

FEATURED ARTICLE: We Must Have Spiritual Leadership Again by A.W. Tozer - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2006/10/10

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SOMEONE WROTE TO THE GODLY Macarius of Optino that his spiritual counsel had been helpful. "This cannot be," Macarius wrote in reply. "Only the mistakes are mine. All good advice is the advice of the Spirit of God, His advice that I happened to have heard rightly and to have passed on without distorting it."

There is an excellent lesson here that we must not allow to go unregarded. It is the sweet humility of the man of God. "Only the mistakes are mine." He was fully convinced that his own efforts could result only in mistakes, and that any good that came of his advice must be the work of the Holy Spirit operating within him. Apparently this was more than a sudden impulse of self-depreciation, which the proudest of men may at times feel--it was rather a settled conviction with him, a conviction that gave direction to his entire life. His long and humble ministry, which brought spiritual aid to multitudes, reveals this clearly enough.

In this day when shimmering "personalities" carry on the Lord's work after the methods of the entertainment world, it is refreshing to associate for even a moment in the pages of a book with a sincere and humble man who keeps his own personality out of sight and places the emphasis on the inworking of God. It is our belief that the evangelical movement will continue to drift further and further from the New Testament position until its leadership passes from the modern religious star to the self-effacing saint, who asks for no praise and seeks no place, happy only when the glory is attributed to God, and he is forgotten.

Until such men as these return again to spiritual leadership, we may expect a progressive deterioration in the quality of popular Christianity until we reach the point where the grieved Holy Spirit withdraws like the Shechinah from the temple, and we are left like Jerusalem after the crucifixion--God-deserted and alone. In spite of every effort to torture doctrine to prove that the Spirit will not forsake religious men, the record reveals plainly enough that He sometimes does. He has in the past forsaken groups when they had gone too far to make a recovery.

It is an open question whether or not the evangelical movement has sinned too long and departed too far from God to return again to spiritual sanity. Personally I do not believe it is too late to repent, if the so-called Christians of the day would repudiate evil leadership and seek God again in true penitence and tears. The "if" is the big problem--will they? Or are they too well satisfied with religious frolic and froth even to recognize their sad departure from the New Testament faith? If the latter is true, then there is nothing left but judgment.

The devil is adept at the use of the red herring. He knows well how to divert the attention of the praying Christian from his subtler but deadly attacks to something more obvious and less harmful. Then while the soldiers of the Lord gather excitedly at one gate, he quietly enters by another. And when the "saints" lose interest in the red herring, they return to find the newly baptized and pious enemy in charge of proceedings. So far are they from recognizing him that they soon adopt his ways and call it progress.

Within the last quarter of a century, we have actually seen a major shift in the beliefs and practices of the evangelical wing of the church so radical as to amount to a complete sell-out-and all this behind the cloak of fervent orthodoxy. With a Bible under their arm and a bundle of tracts in their pocket, religious people now meet to carry on "services" so carnal, so pagan, that they can hardly be distinguished from the old vaudeville shows of earlier days. And for a preacher or an editor to challenge this heresy is to invite ridicule and abuse from every quarter.

Our only hope is that renewed spiritual pressure will be exerted increasingly by self-effacing and courageous men and women who desire nothing but the glory of God and the purity of the church. May God send us many of them. They are long overdue.

Re: FEATURED ARTICLE: We Must Have Spiritual Leadership Again by A.W. Tozer - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/07

Quote:
-----Until such men as these return again to spiritual leadership, we may expect a progressive deterioration in the quality of popular Christianity

I have been troubled over this terrible predicament of ungodly leadership for several years now. It is true that people tend to be followers, and become much like their leaders. Yet, we have been living in times when the people themselves do not want to follow God or his appointed leaders. So God judges these churches by sending them the leaders that they want—those who will tickle their ears. That was his way of handling Israel. Remember King Saul.

For the LORD has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep.
He has closed the eyes of your prophets and visionaries.” Is. 29:10

Quote:
-----He has in the past forsaken groups when they had gone too far to make a recovery.

And when this happens there is little we can do to fix up the situation. You end up facing this:

Quote:
-----And for a preacher or an editor to challenge this heresy is to invite ridicule and abuse from every quarter.

Diane

Re: FEATURED ARTICLE: We Must Have Spiritual Leadership Again by A.W. Tozer - posted by JennRich (), on: 2006/10/07

I would be interested to know the year Tozer wrote this article. Do you know?