

Pastors Comments

PC -- The Focus on Contemporary Christianity August 4, 2008

The burr under my saddle for some long period of time has to do with the way crowds are gathered in the name of Jesus Christ. I have approached this in the past even quoting local Pastor Jeff Perry diagnosing today's generation as a sight and sound generation. The conclusion is that they need be reached with much sight and sound. The amount of contemporary is an ongoing issue within Baptist circles as well. I have been castigated anytime I have raised even a voice of question. It seems now it is anything goes until the bounds of decorum of my critic are passed and then he raises a questioning voice of his own having blown me off as a kook. The lowering of many standards such as regard for alcohol usage has come to the forefront. The research needs to be directed in first answering the question as to whether these are separated incidents or a complete changing of the tide.

Having only preached one specific sermon on hell in my 26+ year pastorate perhaps I too am part of the problem. Far outracing my compromise if that is what it is called is a new outreach effort that cautions that one should only preach on things that effect life here and now. Death, dying and judgment apparently scare more off than they attract. This emphasis on the temporal coming from evangelical circles and not from the charismatic so called, name it and claim it, forum.

A young enthusiast for claiming all the promises in the Bible for the present generation, I think only if they are the positive ones?) exalted in the fact that he did not serve the God of exceptions. I am left to wonder that when that is the focus, how they select all that have to do with health, wealth and happiness and dismiss the times of difficulty, distress and heartbreak.

A recent experience with performing a funeral service for a family with which I was not acquainted caused me to think of Jesus being described as a man of sorrows. Then I realized that I too am a man of sorrows. In these distressing times I can never set aside their loss and replace it with exuberance for what their lives hold as possibilities without the presence of their loved one. I can always show them hope and joy in being a child of God but at the same time happiness cannot be located in that setting.

Now I am even more concerned that perhaps the man who does not worship the God of exceptions truly does worship another god. Is there a god of the here and now where the not so hidden emphasis is on what I am to get out of a relationship with him? Pursuing that thought line causes me all the time the invitations given during commercials for particular ministries have to do with coming to God and getting all you problems solved. Are you lonely? Come to the god who can cure your loneliness! My training is humble indeed, but I am finding difficulty discovering this in Romans.

Flirting on the edge of some problem that I cannot completely define, I look to a scriptural resource and pray my search and my problem have led me in a correct direction.

Has the emphasis for impact on the temporal blinded the present generation so they cannot see the God of scripture and why one would pursue a true course to Him?

II Corinthians 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen [are] temporal; but the things which are not seen [are] eternal.

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