

Proselyting

God's people should not be politically motivated. We stand above the pettiness of pretending for profit and, yet, it is historically the case that the church has struggled with the temptations of party-ism from her beginnings. The church at Galatian was being torn asunder by traditionalists that placed more value on Moses than Christ. Paul was quite clear that they had left the true Gospel for a lie's disguise (Galatians 1:6-9). A serious Bible student might ask the question, "What motivated the dividers?" The answer is found in Galatians 4:17 – *"They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them"* (NKJV).

Party-ism, or cliché-ism, is not a Christian activity. Paul scolded the Galatians about that (Galatians 3:28) and his point was not confined to the groups he mentioned. We should all be striving to be one in Christ Jesus, no matter our contrived or superficial distinctions. Galatian 4:17 is very revealing.

So, what is the motivation behind the cliché crowd? **Self-service!** Their interest is not for the Church, it is not for individual Christians, it is not even for the work of the Lord; it is solely and wholly an exercise in self-centeredness. Their zeal in creating these parties is to develop loyalties to themselves for their selfish gain. The gain may be the perceived power of financial resources; hence those with deep pockets are romanced (James 2:3ff). The gain may be a status issue, therefore, to have a certain person in their cabal confers some integrity or credibility they believe they would otherwise not have (Galatians 6:3). The gain might simply be in numbers (a "majority makes right" flaw; cf. Matthew 7:13-14). And, it's ironic that the size of the crowd in support of some position or decision has no relationship to its scripturalness, yet drafting support for a personal position concerning church politics is the god of many who believe numbers rule the day. It shouldn't escape us that many of the biggest churches are often the most apostate.

True growth in the Lord's body cannot happen when a membership is mired in the muddled waters of clichés (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:10ff). It is a sad day for the Kingdom when a congregation is so focused on choosing sides, they forget to choose souls. Who wants to be part of a divided church?