

Who Gets the Credit?

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Freshman college year was over and I was home for the summer in the Canadian city of St. Catharines, Ontario. I was excited because I had been asked to be responsible for the young people in our English-Russian-Ukrainian church. Working with them was nothing new. Only now I had picked up a lot of great ideas - ideas I was eager to implement. But, as was the custom in our Slavic churches, the ideas first had to get approval from the church committee. Fair enough.

Knowing what I might be up against I had to move slowly, carefully. (Some of the members were very conservative, to the extent that they voted down anything new, any change.) So, in the first meeting, I introduced only one modest proposal. One of the committee members stood up and, true to form, put me down. He reminded me that he knew me since I was on mother's milk. (Not true.) Anyway, he didn't appreciate my idea; consequently, it was voted down. Sure, I was discouraged.

The same thing happened the next time. Another member told me that just because I had finished three years of Bible Institute and a year at university, I shouldn't think I knew more than they did. Spirituality was more important than modern activities. (By the way, most of the members of our church did not have an opportunity to finish even elementary school in Russia and Ukraine.)

Well, I was doubly discouraged. I talked to the Lord about it. He asked me if it mattered to me who got the credit for the new ideas and plans. "I don't care who gets the credit, as long as we can move ahead with the young people's program," was my answer.

"Good! I will show you what to do."

Since I knew who the two negatively vocal church members were, I made a point to visit them at home after work. We would sit at their kitchen table drinking tea and small-talking between sips. Somewhere in the conversation, I would discreetly drop an idea and immediately change the subject.

At the next meeting, the good brother would announce that he had a good idea for our young people. Then he shared "his" great idea (He honestly believed it was his.) and it would be approved.

This happened a number of times, both brothers in Christ taking turns. They were bringing good ideas to the meetings and we were getting things done in our young people's group. It turned out to be a very good summer.

Who got the credit? I'm not sure but, personally, I give all the credit to my resident Counselor. By the way, he has the best ideas! And it is, after all, his work.