



The Believers' Testing of Faith

1 Peter 1:6-9 (NKJV)

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Introduction

TEST

- is a word that some people are afraid to face.
- is a word that some people want to avoid.
- is a word that some people do not value.
- is a word that most people do not understand deeply.

Test is a challenge or difficult situation allowed by God for the purpose of strengthening faith.

As believers of Christ, we need to understand the following purpose of our testing:

1. Testing brings out our true character.

a. At times of need - God brings the best in us as we make a stand on our faith in Him and as we continue on following Him.

2 Kings 20:1-6

“In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: ‘Set your house in order, for you shall die, and not live.’” ²Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to

the Lord, saying, ³“Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly. ⁴And it happened, before Isaiah had gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, ⁵“Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, “Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: “I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. ⁶And I will add to your days fifteen years. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake, and for the sake of My servant David.””

b. At times of victory - At the midst of success that God brings to our lives, our character is tested if we will proclaim to other people God's greatness or our self-accomplishments.

2 Chronicles 32:31

However, regarding the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, whom they sent to him to inquire about the wonder that was done in the land, God withdrew from him, in order to test him, that He might know all that was in his heart.

c. At both times of victory and of need - When we are strong spiritually, the enemy searches at the weaker points in our lives and attempt to test them.

Luke 4:1-2

“Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ²being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days

He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

2. Testing is God's way of refining us.

a. God tests us not to trip us nor to watch us fall, but to deepen our capacity to obey Him, thus to develop and to refine our character.

Genesis 22:12, 15-18

¹²And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

¹⁶Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—¹⁷“blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

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Rev. Morrell B. Estrellado
Associate Pastor



The world is home to the richest culture, heritage, and history, which began in the creation of the Lord. To commemorate the diverse ways of life and cultures of different countries, United Christian Academy (UCA) and UCA College of Asia (UCACOA) celebrated the Festival of Cultures from November 19–21, Wednesday to Friday.

Students from high school and college creatively prepared exhibits representing different countries, showcasing the abundant culture of each community that signifies their mark as a nation.

Aside from exhibits, students were welcome at the UCA stage to perform their original presentations, highlighting culture, connection, unity, and camaraderie among nations. The event also featured fun-filled and interactive booth games that students got to play and enjoy both face-to-face and online.

The week was filled with delightful activities that allowed students to learn in a fun and engaging way. Truly, UCA programs continue to mold students holistically. Praise the Lord for His goodness!

Booth Games

Both online and face-to-face students had an enjoyable moment playing the booth games during the festival of cultures.



It was a fun event for all of the students. The program gave them an opportunity to learn and enjoy at the same time.

2 Peter 3:9
(NKJV)

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Exhibit

The high school and college students set-up their exhibit at the UCA Multi-purpose Hall. The place was filled with colorful and informative displays. This engaging and interactive exhibit is both fun and educational.



The elementary students visit various exhibits, while the high school students eagerly share fun facts and information.



The exhibitors dress themselves up according to the country they have chosen to display. Games and prizes await the students who visited the booth.



So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Hebrews 9:28
(NKJV)

Online Presentation

Even distance learning students joined in the fun and joy of impressive cultural performances. Wearing costumes that represent longstanding ideals and values, they danced with confidence and charisma while holding their props and creatively-made costumes, with most of them handsewn by their parents.



The students give their best efforts in all the activities of UCA. It inculcates in them the lesson of working with excellence.



The festival of cultures is an opportunity for students to witness the essence of unity, love, and peace between people, races, and nations.



There is nothing more fun than learning and discovering new things together with their classmates.



2 Thessalonians 1:10 (NKJV) *when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.*

Grade 7 to Grade 12

Though limited by distance, the online students from Grades 7 to 12 actively participated in their cultural performances. They showed enthusiasm and interest in discovering and portraying diverse and unique cultures. Each country differs from one culture to another, but each also possesses its own uniqueness that makes it special and extraordinary.



Number 1

Suksma, Rahajeng memargi!

Thank you, have a safe journey!

Bali has its own traditional calendar, called the "Pawukon," which consists of 210 days instead of 365. Many festivals and dances follow this special calendar.

Students share interesting trivias and unique traditions unknown to many.



Their resourcefulness and creativity also stand out as they make their own props and costumes for their performance.



They even learn common phrases like simple greetings, introductions, and everyday questions in both formal and informal manner.



Even at the comfort of their homes, the online students participate in all school activities and make fun experiences with their classmates and teachers. After all, it is the goal of UCA to engage even distance learners in meaningful learning.

BISKUT AIS JEM
Iced Gem Biscuits

RAINBOW BISCUITS WITH ICING TOPS

ASLI

the first one of the four primary genres of Malay dance

SENIOR HIGH

MALAYSIA



For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 (NKJV)

Pre-school to Grade 3

Highlighting the beauty of East Asian culture in China, Japan, and South Korea, the Grades 1 to 3 students graced the stage with traditional dances and music, showcasing their countries thriving culture and unique characteristics. The pre-school pupils also performed an adorable song-and-dance number featuring greetings in different languages and God's love for all the children in the world.



The stage is filled with colorful traditional costumes and heartwarming smiles from the kids as they gladly dance and sing.



Everyone is in awe at the amazing talents these kids proudly and confidently bring on stage.



Each grade level highlights diverse cultures from around the world through creative dances, meaningful storytelling, and colorful costumes.



Revelations 1:7 (NKJV) Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Grade 4 - 5

Wearing their festive costumes, students danced to the culture and festivities of their countries. They portrayed historical events and highlighted their represented country's contributions to the world.



IRAN



Students get to discover and to showcase their talent in dancing, singing, and even acting.



SAUDI ARABIA

Grade 6 - 7

Recreating cultural performances in the modern times gives students a chance to explore traditions, customs, and cultures, including clothes, food, language and many more.



ISRAEL

Through their creative and dynamic presentations, they get to experience and to depict the rich culture of the country they represent.



INDONESIA

¹Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:1-2 (NKJV)

Grade 8 - 9

Students turn their performances into an interactive and informative play that caught the interest of the live audience. Their talents and creativity stood out throughout their performances.



These performances help to hone students' skills and talents, which will surely improve throughout their learning journey.



Grade 10 - 12

The festival of cultures gave the students a glimpse of the symbolic history and development of each country. They showed how the culture has evolved throughout time.



Different cultures show God's marvelous works through the wisdom He gave to mankind, being passed on and evolving through generations.



Revelation 11:15
(NKJV)

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

Awarding

The students' hard work, creativity, and talents were recognized as they receive their badges for special awards. Their days of preparation paid off with the excellent execution of their exhibits and performances.



The students' parents, guardians, and loved ones also show their support and join them on stage as they receive their awards.



Through such programs, their God-given talents and skills are discovered and nurtured.



Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Romans 5:12
(NKJV)

Photobooth

Wearing their colorful costumes and bright smiles, students pose together to snap photos as memorabilia of their wonderful experience this cultural festival. What a great way to cap off this joyous program!



The support of their parents and family members is overwhelming and encouraging.



The joy of being part of this program is evident in the faces of the students.



Thank You, Lord, for the opportunity for students to have a wonderful experience of learning beyond the four walls of their classroom.



Romans 5:8 (NKJV)

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.



From books and magazines, the amazing cultures and colorful attires of different countries are brought to life by the UCA students.



We had fun!

Students shared their experiences and memorable moments during this wonderful occasion. Aside from the culture learnt from other countries, the camaraderie among them, the support they showed each other, and the love that bonded them all are really evident in this big family.

One of the most memorable parts of the Cultural Day was when we presented each Asian country. I could really see the effort that each grade level put into their presentations, and I enjoyed watching because I noticed how everyone supported each other. You could feel how students encouraged one another and worked together. The teamwork and encouragement were truly heartwarming. No one pressured you. They just supported and motivated you. I thank the Lord for letting me be in this kind of school.



Marie Joannamarie Andal
Grade 12 Student

During the Cultural Day, I enjoyed the process of making the exhibit and our practice because it brought everyone together, which made our bond stronger than ever. I learned that no matter what our differences in language or appearance may be, we're still made by the same Creator, and that is God! It reminds us to always love one another despite the differences.



Jessnie Jeanne De Jesus
Grade 10 Student

The best part of the event is how the grade levels were able to show the unique culture of different countries in Asia. The most interesting thing I learned that day is the simple greetings that were taught by the groups.



Zhagleer Silvano
Grade 9 Student

The most memorable part of Cultural Day for me was preparing for the exhibit and the presentation. It stood out because I created new memories with my classmates, and even though the preparation was stressful, being with them made everything enjoyable. I also enjoyed the exhibit, where we showcased the food of Thailand. Seeing the kids engaged with our display and asking questions about Thailand's food made the experience even more enjoyable.



Mary Allysa Cordero
Grade 10 Student

I enjoyed watching the cultural presentations the most because I got to witness the beauty of what each country has to offer. The performances helped me appreciate the traditions of different countries even more. I learned how rich, unique, and meaningful each culture is.



Kimberly Camille De Borja
Grade 9 Student

The most memorable part was getting awards and the presentation itself because it was super fun and we got to bond with our classmates, while still learning and being happy. The awards were also memorable because these show the students' hardwork, talents, and self worth.



Devino Lee Saduete
Grade 7 Student

²⁸Much more than, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.
²⁹For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Romans 5:9-10
(NKJV)

The Believers'...

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b. God tests us, who even live righteously, to get rid of the garbage that the world has corrupted us—idols, materialistic lifestyle, and worldly degrading standards. Then, we can grow faster without these baggages.

Psalms 11:5

The Lord tests the righteous, But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

c. God refines us even in how we think, how we speak, and how we live in this world, as a testimony to the people surrounding us.

Philippians 4:8-9

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

3. Testing teaches us about commitment to God.

Genesis 22:7-8

“But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” “And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together.

a. God tests us to prove that we love

Him more than anything in this world, even what He has promised and given to us.

b. God strengthens our character and deepens our commitment to Him and His perfect timing. God always wants to remind us that He has the ability to provide.

4. Testing brings transformation to us.

John 8:46-47

“Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? “He who is of God hears God’s words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.”

a. God challenges us to test that He really exists so that we believe and seek Him more in our lives.

b. God also challenges us to know if we will be willing to follow Him on what we have discovered of Him.

Challenge

Romans 8:35-39

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? “As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” “Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, “nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Indeed, we are more than conquerors in all these things!
- Pass the test and preach the Gospel!

SERMON NOTES

Write the points to remember from the sermon as you seek God in your life.

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