UNDER THE SAME MANAGEMENT

What is the ideal transition when West Murray begins to work with a new preacher? What are some of the things that we should avoid doing that might be hurtful? This kind of transition has happened many times in scripture. Let us notice one failure and one successful transition.

FAILURE

When Apollos followed Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:24 - 19:1-7) he seems to have inadvertently left it in a bit of a mess. Paul straightens out most of the mess in four chapters (1Cor. 1-4). Paul says, “I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit…” (1Cor. 4:6). We must stop the idea of division, groups, or denominations following so called “great” men. Appreciate workers, Yes! But not exalt them “above what is written” (4:6). Let us not fail here! Paul “urged” Apollos to come to Corinth again (1Cor. 16:12). It seems Apollos could have cleaned up some of this mess too.

SUCCESS

When Jesus named the 12 apostles, he did not include himself, he was not one of the 12. He was King. The apostles treated him as king even more when he left than when he walked on earth. Not one of them tried to claim to be “the” next leader, (unlike the Mormons). This transition was so smooth that we do not even notice it! It never comes up in the early church. Note Luke’s careful wording, “But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice… ” (Acts 2:14). What was the point of this voice? Peter clearly said Jesus was “Lord” and “Christ” (v.36). Peter claimed nothing of himself, except he was a witness. Peter did not want his feet washed by Jesus, and he would not permit Cornelius to bow down at his feet (Acts 10:26). Thank God, all the apostles had finally learned who was truly the greatest, Jesus! Let us also finally learn to stop comparing men with men (2Cor. 10:12). Let us determine to make all comparisons to Jesus.

As the story goes, a preacher and the church janitor got into some kind of a petty argument, and the elders took the janitor’s side, to the surprise of the preacher. They said good preachers are a dime a dozen, but it’s hard to find a good janitor. Jesus’ greatness is also in his janitorialship. Jesus cleansed their feet, wore their dirt, and our dirty deeds to the cross. He cleanses the church still, making souls as white as snow once again. Who can do that? Let us have no messes. We have one chief shepherd, and two local shepherds. We are all under the same management. Let us honor them for their service. Dan Peters