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Feeling Inferior -poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/8/14 13:13

Feeling Inferior

by Zac Poonen

Scientists tell us that no two snowflakes anywhere in the world have the same patterns. Likewise, no two human beings anywhere in the world are completely alike.

God has created infinite variety in the universe. This is what makes creation so wonderful and beautiful. How unimaginably boring life would have been if there had been no variety in the universe. Likewise, how uninteresting and prosaic life would have been if all human beings were exactly alike in temperament and personality.

There is variety in the Body of Christ just as there is in the human body. At the same time, there is an organic unity among the various members. All the members are equally important and necessary, although their functions in the Body may be completely different. No member is more important than another. No one's ministry should exclude another's. When the Body operates with each member fulfilling his own special function, then alone will there be a powerful corporate presentation of Christ to the world.

In Old Testament times, God often worked through individual prophets who were His representatives and mouthpieces. But not so now. Today, God works through the Body of Christ. God and Christ are to be represented to the world through the corporate working together of believers harmoniously in one Body. And for this purpose, no one believer is more important than another. Each member's gifts are necessary for the upbuilding of the Body and for its ministry to the world.

A failure to recognize this as God's way can cause feelings of inferiority and superiority in the church. Paul speaks about these in 1 Corinthians 12.

Paul speaks first to those who, feeling inferior, assume that their gift is not as necessary to the building up of the Body as another's.

"If the foot says, 'I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand', that does not make it any less a part of the body. And what would you think if you heard an ear say, 'I am not part of the body because I am only an ear, and not an eye'? Would that make it any less a part of the body? Suppose the whole body were an eye - then how would you hear? Or if your whole body were just one big ear, how could you smell anything? But that isn't the way God has made us. He has made many parts for our bodies and has put each part just where He wants it. What a strange thing a body would be if it had only one part! So He has made many parts, but still there is only one body" (1 Cor. 12:15-20-TLB).

It is always harmful to compare ourselves with others in the Body of Christ - either favourably or unfavourably. Such comparisons can lead to pride - or discouragement and jealousy. When the foot begins to compare itself with the hand, it may say, "Well, I don't have as prominent a part in the body as the hand. I am usually covered over with socks and shoes, at the lowest end of the body, and hardly anyone ever notices my existence. The hand, however, is noticed by others every day. It is always busy doing something, whereas I am inactive most of the time." Once having compared itself thus, it is but a short step to discouragement and to the development of a spirit of complaining against God for having made it a foot instead of a hand. Such a spirit leads many a believer to bury his talent and do nothing whatever for the strengthening and good of the Body of Christ. The church of Jesus Christ suffers today because of multitudes of believers who wish they had some spectacular gift. Not having such a gift, they decide to do nothing.

Having a grudge against God for not giving you the gift that you see someone else has, is only a short step away from jealousy; and jealousy kills fellowship. As the Bible says, "Wherever there is jealousy or selfish ambition, there will be disorder and every other kind of evil" (James. 3:16-TLB).

If only we could see the Body of Christ, there would be absolutely no room for jealousy. In the human body, the foot has no problem being just a foot. It never desires to be anything other than a foot and it never dreams of becoming a hand. It

is quite content to be a foot. It knows that God has made no mistake in making it a foot. It rejoices in being a foot; it rejoices equally in seeing what the hand can accomplish, even though it realizes that it can never accomplish anything similar.

So will it be with all who have "seen" the Body of Christ. When you are envious of another, when you cannot rejoice wholeheartedly at seeing another member being greatly used of God, it is obvious that you have not understood this truth at all. Any member who lives in close communion with the Head will rejoice and be glad when another member of the Body is honoured (1 Cor. 12:26).

There is no room for competition either, between one member and another in the Body of Christ. Co-operation, not competition, is the law of the Body.

When you see another fulfilling some ministry ably, and you plan to show others that you can do just as good a job (if not better), then Self is obviously still in the centre of your life. If you were living in submission to the Head, you would never be competing with anyone in the Body. You would instead concentrate on doing your own specific job - and doing it well.

If we believe in the perfect wisdom of God, we shall recognize that God knows best what gift to give each of us. There will then be no complaining, no discouragement and no jealous longing after another's gift.

There is no need for anyone in the Body of Christ to feel inferior. All members of the Body may not be equal in terms of ability or talent, but all are equal in terms of usefulness to God in their own appointed place.

We are called to be ourselves - radiating God's glory through the particular temperament, gift and talents that God has given us. There is much limitation in the church today, because believers do not bring into it their own special contribution. Vainly trying to imitate somebody else, they quench their own special gift, and as a result contribute nothing to the ministry of the Body.

Re: Feeling Inferior -poonen - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/8/17 20:45

Quote:
-----No one's ministry should exclude another's. When the Body operates with each member fulfilling his own special function, then alone will there be a powerful corporate presentation of Christ to the world.

Unity is so very needed in the body today. This is another good word from brother Poonen.