

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Celebrity Personalities and the Person of Christ (1 Cor. 1:10-17)

Week of 10.12.20

BIG IDEA: PLEASE DON'T FOLLOW A PERSONALITY; FOLLOW THE PERSON OF CHRIST!

This week's scripture tackles the dangers of creating pulpit celebrities from those who are serving God. It is the Glory of God that allows God's servants to do the things they do. Servants are merely planting or watering and then trusting God to give the increase in due season. If they are truly the servant that God has called them to be, they are humble rather than proud or boastful.

Some have been guilty of making pulpit celebrities out of those who serve God and God's people. Have you ever thought to yourself, "he had a good message, but I was hoping to hear from someone else?" How about, "I was looking for her to host service but this other person did a good job." We can surely have a preference on who we would like to hear but we want to make sure we aren't creating pulpit celebrities. The church at Corinth had a host of problems and issues, but Paul lovingly dealt with them to help the church continue to look to Jesus.

One of the problems with celebrity personalities is that it becomes harder for us to view the individual as family. In verse 10 Paul appeals to the Corinthians to have the same mindset, the same attitude. He wanted them to know they are all on the same side and to make sure everyone understood they were all the same. There wasn't any 1st class or 2nd class groups among them; NO in-groups or out-groups. When we worship, study, or serve together we do it as FAMILY.

1. Are we guilty of separating ourselves into groups and alienating a portion of our church family?
2. What is competing for our united identity in Christ?

Paul isn't pressing for homogeneity or uniformity in the church. As a family he didn't want division either, the Corinthians started aligning themselves with certain teachers thus creating celebrities. When we start to align ourselves with certain individuals we began creating the spiritual elite league. The Corinthians were saying I myself am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas (Peter) or I am of Christ. Celebrities don't create celebrities; People do.

3. Have you ever been guilty of celebrification (Randy's Word) in the church?

4. In what ways do WE make too much of celebrity?

Paul did not offer an air-brushed image of comfort-laced celebrity spirituality. Instead, he GOSPELIZED about the bloody, criminal, shame-covered, torturing, scandalous cross of Jesus Christ. To the Corinthian status seekers, Paul offered the Christ who was insulted, mocked, ridiculed, scorned, derided, satirized, and then nailed like a piece of meat. Then, he was stabbed with a spear to see if it was done. To the image conscious Corinthians, Paul said: THAT'S YOUR GOD! Christianity is the worship of the crucified and resurrected KING; it's not a rate-my-professor experience. When we make it that, the CROSS is gutted of its power. There is a reason why we preached through the Apostles' Creed earlier this year. It's because we must be united in matters of first importance.

5. In what ways have we set aside matters of first importance for those things that are peripheral to the Gospel? What are some ways we can embrace the identity of Christ in us?

We have been challenged to boast of Christ and His goodness. We have been challenged to focus on the cross. "2020 is a Great Year for the Church. Despite how 2020 looks there is no panic in heaven." ~Author Chad Bird

Wouldn't it be just like God to choose a time like this to bring the greatest awakening, the greatest in gathering of souls, the greatest giving, the greatest sending, the greatest season of signs and wonders, the greatest worship and capped off with the greatest impact on the world?