

Will You Stand the Test of Faith? Francis Chan

God chooses to use you the most when you are inadequate. That's why we need His grace. I am so sad to leave you. This is kind of routine of praying for you-this is the next to the last time I will do this "routine."

Are you sensing the presence of Christ? I love Him and being with Him. Jesus you are with me. Things at home are so great. Lisa is pregnant again. Number five is on the way. All these things happening at once.

I am about 80% sure. Here is what I believe I hear His leading. Most of what my decisions are from reading the Bible and praying. You feel this peace. I know there's going to be difficulty.

A lot of times in life, we make excuses. People are jealous. "I wish I could do what you are doing." My favorite verse is James 5:17-Elijah was a man just like us. We ask "what can I do?" These Bible characters are people just like us. I was at a theological conference and I didn't even know the big words.

Hebrews 11:6 If you are living your life without faith-you will never realize your full potential. It's okay to be scared to follow God. Keith Phillips talked about the inner city-I said "I don't know if I could do that, and yet I think God is leading us there.

I was talking to a guy at the gym and he was talking about the fact that as we age, life goes faster. Some of you are in the fast lane. Go for it. "I'm loved by God." We've got to go for it.

I was in London. Couldn't understand them-I was terrible in history. A professor taught me about the history of the church and even in the buildings and the architecture we can see mistakes that we made, wars we have fought, that were wrong. Squint holes for lepers. Times of selling indulgences, fought for slavery. Spot where Latimer, Ridley died for their faith. William Wilberforce fought against slavery.

Sense of normalcy. I want you to try now, if it ended here, what would our generation be remember for? We read Acts and Revelation saw what we be remembered for? I believe this age is called the consumer age. More Bible at our fingertips-I'll send my friends to church and pay them to be disciples. Don't lead a single person to Christ. In the middle of it, you don't actually see it.

I believe that God is taking out of this phase. I need to grow, make disciples. Younger generation are asking questions and some of them are becoming missional. When you are on a mission, it binds people together.

Like a sports team-you begin, a bond takes place. If we go out as co-laborers, a bond takes place. I believe God is working. God says, "This is my party, I am going to show

up.” Ten baptisms in the last service. People sharing God with your friends. Are we a part of God preparing us for the future.

I believe that one day, my preaching of God’s Word will be called a hate crime. The way the U.S. is going the things we teach and will be called hate speech. We may not be able to speak at all. We had communist revolutions in China and Russia. The political leaders wanted to kill the church. Everything was built around the Orthodox Church in Russia. Once the government took away the buildings and the priests in Russia, the people didn’t know where to go. Most lost their spiritual moorings. In China the same thing happened. Under Mao Tse Tung, the Chinese government took away the churches, but there was a different result. In China there was a difference. They had empowered ordinary Christians to survive and thrive. When the churches closed, the Chinese people continued to share their faith and the church grew from about two million to approximately eighty million. Which camp would you fall into? Could be God preparing us for the future, so that we are ready to share our faith in a post-Christian culture, under persecution? Or are we so complacent that we are consumer Christians, spoon-fed by our favorite preachers, paying someone else to lead others to Christ and disciple them?

Whenever you are confused, and are seeking direction, just go back to the basics. When the church has made mistakes in the past, it’s where the church has failed to elevate the core issues. Jesus made it simple. In Matthew 22:36-40, Jesus was asked which was the great commandment. He replied, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind...and a second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and all of the Prophets.” Don’t let anything become more important to you. If your family were to say to you, “We will never pray again, we will never read the Bible again”, where would you stand? I love Jesus so much, you will stand before God alone. “Depart from me, I never knew you.” Did you know that my Dad was a pastor. I didn’t want to tell anyone. I didn’t want to tell anyone because I didn’t want them to think my faith was inherited. My faith is so personal to me.

If my whole family rejects Him, I’ll still love Him. Love your neighbor as yourself. When you walked into the room today, did you think of anyone more than yourself? We gather together to spur one another on to love and good works. Give courage to other people. One of the guys, theologian who loved me, and he saw me and he’s decided to tell me his story. He was a long-haired hippie in the sixties smoking a joint and someone cared enough to look beyond my exterior and share Christ with me. The older saint, the theologian began to weep. His salvation experience was so real to him, even after all these years, he still wept at God’s grace. Those were the days, we shared our faith, sitting in a little group and I was teaching the Word. I would burn any recordings from those days, I hardly knew what I was teaching. But our group grew from 30 to 2500. I want to be that person. Gracious, loving, when people see me, they see Jesus.

That’s what God does for us. Holy Spirit change me. I am on an adventure. You have faith that God will use your life. You want to be a lover of God.

