaac back then. As it turned out, it took thirteen years of nothing happening before Abraham was finally ready to listen. God came along and told Abraham, No longer am I going to do all the work, but now you're going to come into covenant with me. You're going to circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, as well as that of your son and servants, as a reminder that you owe me something in return. I'm counting on you to not mess up what I'm trying to do in your life.

When Abraham finally comes into covenant with God, it takes only three months for him and Sarah to conceive. The next year Isaac is born. Why was Sarah able to get pregnant then when she hadn't been able to conceive all those years? Abraham passed the test! How did he pass the test? The circumcision in his flesh kept reminding him, Whoa, whoa, whoa! I have a part to play in this covenant relationship. I can't rush out and do it ahead of God. That's why Abraham was ready to obey when God told him to take his son to the top of mountain. See Genesis 22 He had flunk enough tests. He was tired of failing. I don't know about you, but that's true for me as well. I have flunk too many tests in my life, and I'm tired of failing. Like Abraham, now I only want to get it right!

RECEIVING GOD'S BEST.

Do you want to pass THE TIME TEST? It may not be easy, but it's simple. Every day you just need to open up your heart to hear what the Lord is saying to you. Look at the decisions you may be getting ready to make, and be sure you're not making a choice now that you'll regret years later. If you don't have total peace, which only God can provide, that may be because you're not operating in God's timing. Submit your way to the Lord and receive His best. God's best is so much better than what you can dream up on your very best day! So just wait on God. Tell yourself, If' it not quite, it's not right. If you find yourself trying to manipulate the situation to make it happen, it's not God's best. You're jumping the gun. Slow down and just be patient.

Get up every day, do what God is telling you to do for that day, and trust Him. Do what He has appointed you to do, and in due season, if you faint not, you shall have your heart's desire. If you're ready to put your times in God's hands, make this your prayer:

Thank you Lord, for giving me understanding and helping me to realize why I've been stuck in some places longer than I thought I should be....Thank you for helping me understand why certain things haven't worked out the way I know they should have....Thank you for helping me to get further clarity. The enemy is just trying to get me to jump the gun and move outside of your timing. Today I have purposed in my heart to take my time. I'm going to trust your timing and believe that you know how to work the situation out far better than I do. Even if it looks like my way could work, I'm willing to trust You, because doing what is ultimately the best before You is what I live for. Thank you for giving me the grace to be patient and pass THE TIME TEST. I give Your praise and glory for this lesson learned, in Jesus name. Thank you, Lord God Amen