

ALL IN TO BUILD FOR OUR FUTURE

“The God of heaven Himself will prosper us: therefore we His servants will arise and build...So we built...for the people had a mind to work. A good person leaves an inheritance for their children’s children...” **Nehemiah 2:20; 4:6; Proverbs 13:22**
(NKJV)



This Week’s Thought – June 11, 2017

“They were left to test the Israelites to see whether they would obey the Lord’s commands, which he had given their forefathers through Moses.” Judges 3:4 (NIV)

It is easier to be a Christian when everything is going well, but what happens when things do not go your way? God sends a test or allows a test, and suddenly your faith has an opportunity to come alive and go to a deeper level of dependency. Perhaps you are experiencing disappointment from a friend, an unfaithful spouse, a rebellious child, death of a loved one, a loss of your job, your health is giving you fits, or maybe something worse in your ‘mind’s eyes’.

You can rest assured a test is coming. You have either been through a test, you are in a test or you are in between tests, but they are coming, so be ready. It may be a relational test, a financial test, a physical test, a family test, a career test, or a character test, but in God’s school of faith, He gives regular exams with eternal consequences.

It may be a quick and unexpected pop quiz or an anticipated and grueling final exam. The answer key is abandonment to Almighty God. Your eternal instructor is trustworthy. Humbly learn what He is teaching you so that you can teach others and become a better follower of Christ. The question we often ask and want to know is: “What is the purpose of these tests of faith?”

Two possible reasons for God’s test of faith are: 1) to teach you how to battle the enemy and 2) to validate your obedience to God during difficult times. Your battle is not against a person or persons. It is spiritual warfare with an unseen enemy who lurks behind any and every opportunity he can to deceive, discourage and destroy you.

Your protection against this spiritual enemy, Satan, is the *“belt of truth strapped around your waist”*, an *“armor of righteousness”*, *“your feet covered in peace”*, a *“shield of faith”*, a *“helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit”*, and *“God’s Word”*. (Ephesians 6:13-18)

Furthermore, engage with a community of believers to cover your back with prayer. It is the believer’s preparation and posture that causes Satan to squirm and flee.

Another reason for your test of faith could be to validate your obedience to God. Will you remain faithful to Him, even when He seems very distant and uninterested? When life is hard, will you stay mad and blame others and God for your misfortune, or will you obey Him? Do the right thing even when you don’t feel like it and God will honor your efforts.

He has a much bigger plan that doesn’t waste pain. He is looking for trophies of grace to present to those in need of Christ and for those who may be stumbling and struggling in their faith. He is looking for men and women dead to themselves and their selfish desires, but alive unto Christ. Pain positions you to be a product of the grace of God.

Yes, it may be very difficult right now, but stay true to God. He is bigger than anything or anyone who may have you down right now. Tests are temporary but trust and truth are forever!

“I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews.” (Acts 20:19)

Prayer of reflection you might pray this week: “Heavenly Father, lead me to follow and obey You, especially in the face of any fear, worry or concern. By faith keep me focused on Your work for Your glory. This world is filled with so many temptations, distractions, and frustrations. I know that when I turn my thoughts away from You and Your Word, I suffer; but when I turn my thoughts and my prayers to You, I am safe and able to accomplish Your will for my life. Direct my path Lord, and allow me to discover and know Your will for me. This is my prayer in the matchless, wonderful and compassionate name of Jesus, Amen!”

“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what’s coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn’t lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It’s on its way. It will come right on time.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King