

Stoke Newington SDA Church

Sabbath 11 April 2020

Programme 10.30am – Elder Lemar Smith

- Opening Prayer** - Focus on truly clinging to God. Investing your full faith and trust in Him. Regardless of our test, trial, opposition or environment. At this time we also can reflect, during this time of trouble the greatest sacrifice and how that gives us hope even today and for eternity.
- Hymns of meditation** - **279 – Only Trust Him**
- **516 – All the Way**
- Scripture Reading** - **Isaiah 41:10 New King James Version (NKJV)**
10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'
- 2 Corinthians 12:9 King James Version (KJV)**
9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
- Reflection** - **Tests, Faith and Trust**
- Closing Song** - **526 – Because He Lives**
- Closing Prayer** - **Focus on..**
- Keeping faith, obedience and trust in Him regardless, as God is and always has been in control
 - For further faith in the areas of His plan, we do not understand or find hard to accept

Reflection – Tests, Faith & Trust

During this difficult time you will find pain, hurt, anxiety, fear and worry overwhelming. However, we must not let go of our faith and trust in the one true God that was, is and always has been in charge.

Life is a test of our character, integrity, faith, obedience, love, loyalty and perseverance.

The Bible is filled with many examples of individuals that had tests of many different kinds...

- **Abraham's** obedience was tested through the sacrifice of his son
- **Adam & Eve's** obedience were tested in the Garden of Eden
- **Joseph** experienced a fair share of tests and trials, during his rise to great responsibility in Egypt
- **Ruth** - Suffered the test of continuing life and establishing her faith after the loss of key family members
- **Esther** faced the test of persuading the highest level of authority in kingdom to publicly change his mind on a huge decision
- **Daniel** remained faithful while, even being at the mercy of lions
- **Jesus Christ** remained faithful and obedient to complete the greatest sacrifice the world has ever seen

A test is one of the guaranteed attributes of life. Its shape, form, duration or impact cannot be predicted or expected. A test is defined as...

'A procedure intended to establish the quality, performance, or reliability of something.'

Therefore, tests in life are designed to bring under review and evaluation, through calculated applied pressure the things that make up life itself, your faith, your love, your trust, your integrity and your hope.

The true beauty of a test, is that a test is also the opportunity to exercise, prove, strengthen, validate, stretch and highlight these things, most importantly, your faith and belief. Tests are moments when you truly examine the integrity of all you have built up during your moments of peace when you were unchallenged.

As quoted in the book *The Purpose Driven Life...* "A very important test is how you act when you can't feel God's presence in your life"

The fact is during these moments, we may not feel God's presence, but He has never and will never leave us. In times of test, trouble or weakness... Rest in Him. Rely on Him. Trust Him. Why? Because he has always been ready and waiting. God will never fail you. What you are currently experiencing will pass, but you cannot lose faith or hope. God is greater than the situation you are facing. What you are facing is merely one element in the uncountable number of infinite imbalances God is managing across the universe.

Keep the faith. Stay Obedient. Lean on Him. Trust in Him.

As even if all around us has lost control, God remains the same.

His grace shall forever be sufficient to our each and every need.

God is who He is and forever more shall always be.

Tests, trials and challenges do not last forever. Place your trust, faith and hope in Him whose work still cannot be fathomed from 'beginning to end'.

(Ecclesiastes 3:11)

My prayers are with you all during this tough and testing time.

Lemar

Sunset Time: Today 7.50pm