

**“MAGNIFY JESUS, RATHER THAN HIS
SERVANTS”**
1 Corinthians 3:4-11

INTRODUCTION

We seem to have a natural tendency towards tribalism, with things such as sports teams, phones, and so on...you name it! There is a carnal, immature bent to exalt one over another. The church members in Corinth did this with regards to Paul, Apollos, and even Peter. Unfortunately, their personal preferences turned into arguments!

MINISTERS

You have to admire Paul's attitude. He's not jealous, he's not competing with Apollos and he's not exalting himself either. We can get this wrong in 2 ways:

1) We can disrespect the calling of Pastor and be flippant about it. 2) We may turn someone into a celebrity, and nurture the cult of personality. The danger is, the Bible warns against flattery! **“And a flattering mouth works ruin.” Proverbs 26:28. “A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.” Proverbs 29:5.** Paul and Barnabas had experienced flattery first hand in Lystra in **Acts 14**. They were thought to be the false gods, Mercury and Jupiter (otherwise known as Hermes and Zeus) and for a short time became objects of worship.

VARIETY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

There are many church denominations, but the Bible actually allows for different opinions and convictions (with similar core values). There are some non-negotiable essentials to be a Christian: one God (the Trinity); Jesus (God -Man); the Gospel, salvation by grace through faith; Jesus born of a virgin; the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus; etc. What about secondary issues? It takes all kinds of churches to reach all kinds of people. There exist different kinds of churches. Some have more excited and emotional expression, some more reserved. Others may be loud, quiet, fast, or slow. Its fine to love your tribe (or church family) and appreciate it, but don't denigrate other parts of the body of Christ in the process.

BUILDING

Paul says we are all co-laborers with Jesus. He uses “build” or “building” 26 times in the NT. Here he calls the local church God's building. There has to be a good doctrinal foundation on the essentials. Temples were durable structures and the foundation could take quite a bit of weight. If you build a faith on a personality or a person, that faith won't take the weight of what is thrown on it. Don't put too much weight on a man. If the man fails, your faith fails. Your faith has to be in the solid Rock, Jesus!

CONSIDER

Do you have some strong personal preferences in worship or favorite pastors? That's OK, but don't think less or speak poorly of others. It's great and normal to love your church (and you should) and love how your church or tribe of churches goes about ministry. Don't feel superior to other churches or church denominations. There's far too much tribalism and division in our society today! *(Scripture quotes are NKJV)*

- **PRAY ...** Pray we would all have a better understanding of the broad spectrum of Christ's church in all of its diversity and beauty. See all the different styles as necessary parts, as co-laborers with Christ.