

What to do now:

...if you failed the test

If the general pattern of your life does not fit John's description of the child of God, one of two possible reasons may exist:

- You may have been deceived into thinking you are a Christian, but are not. If this is the case, you need to repent and trust Christ as your personal Sin-bearer and receive the gift of new life by faith in Him (Rom. 10:9-10).
- You may be an immature Christian who needs to concentrate on getting grounded in the Word of God and nurturing your young faith. If this is the case, you need to start reading and studying the Bible for yourself and become a faithful member of a Bible-teaching church where you can be taught sound doctrine and fellowship with other believers (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- You may be trapped in a specific fleshly sin pattern that hinders your relationship with God. You need to repent of this sin, confess it to God, and ask a spiritually mature brother or sister in Christ to help you (Gal. 6:1-5).
- You may be experiencing the slanderous harassment of the devil (Rev. 12:10). Therefore, return to the Word of God as the basis of your faith.

...if you passed the test

If the general pattern of your life fits John's description of the child of God, then specifically thank the Lord for using His Word to give you that assurance. You also need to regularly meditate and memorize Scriptures that speak of the security of your relationship with God through Christ. Suggestions: 1 John 5:11-13; Romans 8:1-2; 35-39

Ten Tests of Faith

A Study in First John

Romans 8:16 says, *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.* In other words, part of the Holy Spirit's ministry is to give assurance of salvation to believers. Since the Holy Spirit is the divine author of Scripture, and since He wrote at least one New Testament book for the sole purpose of helping believers discern the reality of their faith, the tests of genuine faith found in the book of First John must be taken. This chart is designed with that purpose in mind.

2 Corinthians 13:5 *Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you--unless indeed you fail the test?*

The reason the Scriptures exhort us to test ourselves is because our hearts are naturally deceitful and, therefore, we can even deceive ourselves. Jesus said that on the day of Judgment there will be many people who thought themselves to be Christians, but were deceived.

Matthew 7:21-23 *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"*

Pray before looking up the Scriptures and filling in your chart. Ask God to confirm the genuineness of your faith through the passing of these tests or to reveal counterfeit faith through failing them.

As you examine yourself in regard to each of these tests, look for evidence that the characteristics of those who are born of God describe the general pattern of your life. For example, test #2 asks whether or not you are obedient to God. Passing this test does not mean you must be perfectly obedient all of the time. The principle of indwelling sin renders that unreal. However, you should ask yourself if obedience to God's Word is the general pattern of your life. Is this how someone else would describe you?

Scripture	Test	Question to ask	Specific evidence <i>For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead (James 2:26).</i>
1:5-10	Conscience	Is my conscience sensitive toward my sin?	
2:3-6 5:2-3	Obedience	How obedient am I to God's Word?	
2:15-17 5:4-5	Worldliness	Where do my affections lie?	
3:1-3	Anticipation	Deep down, do I long to see Jesus?	

3:4-10	Holiness	Am I progressing away from sin toward holiness or am I still in bondage?	
3:11-18 4:7-12	Love	Do I love other Christians, do I long to be with them?	
3:21-22	Prayer	Does God answer my prayers?	
4:13	Holy Spirit	Do I experience the power of the Holy Spirit in my life?	
3:10-13	Persecution	Have I ever suffered because of my testimony for Christ?	
4:1-5 5:1 5:10-12	Confessing Christ	Do I have Jesus Christ as my own?	