

Why Do Christians Compete With One Another for Position?

When I lived in Malaysia, I was given the opportunity to go to a conference in Bangkok, Thailand. While there we rode a tuk tuk, which is a Thai taxi, down to the plaza where they were selling anything and everything you could think of. With the Thai Baht being 36 to 1 against the U.S. dollar, we felt like millionaires in that place with our minimal money. While there, I found a T-shirt that I liked and it said 'SAME SAME' on the front and 'BUT DIFFERENT' on the back.

Little did I know how true these words were in so many areas of life. As I was blessed to travel to a variety of international cities, like Bali, Indonesia; Singapore; Phuket, Thailand; and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, I came to realize that all cities, cultures and even people are same same, but different.

One of the challenges Christians around the world face is competition in the body of the Christ. People are competing for pulpits, positions and people. We measure success by the size of our church, the title we carry, the amount of money in our bank account or the places we have been and experiences we have had.

Whether in one of the large churches in Nigeria or small house churches in China, believers are battling the same voices that seek to put them in competition with one another, rather than in complimenting each other. It is same same, but different in the church just like in the world. But this should not be, as believers in Jesus Christ, we are to be the light of the world, not the echo of the darkness.

Mark 10:45 says, "For the Son of Man did not come to be

served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Every human being that is called by the name of Jesus Christ is the same, we have the same calling, we carry the same value, we are all called to be servants, but we are different in our function. There is only one calling for a believer and that is to be a servant, but there are a variety of functions that this calling operates out of. In the kingdom of God, there is no hierarchy, no competition, because we are all servants of the Most High God and each other.

Jesus’ calling was to be a servant, but His function was to heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons, and die for the sins of the world. Even though His function changed throughout His life from carpenter’s assistant to Rabbi, His calling as a servant never did. That is why John 13 says that Jesus, knowing who He was, took a towel and began to wash His disciple’s feet. He knew He was called to be a servant, so whatever function He did had no relevance to His value.

Every person has the same value in the eyes of God, He values us as servants, sons, daughters, and no one has more value than another to God, so where does the challenge arise? The challenge comes because we as people place differing values on differing functions.

We have been taught that the function of apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist, president, pope or CEO has more value than that of dishwasher, domestic engineer, street sweeper, or janitor. We decide what functions have what value and so we jockey for position, we speak of promotions, and we have an identity crisis when our function changes, because we see value in function. But God only places value on calling, the calling to be a servant.

If you think about it, every function is just a different way of being a servant. We could end the battle of pride, envy,

jealousy and jockeying for position if we realized we all have the same calling, the same value, but different functions and responsibilities.

Galatians 5:25-26 (VOICE) says, "Now since we have chosen to walk with the Spirit, let's keep in perfect sync with God's Spirit. This will happen when we set aside our self-interests and work together to create true community instead of a culture consumed by provocation, pride and envy."

We are the same same, but different.

Lisa Great *is an author, speaker and blogger with Mouthpiece Ministries International. She has been in ministry for over 25 years, she has a BA in Youth and Family Studies, a MA in Education. She can be reached at ; ; or on her Facebook page Lisa Great.*

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