

THE LOGOS LOGO

³⁸ "Teacher," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us." ³⁹ "Do not stop him," Jesus said. "No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, ⁴⁰ for whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.

On my cereal box this morning, I noticed the pictures of three famous NFL players, Joe Theisman, Jerry Rice and Jerome Bettis. At closer inspection, it was clear that there was something wrong with the pictures. Although each were action shots of them as players and their uniforms were the colors and designs of their respective teams, all the names and logos had been removed from the helmets and jerseys. Apparently, since they were all retired the company didn't need the permission of the NFL or each team in order to use their pictures, however they did to include franchise labels. Once again I am reminded that ownership, credit and profit are central to the human experience.

Aren't they THE TWELVE? Is not Jesus their Master? Were not they personally chosen and called by Jesus? Are they not constantly with him to learn from him? Have they not obtained the "Jesus franchise" by their dedication and sacrifice? Who then is this imposter who thinks he can use the powerful name that is rightly theirs?

The Twelve are so sure of themselves on this one that they actually go and report to Jesus proudly that they inhibited the imposter. In Jesus' response, once again we see the truth of the statement that "...my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord (Isaiah 55:8). We have it exactly opposite. We don't own God, he owns us. We have been blessed to be a blessing to the world (Genesis 12:2-3), not in order to be a member of the eternal elite.

Why do you think everything from stock cars to golf bags bears gaudy corporate logo? It is not so that we know Nike makes sneakers or Ford makes cars, it is so that when the bearers of the logos enter the winners' circle we will all want to buy Nike sneakers and Ford automobiles. As baptized believers, our Christian character (Galatians 5:22-23) should be our "branding" – our logo that reads "Jesus." As we are blessed, our logo should bring others to Jesus and we should respond by welcoming them into the winners' circle.

Jesus, you are so gracious and merciful that you called me to follow you. Remind me that I have done nothing to earn your favor and that I am a sinner like all other human beings. Encourage me to act upon that knowledge by being a vehicle of your good news. Amen.