

# FINDING ALLIES IN CHRIST

Pastor Lucas Almeida—Central Baptist Church—October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

**Mark 9:38-41**

**(ESV)**

*[38] John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” [39] But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. [40] For the one who is not against us is for us. [41] For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward.*

## INTRODUCTION

Christianity is not about conforming others to our image, but helping others be formed into the image of Christ.

**Romans 8:29**—*[29] For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

## THE DISCIPLES’ NARROW VIEW OF THE KINGDOM

Zeal is a passionate defense of what one believes is good.

**Isaiah 42:13**

*[13] The LORD goes out like a mighty man,  
like a man of war he stirs up his zeal;*

**Romans 12:11**—*[11] Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.*

“A burning desire to please God, to do His will, and to advance His glory in the world in every possible way.” —**J.C. Ryle**

John is zealous but his zeal is misplaced.

**Romans 10:2**—*[2] For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.*

*“The first thing I ask is that people should not make use of my name, and should not call themselves Lutherans, but Christians.” —Martin Luther*

**1 Corinthians 3:5-7**—*[5] What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. [6] I planted, Apollos watered,*

*but God gave the growth. [7] So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*

We have to be careful not to become more exclusive with Christ than Christ himself.

**Philippians 1:15–18**—[15] *Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. [16] The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. [17] The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. [18] What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.*

## **JESUS' WIDE VIEW OF THE KINGDOM**

How did Jesus know that this man was an ally of the kingdom?

(1) He was doing a mighty work.

**1 Corinthians 1:22–24**—[22] *For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, [23] but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, [24] but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

(2) He was doing a work in Jesus' name.

**1 Corinthians 12:3**—[3] *Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.*

Jesus is not saying here that Christianity has no distinctions we must uphold.

**Matthew 12:30**—[30] *Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.*

Church membership is a proclamation of the gospel and a recognition of those who believe in it.

Jesus calls us to a personal relationship with him, and by extension this personal relationship is lived within the covenant community he calls the church.