

LESSONS FROM THE VALLEY - PART 3

THE VALLEY IS A PROOF TEST

- 1. Our Word:** In the final sermon for this series, Pastor spoke about the valley as our place of testing. As with ancient Israel, God will use the valley/wilderness as a means of testing His people, [Deut. 8:2]. One of the areas that is tested by the valley is our word or verbal commitment. As you pass through your valley, has your word become stronger or has it wavered? Discuss some ways in which we can strengthen our word while passing through life's challenges.
- 2. Our Character:** Inner soundness can be used as a definition for character. Whether spiritual, moral, psychological, or emotional, character is who we are on the inside. The valley is the greatest way to know who we are on the inside. Share candidly how the low seasons have shaped or challenged your character for the better. Do you feel that the valley has made you better, or has it at times made you bitter, and how can we ensure better and not bitter as our outcome?
- 3. Our Obedience:** Along with faith, it seems that nothing is more desired by God than our obedience to him. As fragrant as our worship is to Him, and as abundantly as we may give to His work, His preference seems to be obedience overall, [1 Sam. 15:22]. The valley is a major way in which our obedience is tested. In fact, we are taught that Jesus, though He was the sinless son of God, *"yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered,"* [Heb. 5:8]. Share with each other how your hardships, life challenges, or spiritual trials have taught you greater obedience.
- 4. Our Grade:** Like Job, every valley experience comes to an end, [Job 23:10]. The key is what grade we will get when it has ended. As faithful believers, our goal must be to pass each test, and as the scripture reminds us, *"Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee...who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well,"* [Ps. 85:5-6]. If you're comfortable, share what grade you believe you are getting for this present test. Are there any areas where you can improve your grade before this test is over?

Prayer: Father, Bring Us Out Of This Test As Gold, In Jesus Name.