

Against Us or For Us?



Theme: Serving the Lord. Proper 21 (25) Yr. B, 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Object: A cap, t-shirt, a pin, or any object that shows that you belong to or support some organization.

Scripture: "Whoever is not against us is for us." Mark 9:40 (NIV)

Do you belong to a club? There are a lot of clubs that boys and girls can join. Some of you might belong to a club such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts that teaches you to become a better person and encourages you to help other people. There are Bible clubs like Awanas that help you to learn how to better love and serve Jesus. You may belong to a reading club that encourages boys and girls to develop a love for reading. I am sure that many of you belong to a club or group that encourages participation in a sport such as gymnastics or soccer. One thing I have noticed about these clubs is that most of them have a cap, a t-shirt, or something similar which boys and girls can wear to let other people know that they belong to that club. All of these clubs do much good and it's great to belong to a group that does good things, isn't it?

The early followers of Jesus belonged to what they thought was a very special club - and it was. There were only twelve in that first group that followed Jesus. They felt very good about being part of Jesus's team. In Jesus' name they healed sick people and taught them about the Kingdom of God. One day the disciples saw someone who was not a member of their group doing good things in Jesus' name. You would think they would be happy to see other people doing good things, but were they? No, they told them to stop what they were doing because they were not a part of their special group.

The disciples thought Jesus would be pleased by their actions, so they went and told him what they had done. To their surprise, Jesus was not pleased. "Don't stop people who are doing good things in my name" Jesus said. "No one who is doing good things in my name will then turn around and say bad things about me. Anyone who is not against us is for us."

It is good to belong to a group, but it is especially good to be a part of the family of God. The family of God is very large and there are many different groups who make up that family. Whenever we see anyone who is doing good in Jesus' name, we should not be jealous. We should rejoice and be glad because "If they aren't against us, they are for us."

Heavenly Father, we are thankful to be part of your family. Help us to be rejoice and be glad when we see other members of your family doing good things. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.