**Battle of the Bands**

When I was in high school, thanks to a godly mentor in my life, I began to play guitar and lead worship. For a season, I even led a worship band for our weekly chapel services. I wasn’t the only one though—there was a second worship band that was much edgier. It’s embarrassing to admit, but looking back there was actually a rivalry between the two worship bands. The other band considered themselves more relevant and we considered ourselves more worshipful. We were both vying for the same platform, while at the same time trying to keep the other band off it. Unfortunately, I allowed my flesh to get the victory on several occasions. Looking back, instead of fighting, we should have been unified for the common purpose of bringing attention to God, not ourselves. The truth is God had gifted both bands differently in order to minister to a different audience, but too bad we never got passed ourselves to see the incredible opportunity God had laid out before us.

Unlike the “battle of the bands,” Peter and Paul understood that there was clarity in recognizing each other’s gifting in ministry. In doing so, all the bases were covered and both the Jews and the Gentiles were ministered to and blessed. As Paul wrote in Galatians 2:7-8, “…the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcision also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles)” Peter affirmed Paul’s gifting to the Gentiles and Paul affirmed Peter’s gifting to the Jews. It wasn’t a competition, it was just a matter of recognizing and encouraging each other’s strengths. The result was the greater plan that God was working in and through them was accomplished!

Today, let us purpose in our hearts to affirm and encourage the gifts each of us have in Christ. Life is not meant to be a carnal competition between spiritual siblings. We all serve a unique role in the body of Christ, so let’s not undermine, discourage, or attack each other. Let’s not be jealous of one another’s gifts and ministries, as if we’re adversaries playing on opposing teams. Our enemy wants to divide and conquer us, but may we never allow him the satisfaction. When we work together as a team we complement each other and God will use us to accomplish greater works for His glory. God wants to do a mighty work in and through each one of us today, so let’s cheer each other on, not tear each other down.

*Pastor Erik Sahakian*