

JANUARY 5

Who's on First?

Colossians 1:15-16, 18

IN MANY CHURCHES, Christians tend to get so caught up in a success-and-size race that the primary calling of following Jesus gets lost in the journey. We have skidded into a pattern where the “haves”—the most influential or financially successful individuals in life—and not the “have-nots” call the shots. Truth be told, it is difficult to *follow* when you're used to being out front leading the pack.

Maybe I need to clarify what I mean. In the body of Christ, there is one and only one Head. Christ Jesus is Lord. Take a moment to reflect on these magnificent words:

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. . . . Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-16, 18

No human being dare take that position. A man named Diotrephes, mentioned in 3 John 1:9-10, attempted to do so and was openly rebuked by the apostle. Diotrephes's account is a warning to anyone who desires to become the “church boss.”

It may be a board member, a pastor, a teacher, a musician, or a former officer or former pastor in a church. No matter who, the Diotrephes mentality has no place in the church. Diotrephes wanted to be first. But that place is already taken in the body of Christ—and in the home and in the marriage and anywhere else where Christ is named and ordained to be the rightful leader. Only Christ is the Head. All the rest of us are in the class Jesus modeled: *followers*.

I urge you to bow before the Lord and ask Him to examine the attitude of your heart today, especially if you're in a place of leadership within your local church or ministry. Be willing to admit your secret ambition to be first and then humbly surrender to the authority of Christ. Trust me: everyone among whom you serve will be grateful for your change of heart.