

Nine Tests That Every Christian Must Face

Lesson 7-

The Misunderstanding Test

Luke 19:10 *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

John 10:10 *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

Hebrews 12:3 *Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.*

- Parents and their children of today consistently struggle to understand each other.
- We also struggle to understand those with whom we work or live around.
- Often misunderstandings arise that hinder progress, relationships, and our peace of mind.

Usually, misunderstandings occur because of the Gaps that we have to deal with

- Generation Gap
- Social Gap
- Educational Gap
- Religious Gap
- Cultural Gap

Differences between individuals often lead to **MISUNDERSTANDINGS**

Misunderstanding is defined as

1. to fail to understand
2. to interpret incorrectly

- Misunderstandings are common and can start a destructive cycle of disagreements, arguments and quarrels that may last for a short period or it could last a lifetime.
- Misunderstanding can lead to the separation of close friends.

***Act 15:37** And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.*

***Act 15:38** But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.*

***Act 15:39** And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;*

Misunderstandings hinders the work of the Gospel

- ***Philip. 4:2** (Living)
And now I want to plead with those two dear women, Euodias and Syntyche. Please, please, with the Lord's help, quarrel no more--be friends again.*
- ***Philip. 4:3** (Living)
And I ask you, my true teammate, to help these women, for they worked side by side with me in telling the Good News to others; and they worked with Clement, too, and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are written in the Book of Life.*

Misunderstandings can result in mistreatment

- ***Gen 37:26** And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother (Joseph), and conceal his blood?*
- ***Gen 37:27** Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.*

Misunderstanding can result in loss

- ***John 6:53** 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.*
- ***John 6:66** From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*

Misunderstanding can lead to persecution.

- Act 14:19 Some Jewish leaders from Antioch and Iconium came and turned the crowds against Paul. They hit him with stones and dragged him out of the city, thinking he was dead.

Misunderstandings can lead to false doctrines

- 2Pe 3:16 Paul talks about these same things in all his letters, but part of what he says is hard to understand. Some ignorant and unsteady people even destroy themselves by twisting what he said. They do the same thing with other Scriptures too.

Misunderstandings occur when people misinterpret or mistake the true significance of actions, words, attitudes, or motives.

- Gen 37:8 *And his brethren said to him (Joseph), Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.*
- Gen 37:10 *And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?*

David's motives were misunderstood by his brothers:

- 1Sa 17:28 *And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few*

sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

Why The Misunderstanding Test

- To humble us as it reveals our own weakness
- We do not always communicate effectively
- We do not always see the big picture as God sees it

Showing us our weaknesses teaches us to rely on God and His Word and not just on our own abilities

- **Deu 8:3** And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Being misunderstood brings humility in our lives

- (It is hard to be proud when everyone misunderstands your motives, your words, or your actions)

The three greatest virtues of Christianity (St. Augustine)

Humility

Humility

Humility

Humility is an exclusive Christian Virtue
No other religion expects humility from its followers

People are consumed by Self-Interests

- It is a Me First generation
- If you don't Toot your own horn—you won't be noticed
- It's everyone for himself...
- It is a dog eat dog world we live and work in

***John 13:4** So during the meal Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist.*

***John 13:5** He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing.*

Misunderstanding reveals **PRIDE**

When we are prideful, we have are prone to:

- Self-Importance
- Self-Indulgence
- Self-Sufficiency
- Self-Righteousness

Misunderstanding reveals the necessity of **PATIENCE**

Being misunderstood means that we often have to lay plans aside until the misunderstanding is resolved.

- Not everyone will agree with us
- Not everyone is as fast to understand as us.

Misunderstanding reveals the necessity of forbearance and forgiveness

- Because of the differences we have as a people (education, social status, generational views, cultural differences, and different weaknesses)...we must be patient with the weak, and not be envious of those who are stronger

***Col 3:12** God loves you and has chosen you as his own special people. So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient.*

***Col 3:13** Put up with each other, and forgive anyone who does you wrong, just as Christ has forgiven you.*

Misunderstanding helps us to measure our maturity.

***Jam 3:2** For we all go wrong in a number of things. If a man never makes a slip in his talk, then he is a complete man (mature) and able to keep all his body in control.*

The Danger in dealing badly with Misunderstandings

Anger
Resentment
Unwise responses
Mental, Emotional, and
Spiritual baggage
Despair
Bitterness

Conflict and bitterness in the church may be the single most damaging matter to the work of God.

- In the secular world, how one gets along with fellow workers is more important than experience, intelligence, gifts, and abilities.
 - Misunderstandings forces us to
 - Learn to speak more clearly
 - Be more tolerate with others
 - Be patient with the slower pace of others
 - Be humble in face of opposition
 - Control our responses to prevent worsening the circumstance
 - As misunderstandings occur often, and do such damage...it is important for a Christian to learn how to deal with misunderstandings effectively.

Everyone will be misunderstood at some point in his or her life. How one deals with misunderstandings reveals one's

- Character
- Maturity
- Ability to Lead

Failing the misunderstanding test often leaves us defeated and embittered.

Passing it brings us closer to the character of Christ