

The Christmas Trust Test Luke 1

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Dec. 22nd

We're created for God's Purposes and Pleasure. Rev 4:11 *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, for thy pleasure (Thelema: purposes) they are created."*

Our fulfilment is in proportion to accomplishing our (His) purposes! Ps. 148:8; 150:6

If we're created to please God (fulfil His purposes); What actually "pleases God"?

Heb. 11:6 *"But without faith (pistis: conviction, reliance; From Peitho: trust, obey)*

it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (John 15:1-8; 1 John 5:4)

Since Faith (trust) is the primary path to accomplishing God's purposes for our lives, He uses "TRUST tests" to develop our faith, in order to enable us to do this! (Pr. 3:5-10)

T: Take Personal Inventory vs 5 (Determine where your faith actually is?)

R: Recognize God vs 6 (Realize His Presence, Purposes, Power are available)

U: Understand Stewardship vs 9a (Realize we're here for "such a time as this" {Est. 4:14})

S: Surrender to God's Will. Pr 3:9 *"Honor the LORD with... the firstfruits of all thine increase..."*

Ro 6:13 *"yield yourselves unto God, ... and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."*

T: Test God's Promises Mal. 3:6 *"Prove me now saith the LORD, If I will not open the windows of heaven..." and pour you out a blessing..."*

While there are countless examples of Trust Test failures and successes; (See Hebrews 11) Perhaps none are quite as impactful as the key actors in the Christmas Story. While each played their role, Mary was certainly "The leading lady". Let's look at Mary's Trust Test.

1. T: Take a Personal Inventory. (Who was Mary initially Trusting?)

Luke 1:26-34 *"Gabriel was sent from God ... unto a virgin named Mary.29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying...30 ... Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS..."*

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

2. R: Recognize God. (His Presence, Purposes, Power are available)

28 "... thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: 34 ...How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

3. U: Understand Stewardship We're all managers of God's Resources!

Luke 2:38 *"And Mary said, behold the handmaid (doulē: servant) of the Lord;..."*

4. S: Surrender to God's Will. Allow Him to accomplish His purposes in/ through you!

V 38 *"Behold the handmaid of the Lord (Kurios: supreme authority) be it unto me according to thy word"*

5. T: Test God's Promises She traveled to verify God's promise. Vs 39-56

Notice Elizabeth's salutation: Vs 42-45 *"Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. ...And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."* Blessed (Makarios) Supremely fortunate!

Notice Mary's response: 46-49 *"Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name."*

Conclusion: There were many “supporting actors” in this great Drama of the incarnation; each faced their own “Trust Tests”, with mixed results.
Do you suppose Mary and Joseph had their own plans for their lives?
What if they had chosen to pursue them instead of God’s?

It was only after Mary passed her TRUST test That she was able to really say:
Lk 2:46 *“My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.”*
And truly see: *“For He that is mighty hath done to (and through) me great things,
and holy is his name.”* vs 49

Application:

Is it possible that God may want to do great things to and through you?
*“For I know the thoughts (maḥāšābâ: plans) that I think toward you, saith the LORD,
thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”* (tiqvâ: what I long/hope for!)

Jer. 29:11

Phil. 1:6 *“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you
will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:...*

2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”*

Will you let him?

“When I stand at the judgment seat of Christ And He shows me His plan for me;
The plan of my life as it might have been, Had He had His way, and I see
How I blocked Him here and I checked Him there, And I would not yield my will,
Shall I see grief in my Savior’s eyes; Grief though He loves me still’
Oh, He’d have me rich, and I stand there poor, Stripped of all but His grace,
While my memory runs like a hunted thing, Down the paths I can’t retrace.
Then my desolate heart will well-nigh break, With tears that I cannot shed.
I’ll cover my face with my empty hands, And bow my uncrowned head.
No. Lord of the years that are left to me, I yield them to Thy hand.
Take me, make me, mold me, To the pattern Thou hast planned.”

- Alexander Maclaren, 1826-1910. (Romans 12:1,2; 2 Cor 5:10)

