

Offices And Bureaucracies

“Teacher, said John, ‘We saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.’ ‘Do not stop him, said Jesus. ‘No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us. I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not loss his reward.” (Mark 9:38-41)

How do people look at others whom they have things in common? And how do we see others whom we share identical or common character? Either you are in the midst of your family among your brothers and sisters, or you are working in an office among your officemates, or you are a student among your classmates, a doctor in the hospital among your colleagues, lawyer in the courtyard, manager in your company above your employees, a father to a family with old and young kids, teacher among your students, a customer among many other clients, an athlete among many others in a competition, a Christian among the members of the church, wherever you may be still you face this question! How do you look at other people especially those whom you reign over or those whom you are basically equal with? How do you estimate their capabilities physically, mentally, or intellectually, and spiritually? And what bases do you have to measure their abilities? Above all, are you really honest and fair on dealing with them?

The various and multiple figures of the above social positions probably is aimed to touch your life in one way or another in order to bring to you the heart of this issue. You may ask, what makes the above introduction mandatory and the aforementioned question necessary? Everyday there is a wrong repeated phenomenon in our society, families, work places, in various institutions, establishments, congregations, and even inside the church. And this phenomenon is a man or woman, worker or workers working but being told to stop from work!

Every group of people is organized with its own system, official policies, rules and by laws, or what we call as bureaucracy: A system or policy that is believed to knit or keep people together. But to some extent it rather results in obstacles, troubles, and more problems. In the passage of this week, such phenomenon even reached the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. They wanted to be inclusive so when they saw someone working but doesn't belong to their group they stopped him. What made them stopped the man? There may be some hidden reasons behind such action to hinder a man or a woman to work in a free atmosphere at our homes, families, jobs, or in the church. The following are the elements of such erratic bureaucracies:

1) Under-estimation of people's capability: ‘Is this man really having the capability to drive out demons?’ We under-estimate people and underrate their actions. We praise the fruits of our hands and depreciate the value of other people's toils. This is one of the reasons that make us stop others from doing the same task that we are doing.

2) Questioning people's credibility: ‘Is this person authorized? Does he have the license to do such work?’ Although we are seeing him doing right, and with perfect steps in achieving his work, still we want to pass on him the municipality principle!

3) Human discrimination: (He is not one of us): Beautifully we classify ourselves and we wrapped ourselves with many honours; we are the old, he is young. We are chosen, he is not. The disciples might have thought, ‘we should be the one to do the miracles, and he should bring to us the sick.’ And this is the theatre principle: “We are the actors, audiences should watch us!”

4) Fear to be discredited (They may take the credit from us): We disapprove and always try to find faults and mistakes, and we don't mention the good things already done but always emphasize the things that are still to be done. Human pride and jealousy may drive us sometime to put obstacles in front of the people around us because we are afraid that they may take our fame and the credit from us.

We may try to stop a person because we think he is doing harm and our objective is good. But, the Lord Jesus Christ as a good teacher instructed his disciples and told them, **“Do not stop him”** and proved the good motive of the man. First: The man is doing the right work; driving out demons. If the people around us, whom we are responsible, are doing the right job we should not try to stop them. Second: The man is following the right principle, for he was doing miracles by the name of Jesus and not by other names. If the people around us are working with the same principle as we have, producing the same fruits as we produced, and lifting the same master that we are lifting, we should not stop them. Jesus as well approved the work of that man. He even assured his disciples the safe nature and destiny of such person when he said, **“No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us.”**

As a wise teacher, Jesus has again put up another strategy that we can apply not only in the church and in our service with the Lord, but in our families, societies and in our job places as well. **“For whoever is no against us is for us.”** Jesus by this describes the attitude of acceptance and appreciation that we often forget because of such bureaucracy and self-centeredness. We should be aware of our approach toward the people who are working around us, because sometimes we are even unconscious of our negative behaviour that repels them. We should eliminate these wrong bureaucracies from our personalities, relations, and attitudes wherever we are because it may just hinder the blessing of God from reaching us through those people.

My Dear and Beloved: Jesus comforted his disciples and described to them the action of the man as **“one who gives you a cup of water.”** We need to honestly accept and welcome those people who join us or who are around us, for they are sent from God as an aid to carry the burden with us, and we should receive the cup of water from them. And the last word will be given to those who are suffering from someone who wants to stop them from doing! Don't worry and do not be discouraged by such attitudes because the Lord did not only speak to the disciples or to the one who wants to stop you, but He also promised that your reward will not be taken from you. And God bless the disciples and that man!