

All for One and One for all

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Some say “toe-may-toe”. Others say “toe-mah-toe”. I say “poe-tay-tah”, you say “poe-tay-toe”. Many times what we say and how we say it depends on our upbringing, our environment, and personal experiences. The same is true with our faith understanding. How we were raised, who we have encountered, and what we have experienced all ties in to what we believe and what we hold dear.

The result is that we have a number of different worship style preferences. Some praise the Lord with cymbal and dance, and others do their praising in quiet reflection. Some belong to the same church that their fathers and their fathers’ fathers belonged to. Others have found new places of worship because of marriage or because of happen stance. Is one better than the other? Not necessarily. What’s most important in my book is not where or how the worship is done, but that it is done. We all need to be in a place where we can go and grow in our relationship with our Lord. Many roads lead to the Lord. What might be a freeway for one person might be a road with potholes for another.

The problem with some of the religious leaders in Jesus’ time was that they saw it as either “my way or the highway.” Truth be know, there are many wrong-way paths that people go down. But, if we are open to the possibility that there might be other good paths besides the one we are on, great growth can occur.

One of the best long term Bible studies I ever led involved a four year Bible study I had with students while I was a campus minister at Stetson University. We had everything from ultra conservatives to ultra liberals in the study. At the beginning we agreed that there would be some things that we would just have to agree to disagree on, but the one thing we all held dear was that Jesus was Lord. We also agreed that we would listen with an open mind to what each shared.

Even though we might not have agreed with everything we heard, it was an enlightening experienced that challenged all of us to look closer at what we believed and professed. We all grew and were blessed. God glories when His people come together and share together.

This happened on Easter Sunday – not only in each of the individual church locations but also in the Community Sunrise Service held at Community Presbyterian Church. Many churches came together for the One that is the One for all of us. We had traditional sharing and praise with guitars and drums. We had Pentecostal words along with denomination and non-denominational sharing. We had songs of faith and resurrection and a youth drama team that shared the love and sacrifice of our Lord.

The styles of worship may have varied, but the heart of worship was there. God was glorified and we were blessed. God glories when His people come together and share together. One of the ministers even shared that we were experiencing a miracle that morning – three ministers sharing a message and all of them keeping it under ten minutes each!

Miracles still do happen today when the people of God join together to worship the One who is greater than our differences. It truly is all for the One because the One is for us all!

Thursday, May 1, is the National Day of Prayer. I’m all for sharing the blessing of everyone coming together again for the One who is number one! Will you join me?