

“I Am the Best!”

“An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest.”

Luke 9:46 (NIV)

Two of the most blessed preachers in the Church of England were John Wesley and George Whitefield. These men knew and loved each other as fellow preachers for their entire lives. John outlived George by some years and it was always the desire of George to have John preach his funeral sermon. This was done Sunday, November 18, 1770.

Not many people know but there was a serious theological rift between the two men in 1741. It was the matter of Calvinism that separated the thinking of Wesley and Whitefield. Yet, these men demonstrated a more godly spirit than the disciples in the verse today.

The disciples were arrogant, proud, and highly sinful in their exalted views of themselves. Jesus’ heart must have broken by this party spirit that divided them.

The One Who was humble (Jesus) had great reason to be proud, the ones who had great reasons to be humble were proud. By their pride they demonstrated that they were utterly unlike Jesus. Mark 9:33-34; 10:35-37; Luke

22:24 are other passages where we read of each of the twelve disciples regarding themselves better than the other eleven. This arrogant spirit where a follower of Jesus thinks that he or she is a better Christian than other believers has plagued the church since the time of Christ.

When a Christian, or a group of Christians, comes to the conclusion that they are better than other Christians, you may be sure they are likely the worst of Jesus’ followers. The context of today’s verse describes the apostles trying to stop a man who was exorcising demons in Jesus’ name. They decided that “because he is not one of us.”, that he should be stopped.

Jesus soundly rebuked the disciples on this occasion and others for their “party” spirit. Our Lord made it very clear that “...he that is not against us is for us.” Luke 9:50. If a person has repented of their sin and confessed Jesus as Lord then that person is every bit as much a Christian as any other follower of Jesus.

The problem comes in when professed followers of Jesus think themselves the elite,

or the inner circle of Christians. This was precisely the issue with the disciples in our text today. Each one of them fought the others for the position of supremacy.

I wrote this devotional after having read a website dedicated to people who were rejected by a specific sect in evangelical Christianity. I read heart wrenching stories of many people put out of this sect for something as simple as listening to the radio, or speaking to other family members who had also been put out of the particular group.

Your story may be one of rejection by your church because of some man-made rules that cannot be found in the Bible. Your hair may be too short or you wear earrings. Never forget that while people judge you by outward appearances, God sees the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). Ultimately it is God Who is the judge and not your fellow sinners. Rest content in the knowledge that you are the Lord’s and He has you firmly in His heart forever.

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