
Words of Truth

Watch Out For Those Who Want To Be Chief Amongst Us

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This study is not about men who desire to be elders, for such is an actual qualification of being an elder (I Timothy 3:1-7). If a man is truly qualified to be an elder, he understands that such a position is not one of lordship over others (I Peter 5:1-4). Nor is this article about those who want to be evangelists. A faithful evangelist understands his position of authority is limited (I Timothy 4:12-16, II Timothy 2:1-4, II Timothy 4:1-5, Titus 1:5, Titus 2:1, Titus 2:7-8, Titus 2:15, etc.). He also understands his role is much more of a servant than of a place of prestige or authority (II Corinthians 4:5). Deacons (Philippians 1:1 and I Timothy 3:8-13) aren't our subject matter either, for the word itself means: "attendant, a waiter, minister, a servant" (Strong's #1249).

The point of our study has several applications. Here locally in El Paso, we are all growing spiritually as we should (II Peter 3:18). With such growth, it is possible to start to get a "know it all" mentality and that is dangerous (I Corinthians 8:1). We do not want to start thinking of ourselves more highly (Romans 12:1-3; 16) because our knowledge is growing (I Corinthians 4:1-8).

Another point, though there could be many, pertains to others that might study this article or potential future issues we could face here if we have newcomers. The reason I am clarifying this is that I see nothing to indicate this is something we are dealing with locally at present. However, we have to be aware that there are those who are self-righteous and despise others that could come or arise in the future (i.e. Luke 18:9-14). That type of person has a "holier than thou" mentality (Isaiah 65:5). At the end of the day, as he/she/they despise others, they seek a position of preeminence as Diotrephes erringly did (III John 1:9-11). We need to be aware of this type of person as well as the one puffed up through knowledge that thinks they are better than everyone else. Thus, let's jump into our brief study by considering those that want to be above others.

When Disciples Want A Higher Standing

When there was an issue of self-elevation amongst Jesus' disciples, Jesus handled it masterfully. Thus, study and learn from this: *"Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not*

what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him” (Matthew 20:20-29).

Whether it is a title or a special seat amongst others, Jesus always taught that His followers should not seek to be exalted (Matthew 23:1-12 and Luke 14:7-11). God does not reward the proud, but seeks that all have an attitude of submissiveness (I Peter 5:5-6). Those who want to be chief amongst us struggle with a submissive mindset for various reasons. There are two we are discussing in this brief study.

Knowledge And Self-Righteousness Leads To Self-Promotion

When people think they're "smart" that leads to self-glorying (I Corinthians 3:18-23). God has created things to be perplexing to confound those that think they're wise so that He alone has the glory (I Corinthians 1:18-31). If you cannot admit, in the "grand scheme of things", you aren't all that smart; then you just don't get it. In comparison to God, what do you think you know (Job 38:1-41:34, Psalms 40:5, Isaiah 55:8-9, and Romans 11:33-36)? In comparison to others, are you really so great? Wait, why are you comparing yourself with others you idiot (II Corinthians 10:12-18)? If you are measuring yourself by comparing yourself to others, you're going straight to Hell for not obeying the Scriptures you should have read (II Thessalonians 1:8-9). Now that's smart, right?

Outside of those who think they're so smart, you have those that think their dung does not stink. They are self-righteous. Truly, they are self-deceived in thinking they are something when they really are not (Galatians 6:3). You cannot be in Christ based upon your own righteousness (Philippians 3:3-17). This is what got many in trouble in the past (Romans 10:1-3). Don't allow it to happen to you or to those that are, or will be amongst us.

Conclusion

We have our Chief (Colossians 1:12-18 and Hebrews 3:1-6). Let's focus our time and efforts on being what He expects rather than trying to accomplish some feat of self-promotion that will lead us to eternal destruction. Faithfulness to God requires submissiveness to our brothers and sisters (Ephesians 5:21). Thus, no one of us is chief!
