

NOT ONE OF US: OVERCOMING CHRISTIAN PROVINCIALISM

Mark 9:38-41

Mark 9:33-50

Essential Lessons for Every Disciple

- I. True greatness in Christ's kingdom is defined by humility (33-37).
- II. The kingdom of God is greater than our experience of it (38-41).

II. The kingdom of God is greater than our experience of it (38-41).

- A. How to Recognize a Provincial Attitude (38)
 - 1) Displayed by true disciples (38a)
 - 2) Manifested toward a true disciple
 - Not...
 - The unbelievers in Matthew 7:22.
 - The frauds in Acts 19:13-16
 - 3) Based solely on...
 - a) Recognition – they are not personally deferential to us, our beliefs, or our position.
 - b) Association – they are not personally connected to us.
 - Luke 9:49 - John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow along with us."

A Sectarian's Favorite Poem

"Believe as I believe, no more no less,
that I am right, and no one else confess.
Feel as I feel, think as I think,
eat what I eat, and drink but what I drink,
look as I look, do always as I do,
then and only then, I'll fellowship with you."

II. The kingdom of God is greater than our experience of it (38-41).

- A. How to Recognize a Provincial Attitude (38)
- B. How to Remedy a Provincial Attitude (39-41)
 - 1) The Lord's Command (39a)
 - 2) The Lord's Reasons (39b-41)
 - (a) Our chief concern must always be that Jesus is glorified. (39b)
 - (b) Our perspective must always be that there are only two sides—there is no neutrality when it comes to Jesus. (40)
 - Matt. 12:30 - "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.
 - (c) Our interaction with other believers must always be with the awareness that how we treat them is how we treat Christ. (41)

John learned the balance!

- 1 John 4:13-18
- Cf. 2 John vs. 3 John.
 - 2 John 7-11 – reject those who don't preach the true Jesus and the true gospel.
 - 3 John 5-8 – support and care for those who do preach the true Jesus and the true gospel.

The Legitimate Applications...

- It is not teaching that we should...
 - (1) Overlook false doctrine and false teachers.
 - (2) Overlook patterns of unrepentant sin.
 - (3) Deny important doctrinal differences.

The Legitimate Applications...

- **1) Primary application:** We must never resent the success of others in ministry because it undermines our position and status.
- **2) We must not tolerate Christian provincialism toward...**
 - Other segments of the true church.
 - Other denominations.
 - Other Bible-teaching churches in our area.

The Legitimate Applications...

- **3) We should not reject others solely because of differences on issues other than the fundamental doctrines of the Christian church.**
 - When does a true church become a false church?
 - When they deny the truth of the gospel.
 - 1) The Person & Work of Christ
 - 1 John 2:18-24; 4:1-6, 15; 5:1
 - 2 John 7-11
 - 2) The Means of Salvation
 - Gal. 1:6-9

The Circle of Involvement

- **Fellowship:** profession of the biblical Christ and Gospel, belief in the fundamental doctrines of the Xn faith, and not living in a pattern of unrepentant sin.
- **Partnership:** essential agreement in all major issues of the Christian faith
- **Membership:** willingness to submit to the specific doctrine and distinctives of that particular church.
- **Leadership:** whole-hearted assent to the doctrine and distinctives determined as necessary by the elders of that church.

The Legitimate Applications...

- **4) We should proactively break down artificial barriers between us in the church.**