

How COVID-19 Has Been a True Character Test for Believers

James Merritt, the senior pastor of Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, Georgia, says the coronavirus pandemic, which has affected millions worldwide over the past few months, has been a true character test for God's children.

"Simply put, if Scripture is true, this has been a perfect test," Merritt told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "According to Romans Chapter three, verses three through five, it says adversity, trouble, trial and tribulation, all of those are tests and grow and toughen and strengthen our character.

"God is not concerned about what this virus is doing. He is concerned about how we're going to respond to it."

And as a pastor, Merritt knows he must walk in integrity and put on Christlike character every day. As an influencer of people, he says, it's not an option.

But then, he says, all believers have that obligation to God. For Merritt, it all starts with a specific prayer every morning to keep him pure.

"In my prayer time every day, I always ask God three things every day: search me, sanctify me and strengthen me," Merritt said.

"When I ask Him to search me, I know that I can just be quiet. God has a perfect memory. He reminds me of something every day that I forgot to confess. Then I say, "sanctify me," and I know that I will be cleansed from top to bottom. And then "strengthen me," where I know that I will not get led into places of temptation. It's like taking a spiritual shower, and we do it every day. ...

“I think we’re living in a culture today where everybody is focused on their reputation and not their character. The difference is really strong. Character is what you and God know you are. Reputation is what people think you are. You can fool people into a false reputation. You’ve got to look at your character in the morning when you look in the mirror. You can’t run away from it.”

For more of James Merritt’s thoughts on character, listen to the entire podcast.