

Is Justice Up to You? 1 Cor 12, Eph 2:10

By Adam McLane I often think about our role as Christian leaders in the local communities in which we live. I think my vantage point comes from a dual-community citizenship understanding of 1 Corinthians 12. While Paul was clearly writing to Corinthian Christians in the context of addressing stuff inside the church, I think the same principle can be contextualized to the present day to address a need in our greater communities where we live. I'm sure there is a fancy hermeneutics term for this, but I call it a dual citizenship.

Verse 7 says, "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." See, in that dual ecclesiology where the Spiritual giftedness is to be shared with both our church and the community, our giftedness takes on a new meaning. If the Holy Spirit has gifted us for that dual community citizenship and if the Son has called us to serve both communities as representatives of Jesus' earthly ministry, than our role where we live is likely much more significant than just working with our youth groups. We must have expectations placed on us that are even bigger than we can imagine!

Follow me with this to Paul's logical conclusion in this passage. If the Holy Spirit has gifted us and the Son has called us to serve a community as it's feet, eyes, ears, and hands for the purpose of completing Christ's mission, then our inaction in our individual local communities handicaps the community we live in. Like it or not, you and I have a great responsibility to bring the restorative hope of Jesus to the dead and dying community we live in. Inaction is a slap in the face to the Architect of your community.

Now, time to state the obvious. Chances are good that that if you march this dual community citizenship concept to your pastors office it will rub the boss the wrong way. Certainly, I am saying that you and I need to get out of the office way more and take risky positions in your community. So, proceed with caution. But do proceed in knowledge that inaction handicaps your community. Be bold in cautiously moving forward. Be the spiritual leader God has chosen you to be! Your community needs you!

Church leaders -- Join the ministry in your community. Resist the temptation to limit your role to your church. Stand up for the poor, aliens, widows, orphans, and powerless. Acknowledge, or not, that you have power in your community role. Perceived busyness by the business of the church is no excuse.

So, I implore you as a friend with these questions. I don't name them to guilt you into short-term action. I beg you to embrace true effectiveness. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

- Are you standing up for the poor?
- Are you protecting the widows and orphans?
- Do you protect the alien among you?
- Are you vocally opposing corruption in your community?
- Are you even aware of these things where you live?

Live boldly, my friends! You have been gifted, called, and chosen. Live boldly and without fear.

