

## A. Introducing the Subject

1. As with our previous subject, to some this would be another form of adversity. But in reality it is sufficiently different to make a separate heading for it. It is a bit complicated since we often make testing situations for ourselves...but if we remember that the testing of God is not to sin (not in the direction or intent of sin) we are likely not going to confuse the Divine program with our own foibles.

2. Frankly, most of us would like to be out of the testing business. Testing suggests we are not so strong as we think we really are and may pretend to be. But as weightlifting develops muscles (they tell me !) so testing develops character.

3. This also means that testing allows us to show character. Our Lord was severely tested. ....not to see if he were the Lord or not but to allow him to show what Lordship looked like. Therefore when testings come to us..they come to permit us to show what it means to know him and to be blessed by his character.

## B. Discussion

1. Testing: What is it? As we are discussing it, testing is the formal trying of a subject to determine its vitality. (Not very impressive?) Testing is not "tempting to sin" but placing one under a burden of stress; in a place of decision; in an area where trial calls for character. Practical spiritual testing is bringing one to a rather unexpected point of determination where forces about seek to challenge the fullness of commitment. Testing is examining the heart and life and giving an analysis as to the depth of feeling and life there in. Testing is coming to being brought to a level where dedication to God must be shown or perhaps rejected. It is easier to be tested than to define testing. And we are really only