

Jesus, They Ain't One of Us

Description

38 John said to Him, Teacher, we saw a man who does not follow along with us d
39 But Jesus said, Do not restrain or hinder or forbid him; for no one who doe
40 For he who is not against us is for us. [Num. 11:27-29.]
41 For I tell you truly, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you
42 And whoever causes one of these little ones (these believers) who acknowledged

Mark 9:38-42 AMPC

Over the course of the gospels we get a clear and well-rounded look into the minds of the disciples through their actions and words in response to some of Jesus' teachings, miracles, and their responses to people who came to Jesus seeking healings. To me, it is clear that the disciples had periods where they felt entitled because of their proximity and relationship with Jesus rather than humbled, and because of this they sometimes acted in ways that could have prevented others from coming to Jesus. One thing us believers must be aware of is that we don't have exclusive rights to Jesus, and we can't determine who he chooses to use to fulfill his plans. To understand the significance of the verses above, you must go back to verse 33-34 where the disciples had been arguing with one another about who was the greatest of the 12. Why would the apostles even be arguing about this topic, given that in this same chapter they had just been unable to expel a demon from a young boy? You would think that experience would've been humbling enough given that they had essentially "failed" at that task until Jesus stepped in and expelled the demon, yet they did not understand that Jesus was the ultimate authority, healer, teacher, etc. Fast forward to verse 38, and the Apostle John is telling Jesus that he and the other apostles had forbidden a man from praying out demons in Jesus' name. One might think this was a noble gesture given that because of their relationship and proximity to Jesus, they had a responsibility to protect his name and image from misuse. Even though the man was doing something noble, we can't allow him to rep the team, and act/speak on behalf of Jesus when we don't know him, and he isn't one of "us." The disciples had spent so much time with Jesus and grown comfortable in their exclusive access that they now felt that they had the right to determine who could do the work of the kingdom, and how it could be done. Because the man was not an apostle, he had no right to speak or act as one. What is interesting about these verses is that John said, "he was driving out demons in your name." Think about that. Here was a man who was not an apostle (at least not one of the 12), he most likely wasn't a close follower or disciple (because the apostles didn't recognize him), yet he was successfully driving out demons in Jesus' name. Could it have been that the apostles were jealous of this random man because they witnessed him successfully expel a demon from an individual when they had recently failed at the same task? Could it have been that the apostles were jealous because they witnessed someone who didn't look, sound, live, pray, read, sing, or talk like them, yet he was operating with what appeared to be greater power/authority than they had in their moment of failure? Do we as believers become so territorial and click-ish when it comes to following Jesus, that we begin to remove or limit membership to the kingdom to only those that we approve of? Jesus had to correct them, like he oftentimes has to do us because we will misrepresent him to others out of ignorance, arrogance, and abuse. What Jesus

was explaining to the disciples is that anyone who has a personal experience with him, and is fulfilling his plan, is in fact a follower of his.....regardless of our opinion.

Reflection Time

What are Christian standards and characteristics that you look for in a person? Do you embody those currently? Have you always embodied these traits? Are you currently an obstacle to someone encountering Jesus? Have you ever found yourself envious of someone else's spiritual gifts, or calling? I ask that you pray for wisdom and discernment to healthily interact with people and represent God to them so that you don't do more harm than good.

Category

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