

Articles and Sermons :: Worshiping At The Altar Of Success by David Ravenhill

Worshiping At The Altar Of Success by David Ravenhill - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/12/18 13:08

[Image: <http://rossignol.cream.org/new/megachurch.jpg>]

Worshiping At The Altar Of Success

by David Ravenhill

Though you may find it hard to believe, there is an addiction more subtle and more powerful than either drugs or pornography. It's older than prostitution, more prevalent than alcohol, more addictive than cocaine. It doesn't discriminate between male and female, black or white, young or old, rich or poor. Its strength is greater than all other addictions combined. It's as rampant in the Church as it is in the world. It leaves the body unscathed but destroys the soul. The vast majority of people addicted have little if any understanding of its power or perils.

The history of the worship of success dates back to Lucifer, the rebellious archangel who wanted to relegate God to a subordinate role and take the 'top gun' position for himself. This desire for success soon spread throughout the earth like a cancer, reaching its pinnacle with mankind seeking to build a tower and to make for themselves a name. What a contrast in attitudes we find between Genesis 11 and 12. Chapter 11 exposes man striving for recognition, while chapter 12 we find God promising humble Abraham that He would make his name great.

A clear picture of this obsession with success can be found in the story of King Ahaz. His numerous sins had brought judgment upon himself and the nation of Judah. This punishment came through the king of Aram who carried off a great number of his people as captives. Embarrassed and distressed over his glaring defeat, the Jewish king made the monumental mistake of attributing the Aramean victory to their gods. Whatever small faith he may have had in Jehovah was completely discarded in favor of idol worship. "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them," he reasoned, "I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." (II Chronicles 28:23) It seems that Ahaz was prepared to pay any price for success.

Lamentably, it seems that much of the American Church holds this same misguided logic. Pastors around the nation are flocking to follow the 'mega church' pattern, believing that what worked somewhere else will work for them as well. We now have the mentality that success is purely numerical. Witness what the Barna Research Group stated as the result of a recent study:

"The most discouraging study we ever conducted was one in which we attempted to identify churches in the U.S. that consistently and intelligently evaluate life transformation among the people to whom they minister. We found that very few churches - emphasis on very - measure anything beyond attendance, donations, square footage, number of programs and size of staff. None of that necessarily reflects life transformation." (Italics mine)

How tragic! Success is now measured by attendance, donations, square footage, etc. It's time we stopped worshipping the 'gods of success' and turned our gaze afresh upon the Lord, for beholding we will be changed. I think that is the definition of SUCCESS in the Kingdom of God

Re: Worshiping At The Altar Of Success by David Ravenhill - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/12/18 15:25

Quote:
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thank you brother for this article. i think that is the most frustrating thing about this mega church system. it SEEMS like many pastors view having large churches, large attendance, multiple programs, and many dollars of resources as the goal of christianity. while ministering to one another, loving one another, and serving one another is left out in the cold so the church can serve the "vision of the pastor".

i hope that does not come out sounding wrong, it just SEEMS like many churches (or at least many popular mainstream churches) fit this article to a T.

anyways, thanks greg for the article.