WARNINGS TO WINNERS: THE TEST OF CRITICISM

REVIEW: Components Of A Critical Spirit

A. Dissatisfaction With God’s Placement In Life
B. Wounded Pride – Self-Pity
C. Being Judgmental
D. Selfishness Or Self-Seeking

• Gideon Was Able To Overcome Their Critical Spirit With A Soft Answer That Diffused The Situation
WARNINGS TO WINNERS: THE TEST OF CRITICISM

• When You Step Out For God -- Some People Won’t Like:
  – What You Are Doing
  – How You Are Doing It
WARNINGS TO WINNERS: 
THE TEST OF CRITICISM

• “Never fear criticism when you’re right; never ignore criticism when you’re wrong.”

• Don’t Let Critics Stop You – Keep Your Focus On The Real Battle
WARNINGS TO WINNERS: THE TEST OF CRITICISM

• Let Jesus Deal With Others:
  – You Cannot Change Them Yourself
  – Give Them Over To The Lord
  – Honor Him:
    • Be Peaceable
    • Be Humble
(Judg 8:4-9 NIV)  Gideon and his three hundred men, exhausted yet keeping up the pursuit, came to the Jordan and crossed it. 5 He said to the men of Succoth, "Give my troops some bread; they are worn out, and I am still pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." 6 But the officials of Succoth said, "Do you already have the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna in your possession? Why should we give bread to your troops?" 7 Then Gideon replied, "Just for that, when the LORD has given Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will tear your flesh with desert thorns and briers." 8 From there he went up to Peniel and made the same request of them, but they answered as the men of Succoth had. 9 So he said to the men of Peniel, "When I return in triumph, I will tear down this tower."
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• What Kept Gideon Going?  
  The Battle Is Not Over

• God Wants Us To **Fight** The Battle  
  AND  
  **Finish** The Battle!
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• Sometimes the first wave of Opposition comes from our own people

• That is -- The Test Of Opposition
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

- Opposition Often Comes From People Who Haven’t --
  - Seen What You’ve Seen
  - Done What You’ve Done
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• Opposition Often Comes From People Who Are --
  – Small Thinking
  – On A Different Wave-length
• Sometimes Those Who Oppose God’s People The Most Are Those Who Should Be The Most Grateful
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

Things That Can Cause Us To Oppose God

- Fear
- Selfishness
- Ungratefulness
- Unbelief
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• Opposition Does Not Mean
  – God Has Abandoned You
  – You Should Cease From The Original Battle
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

Opposition Is Lesson Time

1. Those Who Oppose The Plan Of God — Will Be Taught A Lesson Through The Discipline Of The Lord

2. Those Opposed Must Keep On Going
   - Keep On Fighting
   - Keep On Pursuing
   - Keep On Pulling Down The Enemy

• (Gal 6:9 NIV) Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• RECOGNIZE : (Eph. 6:12) **Our Main Battle Is Not With People, But With:**
  – The World
  – The Devil
  – Our Own Selfish Human Nature

• RECOGNIZE: **The Weapons Of A Spirit Filled Christian Are Not Fleshly, But Spiritual**
  (2 Cor 10:4-5)
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• ASK THE LORD: To Give Wisdom In Remaining Calm and Focused When Criticized or Opposed

• PRESERVE: The Bond Of Unity With Love

• (Eph 4:29 NIV) Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• Don’t Give Up! Hold On!

• Stay Engaged In The Battle Even When Opposed!

• (Gal 6:9 NIV) Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

• **Humble Yourself And The Lord Will Lift You Up – Let Him!**

• *(James 4:10 NIV)* Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

• **The True Children Of God Are Peacemakers – Be One!**

• *(Mat 5:9 NIV)* Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.
THE TEST OF OPPOSITION

- **Make Every Effort Towards Peace & Edification – Be Such A Leader**
- *(Rom 14:19 NIV)* Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification

- **The Way To Live In God’s Joy Is To Promote Peace – Just Do It!**
- *(Prov 12:20 NIV)* There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace.
THE TEST OF CRITICISM

4 Ways To Handle Criticism

• Commit The Matter Instantly To God

• Don’t Defend Yourself From Criticism -- Defer It

• If You Are Wrong Confess It

• Be Willing To Learn That You Are Not Infallible