

The Marks of True Christian Leadership

1 Cor 3:1-15

v1 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly--mere infants in Christ. v2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. v3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? v4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere men? v5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task. v6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. v7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. v8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labour. v9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. v10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. v11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. v12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, v13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. v14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. v15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

1 THREE THINGS A CHRISTIAN LEADER SHOULD AVOID.

1.1 AVOID THINKING YOU ARE IMPORTANT WHEN PEOPLE KNOW YOUR NAME

- v4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere men? v5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul?

One of the realities Christian Leaders must deal with is, we are involved in a public forum. Because of the office we hold, people recognise who we are. The longer you are in ministry, the more people will acknowledge your presence. The danger for some Christian Leaders is that this sometimes "goes to their head". They begin to think they are more important than they actually are.

I want to warn you regarding this matter. The same people that "CALL YOU BY NAME" can very quickly become the people that "CALL YOU NAMES!!!".

KEEP YOU FEET ON THE GROUND.

There is only ONE NAME that is above all other names, and that is the NAME JESUS.

1.2 AVOID THINKING YOU ARE THE SOLUTION TO ALL THE CHURCHES NEEDS

- v5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

I know all Pastors who leave college, think they are GOD'S ANSWER to what the church needs. They think they have all the answers to the problems in the church.

The reality is most new pastors are not even ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS.

The sooner we realise that we are all part of a BODY, the sooner we will realise that we are only a small part in that BODY. WE NEED EACH OTHER.

1.3 AVOID THINKING YOU ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN OTHER CHRISTIANS - *v9 For we are God's fellow workers*

Christian leaders in our day are chasing after TITLES. Just look at the adverts for “Christian Events” found on the lampposts of our towns and in Social Media Posts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or “X”.

You will find “Prophet, Bishop, Rev Doctor, Apostle, Highly Favoured, Anointed, Doubly Anointed, Pastor and First Lady”.

I watched a recorded video clip of a pastor calling the deacons of the church to throw a visitor to church out the church for daring to come to the front of the church and ask the pastor to pray for him. After being thrown out the “Pastor” went on a tirade saying “HE” was the ANOINTED PREACHER in the Church, and nobody dare interrupt him when he was at the front of the church.

SCRIPTURE SIMPLY SAYS; “*v9 For we are God's fellow workers*”

The Greek word is “SUN-ERGOS”, which means

“ERGOS” = WORKER

“SUN” – pronounced “soen” = TOGETHER

In Other Words: YOU ARE MERELY “A COMMON LABOURER”

2 THREE THINGS A CHRISTIAN LEADER SHOULD REMEMBER.

2.1 REMEMBER, WHATEVER YOU ACHIEVE IS THE WORK OF GOD - *v6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.*

Nothing you achieve in ministry is because of your effort!

From personal experience I can tell you of many occasions when I have delivered, WHAT I THOUGHT TO BE, a wonderfully prepared and crafted message, and there has been ZERO, I mean 0, niks, nada, nothing, NO reaction.

Then on other occasions, when my preparation has been less than ideal, my presentation has felt like I was grasping at straws. When I have left the pulpit with my head hanging in shame and discouragement, when someone has come to me after the service and said that what I shared were like the very words of God in their life.

2.2 REMEMBER, WHATEVER YOU DO, IT WILL BE JUDGED ON THE LAST DAY - *v13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work.*

I have often said, and I will say it again, I don't work for Bethany Emmanuel, I work for Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only one from whom I am interested to hear the words.

“WELL DONE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT”

Jesus is the ONE who called me! Jesus is the ONE who provides for me! Jesus is the ONE who will JUDGE ME IN THE END.

I SEEK ONLY TO PLEASE JESUS!!!

Now does that mean I'm not accountable to the Local Church. By no means. While I have often told the church that they don't OWN me, I have told them to FIRE ME if I am not being true to Jesus or HIS WORD.

2.3 REMEMBER, YOUR REWARD IS BASED ON YOUR EFFORT NOT ACHIEVEMENT - *v8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labour.*

Christian Leaders often make the mistake in applying worldly standards to achievement.

Who here knows who Mordecai Fowler Ham is? - The Lord's instrument to bring a 16-year-old Billy Graham to make "my real commitment to Jesus Christ." Graham attended Ham's revival in Charlotte in 1934.

Who here knows who ROBERT EAGLEN is? - Charles Haddon Spurgeon
On 6 January 1850—15-year-old Charles Spurgeon was walking up Hythe Hill in Colchester, on his way to church. When the blizzard prevented him from going further, he turned the corner and made his way into a small Primitive Methodist Church on Artillery Street. There a simple preacher preached a message from Isaiah 45:22 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth'

3 THREE THINGS A CHRISTIAN LEADER SHOULD DO.

3.1 YOU SHOULD STAY FOCUSED - *v8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose.*

Many things will distract you in Ministry. The well-known Pastor Harold Peasley preached a message that has stuck in my head for many years. The title of the message was "KEEP THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING" – For Harold that was EVANGELISM.

For me it is something different.

Each of us has a different calling. STAY FOCUSED ON WHAT GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO DO!!

3.2 YOU MUST BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE AT YOUR CALLING - *v10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.*

God did not call you to be Reuben. God called you to be VUKILE BRIAN TUKUTA. BUT make sure you are growing in your ability in every way possible.

3.3 YOU MUST MAKE SURE JESUS IS AT THE CENTRE OF ALL YOU DO - *v11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ*

There is only one foundation and one GOAL – JESUS CHRIST MUST BE LIFTED HIGHTER.

JESUS CAME NOT TO BE SERVED BUT TO SERVE