



Playin' Favorites Hurts God's Favorites—All Of Us Are

"Then He put out His hand and touched him..." ~ Luke 5:13

Ever been in an unfair situation? I have a friend who has talked with me couple times about a situation in his life and he needed prayer about his constant concerns for his sick-church that's a couple hours south of where I live. It's a place where an inordinate amount of families and leaders keep bailing-out the back revolving door.

He said these people never return again and that hurts him as a teacher there, because the seemingly PC but hard-headed lead pastor allegedly doesn't take time etc.. for the common folk there, but for years now has only built everything to suit and serve his own incompetent family members (who are in the top positions).

I guess my friend shared this with me because I'm totally outside the situation and don't even know the name of his church.

Anyways, I was told that his lead pastor has been respectfully approached one-on-one several times (even by the one telling me this), where the leaders have asked the senior pastor why it's only family members who become elders, board members or paid staff at this church (..again, I've never been there, but I hear that in some sheep-sheds at times a carnal-half-baked family member becomes the only retirement plan there is for preachin' pop. Sociologically, this sounds like the start of a creepy cult huh).

Hey, I'm no one of significance here but I did have some other initial thoughts. A.) OK, my praying friend (I'll call him Joe) said he first went one-on-one to respectfully discuss this issue with the pastor, and he still really loves the man and this church.. even though I think he's probably stayed with this sicko-congregation too many years. I also thought about Matthew 18:15, and 1 Timothy 5:19) as well as.. B.) My friend doesn't seek to harm or split this flock. It reminds me of a better Leader: C. Jesus the Chief Shepherd, who took the time for the lowly and unknown people. He was such a good Example—"no respecter of persons" in that He didn't play favorites with certain people in His fold over others.

"'Teacher,' [Jesus] these men said, 'we know how honest you are. You are impartial and don't play favorites. You sincerely teach the ways of God..'" ~Mk. 12:14, nlt

"..Teacher [Jesus Christ], we know how honest You are. You teach about the way of God regardless of the consequences. You are impartial and don't play favorites." ~ Matt. 22:16, nlt

Listen, Mr. Saved-over-seer whoever you are, thank you for being a witness for Jesus Christ in the past.. if you've been/done that! With all due respect Pastor/leader, may I challenge you practically?

Do you constantly talk publicly about how individuals are a problem for you? Do you hate nepotism? We all seem to have our blind spots, but what are you hearing? Do you, at the right time, appear to publicly smile a lot and sound off right ..and then quickly disappear out the back door like a quick wooden figure in a European cuckoo clock .. just to avoid the "high-maintenance-chronics" that only seem to create more work for your staff? Are you seeking to eventually be able to run your place of employment by remote control through a family member, as you retain a place to speak, retain your position of authority, retain your pay (with much less work) or seeking to increasingly be able to go vacationing away from those problematic people? We know too many counseling hours can get to anyone, but please don't get lazy or hardhearted.

Are you regularly down there among the sheep and the goats if you will ..to listen intently to them.. to laugh with em and tell some clean jokes.. ya know, to share a verse, to be real before, to appropriately touch in a caring way like a pure hearted father type.. or to earnestly pray for them about what's really bugging em.. to simply show love to those who regularly pray for you and who also give towards your salary each month and even fund those trips?

Of course they are not to own you, bribe you, oppress or lead you around to worthless frivolous stuff when more important matters are pressing in on you, but I encourage you and I even dare you (if that's OK..) to keep walking slowly through the crowds, to stop every now and then, and to make eye contact with those God deeply feels for. You've done this a lot I'm sure. Keep up the Good Work, livin' it out before a watching world.

Take the time to halt, to block-out your own problems for a few moments and do your very best to say (with body language and all that is in you): Hey, I see you—you really matter to God and me. What's your need my friend.. what's on your heart?

I think God can use their feedback to help keep your feet on the ground. Please trust the Lord and plan better for when you get old and grey. Please don't be a perpetual wall-construction-artist, for that: 1.) Restricts spiritual impact, it.. 2.) Creates unhealthy and inverted loneliness—a perverse isolation-istic troglodyte existence of "hermit-tude." It 3.) Misrepresents your caring non-hide-away Master who wants you to stay humble and sensitive ..and this is also 4.) Far from Christ-likeness!

We Christians (no matter "our position" in the Kingdom..) can employ the gift of time in different inclusive efforts of agape bridge-building and friendship cultivation ..or we could resort to constant wall-building that blocks potential friends out ..and repels sinners away from Christ and His Church. They tend to have a good nose for hypocrisy. Net fish, pole fish and do take time for discouraged hurting individuals around you. It's so important!

"So He [Jesus] touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them."

~Matt. 8:15

*"Then He [Jesus] put out His hand and touched him, saying, 'I am willing; be cleansed.'
Immediately the leprosy left him." ~ Lk. 5:13*

*"..and begged Him [Jesus] that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as
touched it were made perfectly well." ~Matt. 14:36*

*"But His disciples said to Him [Jesus], 'You see the multitude thronging You, and You say,
'Who touched Me?'" ~Mk. 5:31*

Sure we must do what we can to wisely protect those we're responsible for (.does this always call for a new wall?), but Jesus the Fisher of all fishers, is still accessible and inclusive today.. waiting there for individuals with open arms. He never became a supastar in His own estimation or got so influential on earth that He didn't take time for one-on-one ministry. Follow Him!

I once again brought up a few verses and told my dear friend that I would indeed pray for him/them. Will today while I'm thinking about him/them.

Perhaps you have something to add to my quick thinking out loud little talk here (hope I'm making some sense for you)?

New fisher (whoever you are): remember no local church is perfect—flawed people are a part of churches—but God does expect us to be active and supportive in a healthy Bible teaching church that embraces Essential Christian doctrine and has spiritually sound leaders in it. World missions, our biblical unity, and the not-yet caught who are swimming in local fishing holes, ponds, lakes, seas ..are still on His mind.

[Need a sound church](#) and real friends? Got [church hurt inside](#)? Please don't give up on Jesus Christ or His Body...

Are you just in all your ways like the Lord is? Have a prayer request or some questions about knowing God ..and how to properly walk in Jesus Christ? At fish4souls.org click "[Contact](#)" and let us know! Perhaps we can help. Follow.. [Facebook.com/ShareJesus](https://www.facebook.com/ShareJesus) or at [Twitter.com/kurtwvs](https://twitter.com/kurtwvs)

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