

When 'Apostles' and 'Prophets' Lust for Fame

Nowadays one can't help but notice how many so-called ministers flaunt their titles, positions, achievements and degrees with such pomp and pageantry, repelling those who have any ounce of spiritual discernment. In all probability, if someone has to advertise what they are and bring inordinate attention to themselves, they are not what they claim to be. They are false.

"He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true" (John 7:18 NASB). "There is nothing false about him" (John 7:18 NIV).

False apostles, false prophets and false teachers stalk our land. They speak from themselves and of themselves. They seek their own glory.

The apostle Paul warned us of men who have no marks of the cross in their lives and preaching. They are diabolically aligned with the spirits of this age. They are "enemies of the cross of Christ. ... Their destination is destruction, their god is their appetite, their glory is in their shame, their minds are set on earthly things" (Phil. 3:18-19, MEV). They are self-deceived.

If anything originated from man, Jesus wanted no part of it.

"I receive not glory from men—I crave no human honor, I look for no mortal fame" (John 5:41 AMP).

Compare the nature and quality of Jesus versus the religious leaders of His day: "For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43, TLB). In life and ministry, what are you hoping to receive? What are you

craving? What are you really looking for? What is it that you wish from men? Is it their smile? Or do you long for self-denial?

Jesus was dead to human praise, human criticism and human opinion.

Listen to the frequent conversations at Christian conventions. It's all about men. It's all about who this one is and who that one is, who did what and who's been where. Doesn't it get nauseating at times?

Have you ever looked with holy eyes at some of today's most popular Christian conference ads? It's all about Apostle so and so and Prophet so and so, and for those who are not content with just one title there is Apostle/Prophet Dr. so and so—posters advertising special people and special programs, and how much they are all doing for the Lord.

I realize some of these things have their place, but in all of it, where is His face? Don't you want to see Jesus? Doesn't it disturb you when some mere mortal stands in the way?

The real truth about most men is this: They don't really know their own hearts as well as they think. We are never as humble and submissive to God as we think we are. Even Paul near the end of his earthly life and ministry had to be broken so that he wouldn't be puffed up with pride because of his many visions and revelations (2 Cor. 12:7-9). Who do you think you are?

Your only safeguard against pride is to keep on truly humbling yourself and not be self-seeking. Paul said of Timothy, "I have no one else like him" (Phil. 2:20, NIV) because he was not self-serving or self-seeking (v. 21).

The origin of every word and action determines its glory and purity. Holy roots mean holy fruits. A desire for gain outside

of God's will or even timing means you are worshipping a form of increase and success instead of God. It is evidence again that you are seeking your own glory and honor, and not the glory and honor of God. I call it unsanctified gain, which manifests in discontentment. Notice what true gain is: "Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content" (1 Tim. 6:6-8, NKJV).

In the above context Paul is warning Timothy of men who imagine godliness to be a source of monetary profit. He is referring to men who enter ministry with wrong motives (v. 5). How many men do you really know in ministry who are content with having food and clothing?

It seems that there is so much striving for bigger and better positions, bigger and better possessions, bigger and better places, more and more power, influence, money, recognition, honor, success, etc. Will this merry-go-round ever stop? And when will its riders get off?

Is it wrong to have bigger and better or more and more? If it's outside of the will and timing of God, yes. It's idolatry and lust. I've heard well-known ministers preach that God's will for us is just as much to be rich as it is to be saved. From where comes such a persuasion?

Paul spoke strongly against the desire to be rich (1 Tim. 6:9). Riches are certainly not evil, but the desire to be rich is. What if the desire to be rich is for the sake of the gospel and for establishing God's kingdom on the earth? Well then, you would be rich toward God.

But doesn't God give us all things richly to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17)? You're missing the whole point. Are the riches a result of gift or greed? Are you pursuing gain or godliness?

There is a difference between God truly blessing us even with

riches, and you getting them by your own self efforts. Be mindful that covetousness can also bring monetary gain, but it is ungodly gain.

Paul had learned the great secret of Christian maturity: "Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need" (Phil. 4:11-12, NKJV).

When you're not content with what you have (not just in possessions, but in position, power, popularity, honor, recognition, influence, acceptance, approval, etc.) you'll be covetous in both your conduct and conversation. Then, what you say and do will be from self-servitude and a seeking of your own glory (John 7:18). In both your words and actions you will be seeking gain for yourself. It does not matter what the pretense is. God sees your heart.

The motive of the heart reveals the rightness or the wrongness of every thought, word and deed. Are your thoughts true or are they false? Are your words true or are they false? Are your deeds true or are they false? Whose glory and honor are you really seeking?

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