

The Problem With the Entertaining Church

As ministers of the gospel, I believe we need to be reminded that the most incredible amount of love and joy we can give to a person is the truth of the gospel and the impartation of the Holy Spirit that makes Jesus come alive in our hearts. Recently I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Brian Shaeffer. Dr. Schaefer is a good friend and an overseer of many churches and pastors. He made a compelling statement, telling me, "I would rather teach people into heaven than entertain people into hell."

To be honest, I enjoy entertainment. I have been to many churches that entertain me. An entertaining church with a charismatic pastor can draw a lot of people. However, there is a Scripture that points to the danger involved. "They are of the world, and therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them" (1 John 4:5). It is natural to want to please people and make them happy. A large crowd has the appearance of success. However, John warned us that worldly people listen to worldly messages.

We can enjoy church, the music and the speaker, but if we are not experiencing a touch of the Holy Spirit, we are missing something vital. I have heard the argument from the churches known as "seeker" churches that the job is to draw people into the church, and then once they get here, we can share the gospel with them. My experience with these churches has been that there is a lot of wonderful music and a powerful motivational speaker. Still, I do not see many salvations, people becoming filled with the Holy Spirit or captives set free and broken hearts healed (Luke 4:18). Evidence of miracles, divine healing and edifying prophetic words are missing.

I will not condemn the church because Christ loves the church and gave His life for the church, but I call on the church not to forsake the gospel of Jesus Christ, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. That is the New Testament mandate we all have, and it is critical if lives are going to be changed, healed and blessed. All these things glorify the name of Jesus Christ.

Today's church should follow the clear example of the early church in the book of Acts. It will impact everyone, and the church will grow as God touches His people. The Bible gave us the plan, and it is up to us to implement it.

If you are a leader, pray before every service for the direction of the Lord. After all, it is His church and His people. Then invite the Holy Spirit to come—and give Him time. I have experienced countless services where the Holy Spirit was actively welcomed and allowed to move. The result is the scriptural promise: “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or imagine, according to the power that works in us” (Eph. 3:20). It just does not get any better than that! {eo}

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