

## THE TEST OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD

The purpose of The Test of Being Misunderstood is to discover if you are mature enough to live free from the opinion and acceptance of the crowd. This test will gauge whether God can trust you in times of great pressure to do what is right instead of bowing to what is popular. This is a test for leaders!!!!!!

Have you ever wondered how Moses was able to continue leading the children of Israel-and not get discouraged and quit-when time after time they misunderstood almost everything he said and did? They watched as Moses delivered them from Pharaoh, rescued them from Egypt, and part the Red Sea to bring them through on dry ground. Yet they accused him of leading them into the wilderness to make them die of starvation and thirst. They accused him of leading them out of Egypt to be slaughtered by giants. They talked about him because he married an Ethiopian woman-even his sister and brother disagreed with his decision to marry her!!!!

The crowd was always talking about Moses, always misunderstanding his intentions, and always questioning his motivation. Yet the Bible says he was one of the most humble men to ever walk the face of the earth. Leaders are always at risk of being misunderstood. The word misunderstood means 'incorrectly understood or interpreted or to be unappreciated. The purpose of The Test of Being Misunderstood is to discover if you are mature enough to live free from the opinion and acceptance of the crowd. This test will gauge whether God can trust you in times of great pressure to do what is right instead of bowing to what is popular. This is a tests for Leaders!!!!

Leaders must learn how to pass The Test of Being Misunderstood - or else they'll always walk around with their feeling hurt, ready to

quit or fight. And since those who usually misunderstand never keep it to themselves, leaders will feel pressure to defend their name and set the record straight to everyone who could have the wrong idea about them. All of those things are one big waste of time!!!

The pressure from being misunderstood can cause you to turn your attention toward retaliating against the person who misunderstood you instead of remaining focused on God's will for your life. Don't take the bait!! You have to realize that all of this is happening to uproot the Word of God from your heart and get you off track. We read in (*Mark 4:16-17*), And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution arise for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

When the Word has been sown into the stony ground of our hearts and we receive it with gladness, we begin to grow and flourish. Satan can see we're on a path that will lead to our becoming stronger in God, so he tries to get us to release the Word we've received. The enemy brings about what I like to call the "squeezing season". This is when he unleashes a lot of pressure on you through two vehicles- affliction and persecution.

Affliction is pressure caused by circumstances. When you have a financial challenge, it bring pressure. When you get a bad doctor's report, it bring pressure. When you have confusion in your home, it bring pressure. These are all examples of afflictions.

Persecution, however, is pressure other people bring upon you. When the words or actions of people make you want to change your mind about a quality decision you've made, that's persecution.

The enemy use this kind of pressure to get you to return to the nice, comfortable "religious" life you used to have instead of being sold

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out and totally committed to God. If you let that happen, you will simply blend into the crowd instead of standing out as a leader you were destined to be. If you're not able to handle people talking about you and misunderstanding your motivation for doing things, you will never be able to get promoted to a higher level in God.

So let's look at the reason Moses matured to the place where he was no longer moved by those who misunderstood him. If you're familiar with the life of Moses, you'll know that he was born during a time when the reigning pharaoh in Egypt has disregarded the previous arrangement with Joseph and the children of Israel. Pharaoh also decided that the Israelites were multiplying too fast, so he gave instructions that all the newborn baby boys should be thrown into the river.

When baby Moses became too difficult to hide, his mother placed him inside a basket and put it in the Nile River in hopes of protecting him. Pharaoh's daughter saw the baby floating in the basket and took him into her home and raised Moses as her own son. Now fast-forward to when Moses is about forty years old. Since he was raised with the Egyptians, he hasn't been a slave like rest of the Hebrews. He hasn't been made to suffer the same hardships as his people, yet he know he is a Hebrew. He wants to be accepted and have a sense of belonging.

One day Moses sees an Egyptian beating up a Hebrew, and when he thinks no one is looking, he kills the Egyptian and hides the body in the desert. The next day he's out among the Hebrews, and two Hebrew men are fighting. Moses tries to be a mediator-"Can't we all just get along? But one of the Hebrews says, Who gave you the right to tell us what to do? Are you going to kill us too? Now Moses realizes the secret is out, and soon everyone will know that he

murdered the Egyptian. So he flees Egypt and spends the next forty years out in the wilderness alone with God.

It is during these forty years that Moses finally gets the revelation that the only opinion that really matters is God's. That's what qualified him to go back and deliver the children of Israel. He had grown to the point that he was able to ignore what Pharaoh had to say about him. He was able to ignore even what the Hebrews had to say about him. He cared only about what God said about him. For the next forty years he led the children of Israel through a wilderness despite their bickering, arguing, and murmuring the whole time, and he didn't quit. Moses had passed THE TEST OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD. He just had to keep reminding himself. "I'm on a mission to do the will of God.

### **HOW ABRAHAM FLUNKED THE TEST**

Just as the Bible gives us examples of how to do things well, it also give us examples of how not to do things. Abraham's story is a good example of how not to take The Test of Being Misunderstood. God gave Abraham instructions to leave all of his kindred behind and go to the land God would show him. Abraham left his home, but he didn't leave everyone behind he brought his nephew, Lot, with him. Personally I believe Abraham took Lot because Lot's dad - who was Abraham's brother-had died. I also believe Abraham didn't want to have to deal with his other relatives misunderstanding him and saying, How could you abandon your only nephew when he was counting on you?

But if you're going to get bumped up to another level of leadership in the kingdom of God, you have to be able and willing to deal with people misunderstanding you, even if those people are your family. As long as you know in your heart that what you are doing is right before God, let that be enough. Sometimes your family is not going



to understand you. Sometimes friends are not going to understand you. Sometimes the people in your church are not going to understand. Once you have made up your mind to obey God, you can't run around and take a vote to see what everyone thinks about it.

## **HOW JESUS HANDLED BEING MISUNDERSTOOD**

The Bible says Jesus was tempted in all the ways we are, and He certainly knew how it felt to be misunderstood. We see a prime example in the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus brought before the Jewish council.

Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; but found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Here after shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?  
(*Matt. 26:59-68*)

Why is Jesus going through all of this? Because He has been misunderstood. He was talking about his body when He said, "You destroy this temple, and in three days I'll raise it up again." But they

found a couple of guys off the street who were willing to testify against Him: "We heard Him say He can knock down the temple, and He'll build it back up in three days" This would have been perfect opportunity for Jesus to say "That's not what I meant!!!!" Though Jesus could have spoken up and explained Himself, the Bible says He held His peace. Why did He remain silent? Jesus knew He was doing what was pleasing to God, and that's all that mattered. His accusers' opinion of Him didn't count. So Jesus felt it was better to make sure He stayed right with the Father than to allow these people to bait Him into an argument that was going to pull Him off His course.

Jesus was often misunderstood-by the crowds, by the Jewish religious leaders, by the Roman authorities-but on one occasion it was His own followers who misunderstood Him. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him....Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

*(John 6:53-68)*

This time Jesus's own disciples were the ones who misunderstood Him. Jesus said to them, You're going to have to eat My flesh and drink My blood. Even though most of these people had been with

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Him for three years and He had never said anything like that before, no one raised his hand and asked. "Can you explain what You mean? No one gave Him the benefit of the doubt by saying, "I'm sure He didn't really mean it that way. Instead, they said, "This is a hard saying. Who can listen to this kind of preaching? And many of them walked away. Notice that Jesus didn't run after them, begging them, "Please don't leave My Church!!" He let them go and turned to the twelve disciples and said, "What about you guys? Are you going too?"

Jesus wasn't willing to even clarify His statement to a bunch of carnal believers who would have known what He was talking about if they'd spent enough time in prayer. Or, if they didn't understand what He meant, at least they could have trusted that He had purpose for making that statement after having seen His impeccable character for so many years. By asking, "Will you go away too, " Jesus was basically saying, "If you don't know what I'm talking about, and you don't love and trust Me enough believe I'm not trying to hurt you, then you probably should go ahead and leave." He was interested only in doing God's will, and He was not concerned about being misunderstood. You must have the same mentality if you're going to accomplish the great work God has for you to do.

### **KEYS TO PASSING THE TEST OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD**

If what you've been reading challenges you or bears witness in your spirit, it's because God is trying to get you in a position to be used in a greater capacity in the kingdom of God. He's asking you the central question of THE TEST OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD: "Are you going to stay behind, nurse your wounds, and worry about what people think of you? Or are you going to just do what God has told you to do?" If you want to pass this test, there are three keys to keep in mind.

**Don't allow another human being to determine your self-worth...**

Consider Jesus's example. (*John 2:23-25*) says, "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man"

The Bible say Jesus wouldn't commit Himself to the people, even though they were cheering Him on talking about what an anointed preacher He was and how many miracles He had performed. Obviously, He loved the people. He was willing to give His life for them and to forgive them as He was dying on the cross. But He didn't let what they thought of Him affect His self-worth. Jesus didn't allow His self-image to depend upon everybody else's opinion of Him.

Are you letting someone else determine your self-worth? Has someone else's voice become the barometer in your life that decides whether you're doing a good job? The only person who owns that right is God Almighty. Yes, of course we submit to government leaders. Yes, we thank God for employers. Yes. We honor those who have been put in spiritual authority in our lives. But at the end of day, there's only one whom we need to hear say, "Well done!!!" If you're receiving applause from everyone around you but heaven has nothing to say, none of that praise matters!!

**Keep your eyes on your own business..**

We read in *1 Thessalonians 4:9-11*, "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; and that ye study to be quiet, and to do

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your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.

Some of us get ourselves into trouble because we entangle ourselves in other people's affairs. When you don't mind your own business, you can often end up being misunderstood. If it doesn't concern you, keep your mouth shut. Just pray for the people involved. If they ask you what you think about the issue, then share your wisdom with them. But if they never ask your opinion, keep it to yourself. This will keep you from being misunderstood, and it will prevent you from being caught up in unnecessary drama. Just tend to what you have going on in your own life.

### **Live a righteous life that speaks for itself**

The Word of God says, "And see to it that your conscience is entirely clear (unimpaired), so that, when you are falsely accused as evildoers, those who threaten you abusively and revile your right behavior in Christ may come to be ashamed (of slandering your good lives) *"Pet. 3:16"* The message Bible say it this way: "Keep a clear conscience before God so that when people throw mud at you, none of it will stick. They'll end up realizing that they're the ones who need a bath.

In other words, people can talk about you. They can misunderstand you. They can throw mud at you. But if you live right long enough, the mud won't stick. Your good name will be cleared up-not because you were fighting to make it right, but because you did right long enough for people to know your true character. When you do these three simple things, you will not get sidetracked from your life's mission. You will be able to pass THE TEST OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD, and God will see that He can trust you to be the leader He desires and needs you to be.....