



System Testing: Thieme's *Christian Suffering*: the Believer Must Bear Testing God Does not Remove; Disaster Testing; 5th Floor: True Happiness, Jn 15:11

9. After the believer has used the appropriate problem-solving devices, he places his case before the supreme court of heaven. God is the perfect judge. There is no reason to complain and whine about unfairness. (p. 122-23)

This is the devil's world. Injustice and discrimination are the norm under Satan's arrogant administration. Rather than focus his attention on the stupidity, cowardice, and evil of mankind, the spiritually autonomous Christian will regard human weaknesses in the context of God's plan.

God is always fair to the believer, God has furnished powerful and effective divine assets, and He intends for the believer to bear the testing that He does not remove. When separation from a flawed system is not justified, spiritual autonomy gives the believer the strength to put the case before God, leave it there for divine solution, and cope with the situation as unto the Lord. (p. 123)

The Shulammite's test also involves a threat to her virginity and consequently to her personal virtue, integrity and reputation. This places her under the next category of momentum testing:

- (64) **Disaster Testing.** This category includes a wide variety of pressures that confront an advancing believer and often varies with the circumstances of life but may be generally defined as that which causes mental or physical pain and suffering.
- (65) Mental anguish is caused by loss of loved ones, a job, possessions, reputation, or health. Physical anguish can be associated with the loss of health due to genetics, injury, illness, or disease.
- (66) During the course of a marriage the challenges that come from sin-nature-, people-, system-, thought-, and disaster-testing put great strain on unconditional love.
- (67) Only confidence in the Word of God can enable a man and a wife to maintain stability of soul. Worship of God, which involves not only inculcation of doctrine but its application as well, demands morality toward others including your spouse.
- (68) Confidence toward God empowers courage toward the circumstances that face every marriage. And personal love toward God motivates unconditional love toward others including your spouse.
- (69) Utilization of these virtues gives a married couple tranquility of soul with which to share the happiness of God no matter what exigencies confront them, whether in adversity or prosperity, illness or health, good times or bad. This tranquility is the final floor of the edification complex of the soul:
- (70) **5th Floor: Happiness.** True happiness is when the believer can share the perfect happiness of God. This happiness is based on that of our Lord during the Incarnation.



- (71) True happiness, once acquired, does not vacillate with the changing circumstances of life. The Lord used the prototype spiritual life assigned to His humanity for thirty-three years and it sufficiently enabled Him to maintain perfection in His life and to create perfect happiness in His soul.
- (72) Jesus Christ was a mature believer by age 12 which enabled Him through the power of the Holy Spirit to share the happiness of God in His humanity.

During the Upper Room Discourse, the Lord told the apostles that it was His desire that they, and others who would follow Him, would share His happiness:

John 15:11 - "I have taught you these things [**commandments that believers are to keep, v. 10] in order that My [**inner perfect**] happiness might be in you [**what Christ attained in the prototype spiritual life we may attain in the operational spiritual life**], and that your happiness might be completed [**πληρώω, plēroō: to fill up a deficiency**]."**

- (73) True happiness resides in the soul of the individual and is developed there through knowledge of God and Christ from Bible study.
- (74) Happiness progresses from a personal sense of destiny to spiritual self-esteem, to spiritual autonomy, and is maximized in spiritual maturity.
- (75) The Greek word **πληρώω, plēroō** is a word that indicates progress toward an objective. It means to fill up a deficiency by acquisition of full knowledge of divine viewpoint from which one develops total soul tranquility.
- (76) True happiness may be summarized as follows:

True happiness is an inner resource developed from maximum doctrine resident in the soul and is so advanced in its grace orientation to the plan of God that all aspects of life are evaluated with regard to eternal rather than temporal implications. Consequently, true happiness is the unique possession of the mature believer in which he shares the happiness of God.
- (77) However, in arrogance, both believers as well as unbelievers seek to find happiness in all the wrong places produced by their own efforts and motivated by unhappiness.
- (78) This is a frantic search for happiness that inevitably fails to produce the sought-for happiness and as a result intensifies the unhappiness that motivated the search.
- (79) True happiness in the soul results in maximum service to God through the motivational virtues of personal love, worship, and confidence.