

SERMON
Dealing With the Reality of a Hateful Situation
Text: John 15:18

Reverend Tanisha Johnson
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“Today is filled with anger, fueled with hidden hate; scared of being out cast, afraid of common fate. Today is built on tragedies that no one wants to face, nightmares to humanity and morally disgraced. Tonight is filled with rage, violence in the air, children bred with ruthlessness cause no one’s at home that cares. Tonight I lay my head down but the pressure never stops, knowing that my sanity’s content when I’m dropped. But tomorrow I see change; a chance to build a new, build on spirit intent of heart and ideas based on tomorrow I wake with second wind and strong because of pride, I know I fought with all my heart to keep the dream alive.”

The author who wrote this poem was born in Brooklyn, NY, in 1971 to a lady by the name of Afeni Shakur. His life as a child was one that he described as being tough, and unimaginable as he was able to physically escape this life style, it continued to follow him “mentally” through out his career as a rapper, and actor and a writer. During his lifetime he spent time in jail from assault charges to misdemeanor rape charges. During the time of this incarceration he was able to release what some say was his greatest creative album to appear in the top of the billboard charts. This album entitled, “Me against the World”, sold millions and in fact it is still one of his most purchased albums to this day. When interviewed about the concept of this album, Tupac Shakur, also known as “Pac”, stated that he realized that no one other than his mother really had his best interest in mind. He stated that this industry of fancy cars, honey’s and fancy houses came along with something that was not mentioned in his contract with Death Row, Interscope or After Math, and that is haters. Every time he turned on the T.V. or read the paper, he was faced with either looking at or listening to a bunch of haters. Pac stated that all he wanted to do was make that paper, but every time he turned around somebody was hating on him.

Well preacha...what does this possibly have to do with the text? Well...I’m glad you asked...because much to our dismay or denial some of us in here have taken the role of “Christian Haters”, or we’ve been attacked by them. For some reason or another we thought that once we gave our lives to Christ, it would be easy and a walk in the park. Some how, some body told you that it would be roses and daises and you wouldn’t run into any mishaps. All you know is that God is good and his mercy endures, but during your daily devotional readings, you forgot to read a few chapters and was not aware of the words written here in the 15th chapter of John starting somewhere along the 18th verse. You knew that while you where in the world you had some haters...you had some females that didn’t like you because of the way you dressed, styled your hair or simply because your boyfriend was fine and together ya’ll were the high school version of Beyonce and Jay-Z, and fellas you had some dudes that didn’t like you because your edge up was straighter than theirs, your jump shot had the perfect form, you wore a fresh pair of kicks to school every week, or the fact that you had 2-3 females sweating you and they were

doing all they could to get the one female to actually say hi to them. But I came to let somebody know that ain't nothing changed because you still have some haters, but the only difference is that they hating on your shout, they hating on the gift that God blessed you with...and for my preachers you got some people hating on you simply because they can't "whoop" like you...look to your left and look to your right 'cause just as sure as the sun rises and sets, somebody in here is hating on you...don't get it twisted cause even though they may be smiling in your face, at the same time they are sending a text message to somebody across the room...but I've come to let somebody know that it is what it is so stop trippin' and get over it.

One thing that I have learned about people in the church today is that we are good about doing two things...throwing pity-parties and going to pity-parties. We throw pity parties for ourselves in hopes that somebody would feel sorry for us not realizing that all they are doing is taking pleasure in our misery...then we go to pity-parties thinking that we're being supportive when all we are really doing is adding fuel to the flames, keeping them down instead of speaking life into their situation... So stop acting surprised when people who you thought were down with you, really could care less about you, people who you thought had your back, were really stabbing you in the back. Your haters serve for one purpose and one purpose only and that is to elevate you in your walk with Christ...the Bible tells me that he will make my enemies my footstool, and the last time I checked, a footstool is used to help you reach something that you know is obtainable, but you can't quite reach it yet...in other words you know it's there, but you can't quite put your hands on it...I wish I had about 5 people who knew what I was talking about...you've gone through the majority of your life depending on people to validate who you are...deep down on the inside you feel neglected not wanting to lie down and go to sleep because you knew that when you woke up the next morning you would have to do it all over again.

But let me encourage somebody and let them know that the Bible says, "weeping may endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning"...so the next time you come across one of your haters, offer them a glass of "Haterade," and tell them thanks for the lift...tell them you appreciate all the hell they took you through...you appreciate all the chaos that they have caused in your life...tell them it's because of them that you pray harder...it's because of them that you're stronger than they realize...it's because of them that you are able to wake up in the morning and say greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world...

So here we have a text that has been credited to John, one of the 12 apostles of Jesus Christ. This particular gospel contains 21 chapters and is divided into 4 sections, the prologue, the book of signs, the book of glory and the epilogue...the particular focus of our text comes from the book of glory which consists of 5 subtopics...the Passover meal, the farewell discourse, the passion, the resurrection, and the conclusion...here we have Jesus talking to the disciples and he's trying to school them on some things so that they can be prepared for what's ahead of them. These twelve men have been with him for a mighty long time and now we come to the point called the "farewell discourse"...in other words Jesus is in the middle of the end of his earthly ministry...but he realizes that it is imperative that his boys know from the jump what's about to go down, how it's going down and how it's about to go down with...as Christians we know we'll be in constant battle so we have to be prepared...we have to be in a position in which we are most effective...no matter who tries to stress us out...no matter how hard the winds may

blow...no matter how high the waves in our lives may rise...he said in his word that he will lead me beside still waters...oh somebody ought to shout "Lord Please Don't Let Me Drown"...I know I haven't been the best friend...the best wife or the best husband...I've even gotten a little side tracked on this here Christian journey...but the Bible tells me that all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory...but I know as long as I live right...as long as I pray right...surely...heaven belongs to me...

So here we are given some advice which is pretty much straightforward and to the point...he said if the world hates you...know that they hated me first...if the world does not care for you, don't suck your teeth.... cause they hated me first...don't get gangsta on them when they lie on you...cause they lied on me first...don't get upset cause you didn't get invited to the party...they had me over for dinner and tried to set me up with a woman who ended up washing my feet with her tears and drying them with her hair...don't get upset cause you don't have an entourage...the same ones that rolled with me eventually turned on me...everything that is happening to you...I already went through it...and if we read a little further starting at verse 22...he goes on to say if I hadn't performed the miracles of healing those afflicted with leprosy, making the lame to walk...raising the dead and having sold out fish fry's with complimentary hushpuppies it wouldn't be so bad...I could understand ya'll hating me for doing nothing...or if I had not told you that I am the resurrection and the life he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live...If I had not told you let not your heart be troubled he that believe in God believe also in me...if I had just kept my mouth closed then I could possibly see why you wouldn't have me in your top 5 friends list on your [Facebook] page...but instead I told you that I came so that you might have life and have it more abundantly...I've come to catch that tear drop that you've cried cause your so-called friends have forsaken you...I've come to comfort you in the midnight hour when you've felt like you didn't have anyone else to talk to...I've come to let you know that in me there is no failure and whatever it is that's got a hold of you and hindering you has got to let you go 'cause I'm God and through me all things are possible if you just believe...

So as we dig deeper into the text we find that there are three reasons why the world hates us...as followers of Christ we have been chosen out of the world and set apart for the up building of Gods kingdom...and because we are uniquely chosen and created...I submit to you the first reason that the world hates us is because they envy us...they want what we have but they are not willing to go through what we go through...they want our anointing but they are not willing to endure the pain and suffering of being alone in the midnight hour without a friend to call on...but the Bible tells me of a friend that sticks closer to me than any brother...this man is the one I can call on when my mother and my father have forsaken me...this man is the one that told me to wait on him and be of good courage and he will strengthen my heart...he also told me that weeping may endure for a night...but my joy will come in the morning...all I have to do is to look to the hills from which cometh my help...knowing all my help comes from him...

The second reason for the world not hating us is because you belong to Christ...they wonder how can you deal with the things that you deal with on a daily basis and because they can't comprehend it they can't understand it...they can't grasp the fact that its' obvious you are dealing with some issues...but deep down on the inside your internal organs are being shifted because you got a praise so deep on the inside that at any moment its' going to erupt from the depths of your belly...they don't understand how you

can walk around with your head held high and a smile on your face when your bills are not due, but overdue...its' five minutes to five and you've got is 5 dollars to your name...they can't comprehend how you come to church with an unrestricted praise when your other half is acting a fool... your children won't do right...your boss is trippn'...and your co-workers are being sneaky...they ain't quite figured it our yet that its' not you but Christ that's living on the inside of you...1 Peter 4 and 14 says if you be reproached for the name of Christ , happy are you...is there anybody in here happy on tonight...is there anybody in here that can say when I think of the goodness of Jesus and all he's done for me...my souls cries hallelujah...

The third reason deals with the world's ignorance...they have all of these misconceptions about religion, church and theology...but the fact is they really do not know God...they have no idea what he is capable of doing...and so because they don't really know him...and we were created in his image...then they really don't know you...and even though they are envious of you, they don't understand you...they still want to be like you...but they have no idea how many sleepless nights you've had cause your so-called friends could not deal with where God is about to take you...they now realize that it's every man for himself and they can no longer ride on your coat tail...but they have no idea how close you came to giving up on God because life as you thought you knew it was damaged beyond repair...but one day you called upon the name of Jesus and he pitied every groan...they want to be like you but they ain't ready to give up that no good negro that about bout nothing or that trifling female that too lazy to get up off her back and go get some business about herself...they want to be like you but are they willing to stop those late night, weekend sexcapes to spend some quality time with Jesus?...they want to be like you but are they willing to say for God I live and for God I'll die?...they want to be like you but are they willing to make some sacrifices?

I wish I had just 5 people in here who where feeling me right about now...you've gone through the fire and you've been broken down to the smallest particle on the face of the earth...but in spite of all that you've gone through...you never lost your praise...you never stopped shouting...you never stopped giving God the glory...I heard...the songwriter say...everyday with Jesus...is sweeter than the day before...I heard...my grandmother say...that God is good...all the time...and all the time...God is good...she even said...he's just like Campbell's...he's ummm ummm good...and because of his goodness...I have no choice...but to give him praise...I have no choice...but to glorify him...I have no choice...but to magnify him...cause the Bible says...oh magnify the Lord with me...and let us...exalt his name together...oh taste and see...that the Lord is good...David said...I will bless the Lord...at all times....and his praises...shall continually be in mouth.

Reverend Tanisha Johnson, MAR, M. Div.

Tanisha was born and raised in Greenville, North Carolina. After much arguing and wrestling, on March 7, 2004 she stepped behind the sacred desk at Mt. Calvary FWB Church under the leadership of Bishop Henry Brown, Sr. and declared the word of God. Her text "The Art of Following Directions" was not only a powerful sermon, but it also was

a reflection of her life and her fight of trying to avoid what God had already ordained. In May of 2004 she received her Bachelor of Science in Bible Ministry from Southern Christian University. She recently received her Master of Arts in Religious Studies from Liberty Theological Seminary School. She serves as a Chaplain Resident at Pitt County Memorial Hospital where here assigned areas include Pediatric Intensive Care, Children's Hospital, and Pediatric Rehabilitation. She is currently a member of Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church where she serves as an Associate Minister under the leadership of Dr. Sidney A. Locks, Jr., she is also one of the many students of Bishop Rosie S. O'Neal, Pastor and Founder of Koinonia Christian Center Church. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, and is founder of Young Black Minister's Digest (<http://ybmdigest.com>), a website designed to encourage young ministers and give them an opportunity to fellowship with one another. She is married to Dedrick Johnson and together they reside in Greenville with their two daughters Sha-Talia, and Sha-Kiya.

Since the time Tanisha first wrote this sermon back in 2008, she has become a pastoral counselor at One Touch Pastoral Counseling, <http://www.onetouchpastoralcounseling.com> .

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