

To Be or Not to Be

³⁵*The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing is impossible with God."*

³⁸*"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said."*

Matthew 1:35-38 (NIV84)

Let It Be...as God Has Said.

The good life is not the same as the God life.

You who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. (vs. 28)

God's Word is sometimes troubling.

Mary was greatly troubled at his words. (vs. 29)

Trouble does not mean God is not with you.

Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. (vs. 30)

It is okay to have and ask questions.

"How will this be," Mary asked, "since I am a virgin?" (vs. 34)

Choose to let it be...as God has said.

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." (vs. 38)

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Deepening Your Walk with God

For the week of May 8, 2016

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at the Taking It Home section and Next Steps from last week, how did last week's sermon cause you to live differently? (Be sure to check out lakeviewowego.com for additional resources for this week's sermon.)

MY STORY

1. Whom have you known who has dealt with difficulties in their life in a way that brought glory to God? How did they do so?
2. Describe a time when you really did not understand what God was doing during a difficult time. How did you handle the situation?

DIGGING DEEPER

Take a few moments and thank God for His Sovereignty over all things. Ask Him to help you to trust Him in all circumstances.

1. **James and Trials.** Read James 1:1-4. What is the progression that James writes about that begins with a trial in our lives?

Think of a trial that you have encountered in the past that you feel you dealt with well. How did your trial parallel James' explanation of what trials can do in our lives?

The Trial:

How I Persevered:

How I Matured:

2. Peter and Painful Trials. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. What verse challenges you the most out of this section of scripture and why do you find it challenging?

Peter tells us not to be surprised at painful trials. How do you typically respond when you encounter difficult trials?

Read verse 19 again. What two actions does Peter suggest the believer who is suffering should do? What does the role of faith play in living out these two actions while you are suffering?

3. Paul and Weakness, Insults, Hardships, Persecutions and Difficulties. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Share a time when you pleaded with God to take away a weakness, difficulty, or hardship that He did not take away.

How have you made sense of the fact it was not taken away?

What can you learn from Paul's response that can help you to better respond to ongoing difficulties in your life?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Seeing Differently. Think of a trial or a difficulty you have in your life right now. What is ONE thing that you have learned from the sermon or this insert that can help you and how will it cause you to see your circumstances differently?

2. Helping Others See Hope. Is there anyone in your life who has been struggling with something for an extended period of time? How can you encourage them this week?

NEXT STEPS

Which of these NEXT STEPS will you commit to in order to allow yourself to look at the difficulties of life through the eyes of God?

- Do the insert *Deepening Your Walk with God*.
- Invite God to walk with you in all aspects of your life by placing your faith in him for salvation and new life.
- Choose to be joyful in spite of a difficulty in your life.
- Interact with a difficulty differently knowing God is in control.
- Encourage one other person who is dealing with a difficulty in their life.
- Other: _____

PRAYER REQUESTS

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