



Tested Genuine

“A group of Jews was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits. They tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus in their incantation, saying, “I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out! ... But one time when they tried it, the evil spirit replied, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?”
Acts 19:13:15 (NLT)

Studies suggest that 30–60% of people admit to some form of plagiarism—from stealing ideas and failing to cite sources to putting their name on someone else’s work.

I was more than a little shocked when I learned this.

Plagiarism came to mind as I continued reading in Acts...

“Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and battered.” (Acts 19:16)

What struck me wasn't the violence. It was what led to it.

These Jews were attempting to cast out an evil spirit by saying, "I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches." That's Spiritual Plagiarism!

Paul knew Jesus. At best, they knew *about* Jesus.

Big difference.

Got me thinking: **Is Spiritual Plagiarism more common than we realize?**

How many churchgoers, under pressure to appear like they know God, simply repeat what they've heard others say? How many have inherited their parents' faith but never developed an intimate relationship with Jesus themselves?

They know the right words—the "formula"—but do they know Jesus?

Reflect: **Do I really know Jesus?**

Worldly plagiarism must work...seldom do people get caught. Scripture paints a different story of consequences in the spiritual realm.

This confrontation was disastrous for these Jews, though I suspect that in most cases, Spiritual Plagiarism yields a far less flagrant response... an even greater tragedy when you think about it.

How many religiously toss up the godly words they've heard others use, as if wielding a magic wand, asking God to solve their problems?

They believe God's purpose is to relieve their troubles. When they don't get the response they want, they turn away from intimacy with Jesus. What better tactic could the enemy employ to destroy lives?

Jesus warned:

"Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter... But I will reply, 'I never knew you.'" (Matthew 7:21-23)

Imagine standing before Jesus and hearing:

"I never knew you."

That's the ultimate tragedy of Spiritual Plagiarism.

Consider: **Want to know whether something is genuine? Subject it to fire.**

Fiery trials expose what's real. Spiritual Plagiarism can't withstand the heat.

"Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the Lord tests the heart." (Proverbs 17:3)

God will test you. Not because he wants you to fail, but because he wants to burn away what isn't genuine.

Envision Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego standing before a blazing furnace:

"The God whom we serve is able to save us... But even if he doesn't, we

want to make it clear... that we will never serve your gods.” (Daniel 3:16-18)

Their faith Tested Genuine.

God can fix your situation.

But even *if* he doesn't, will you still trust him?

Will your faith be Tested Genuine?

The people celebrated in Hebrews 11 understood it. They died believing God's promises even though they never saw them fulfilled.

“They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it.” (Hebrews 11:13)

So, what happens when God answers your prayer with “no”?

Imagine: **Mobilizing my Mission leads me through fiery trials.**

There is perhaps no better crucible for testing your faith than joining Jesus on Mission—doing the Father's will.

Think about the Mission driven Faith Hall of Famers...

✓ Noah kept building while people ridiculed him.

✓ Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac, trusting God despite not understanding how the promise could possibly be fulfilled.

✓ Moses repeatedly confronted Pharaoh.

✓ Paul faced one adversary after another as he planted churches.

They took God's promises seriously. Their faith **Tested Genuine.**

When you mobilize your Mission, Jesus will test you, too. He'll ask you to surrender things that matter less. He'll push you to grow. He'll lead you into situations where obedience costs something.

You'll encounter resistance.

Sometimes it will be difficult to tell whether the challenge is God's refining fire or the enemy's opposition.

Will you wholeheartedly obey *even if* God doesn't fix your situation?

Paul gives us a sobering picture of our final test:

"But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value." (1 Corinthians 3:13)

It isn't whether you know the right words.

It isn't even whether you can do impressive things in Jesus' name.

It's, **do you know Jesus?**

And more importantly:

Does he know you?

Those saints didn't have guarantees that everything would work out. Still, they relentlessly focused on their Mission trusting the One they had grown to love.

That's genuine faith.

Jesus calls everyone he saves to follow him into the adventure of a life

on Mission. Along the way expect to be refined and proven.

Because, you must be...

Tested Genuine.

Get off the grid and ask these questions

Coach's Questions:

- **Reflect:** *What tests of faith have I already experienced?*
- **Ask:** *What is Jesus testing me on right now? What promise do I need to focus on?*
- **Challenge:** Obey—acting as if this promise is absolutely true.
- Further insights: [God is True](#); [Stone Face Determined](#)
- Don't know my Mission—[Start here!](#)

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

I'm truly glad to be tested.

"So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine."

The Apostle Peter | 1 Peter 1:6-7 (NLT)



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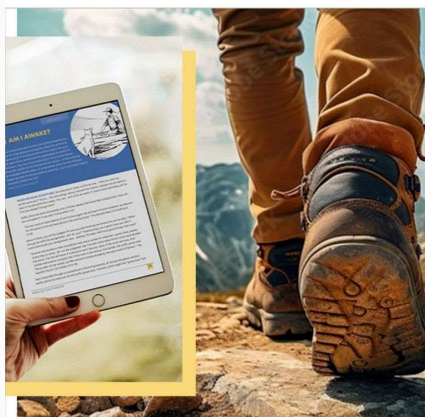
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~ DAN B.

Life Mission: Shaping radical existence in the everyday



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