

Examining Our Relationship with God

Each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face
(Shakespeare)

Life Stinks!
(Mel Brooks)

Examining Our Relationship with God

Examine: *Faith in the Goodness of God*

Widows, orphans, and sorrows:
“strike heaven on the face!”

Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things;
let them consider the steadfast love of the Lord.

(Ps. 107:43)

Examine: *Faith in the Goodness of God*

Widows, orphans, and sorrows:
“strike heaven on the face!”

Whoever is wise, let him attend to [keep close to heart, fix eyes upon] these things;
let them consider the steadfast love of the Lord.

(Ps. 107:43)

The Tests of God

Summative and Formative

- Formative Tests are educational methods whose purpose is to teach DURING the test.
- Summative Tests designed to judge and exclude us (like finals and SAT's)

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials for . . . the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. (James 1:2-3)

The Tests of God

Summative and Formative

The tests of God are simple: **To Show us and to Grow us**

The Storms of God

We don't like to hear this, but God often and deliberately leads us into storms.

On that day, when evening had come, [Jesus] said to them, "Let us go across to the other side" ... And a great storm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. (Mark 4:35, 37-38)

The Storms of God

God and His GOODNESS is in charge for our Good.

Everything He cuts off would harm us to keep; and
everything He leaves would harm us to lose.

The “Irresponsible” Timing of God

“and they were immediately overcome [astounded, out of wits, insane] with amazement [bewildered, in shock, astounded].” (Mark 5:42)

“Talitha, cumi.”

“Honey, it’s time to get up.”

Where is God “delaying” in your life? Is this the kind of God you want to hurry up?

When God Allows Betrayals and Trauma

There are some things we only learn
through the sin of another man.

When God Allows Betrayals and Trauma

Joseph:

- [God] sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave. His feet were hurt with fetters; his neck was put in a collar of iron; until what He had said came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him.
(Ps. 105:17-19)
- Joseph said, “You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.” (Gen. 50:20)

When God Allows Betrayals and Trauma

For every single one of us, even in the deepest betrayals and trauma: “God is bringing about good.”

Shame

What do we do in our relationship with God when we experience deep shame?

Our instinct is to let shame drive us from God, to doubt His love, or goodness or power.



Shame

Do you see God's "formative" testing in my life?

Considering the steadfast love of the Lord

Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things; let them consider the steadfast love of the Lord. (Ps. 107:43)

Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man! (4 times)

Shame

Betrayals

Timing

Storms

Considering the steadfast love of the Lord

Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things; let them consider the steadfast love of the Lord. (Ps. 107:43)

Can we see His loving pruning, His personal formation; His love IN THE MIDST of the tests of God?

The higher power

Good Good Father

Chris Tomlin

Time with God

- How can the understanding of the “Formative Tests of God” bring us to worship Him as the loving Lord?
- Is there a storm in our past for which we have been unable to “thank the Lord for Your steadfast love” and “for Your wondrous works”?
- Is there a way we are—today—trying to “help God” with His “seemingly-malpractice” timing?



9:10 to 9:30 – Time with God

9:30 to 10:00 – Small Groups

10:15 to 11:00 – Worship and Communion

11:00 to 12 – Picture and Pack

12:00 Lunch