

# Who's Your Hero?

One Saturday afternoon when I arrived at the church I attend, I was met at the curb by one of the leaders in our congregation. She was almost in tears. I asked her what was wrong, and she said she'd just had a serious argument with a student in my mentorship class.

As she explained the situation, I realized my student apparently had just finished saying and doing some very embarrassing things. I was somewhat taken back by what I heard because this student had been in my class for two years and should have known better.

I make sure all my students know that God will test them regularly—not with pencil-and-paper exams but with life experiences. As an instructor, I hear a lot of amens when I'm teaching a class or giving a sermon, but I've come to the conclusion that those shouts of victory aren't genuine until we finish God's test with a passing grade.

I caution my students to have no fear if for any reason they find themselves getting a failing grade on one of God's tests. Why? Because they can be sure God will test them again and again until they pass that test according to His will for their lives.

As I began to stress this point to the student who had been engaged in the argument, I started to become even more disturbed by the response I was receiving from her about her actions. She told me that if I had been the one to offer her a word of correction—instead of the other leader—she gladly would have repented for her behavior because, she said, “I

respect you, Prophetess Bynum.”

And that was the problem.

The apostle Paul explains it this way in 1 Corinthians 3:4-6: “For when one says, ‘I am of Paul,’ and another, ‘I am of Apollos,’ are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos...? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase” (NKJV).

There was my student’s problem in Scripture as plain as day. Paul was saying that these leaders were servants, not heads of parties or factions the believers of that day were supposed to line up behind.

The Lord began to speak to me about how this carnal attitude of allegiance to Christian leaders instead of to Christ is a nationwide epidemic in the church. God has anointed pastors and teachers, and although millions have been blessed by their anointing, people hear the preached Word from the pulpit and then go after the one who’s ministering instead of pursuing the Word.

Many believers are stunted in their spiritual growth because they place their spiritual focus on a person. So instead of serving God, saints are serving other human beings.

That is why the young woman in my class was able to say, “I wouldn’t have ever done that to you, Prophetess.” If there had been a genuine conviction by the Holy Spirit that pointed her to the Word of God, then she would have known she shouldn’t have done that to me—or anyone else. This same carnal attitude causes people to say things such as, “I’m not going to smoke

or drink because the pastor is around.”

Paul planted, Apollos watered, but it is God who is causing our hearts to mature and grow, Paul wrote. Now I understand why we’re lacking spiritually and in other ways. It’s because God gives the increase according to our growth, not in spite of our growth.

We must get beyond personalities in the church and make sure we get to God Himself. Romans 8:6-8 reminds us that to be carnally minded is death but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Neither the flesh nor the carnal mind is pleasing to God.

People who are living in the flesh will do as the student in my class did. They will blow up at people, disrespect leadership, do things for show-and-tell—and then justify their actions. When we are properly planted in the Spirit, we will have a conviction about pleasing God and not man.

Remember, spiritual leaders such as pastors, evangelists, preachers, missionaries and others serve as “planters” in our lives. It is the Holy Spirit who waters us with His presence.

And it is God who increases us both in the natural and the spiritual realm because of our level of maturity. It’s time to grow up.

---

Juanita Bynum is the author of the popular book No More Sheets (Pneuma Life). She will host her Weapons of Power women’s conference Aug. 30 through Sept. 1 at the Pensacola (Fla.) Civic Center.