



News and Current Events :: Bill Hybels repents of the Seeker-friendly method?!

Bill Hybels repents of the Seeker-friendly method?! - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2007/11/5 22:41

Here's the report from Christianity Today:

(http://blog.christianitytoday.com/outofur/archives/2007/10/willow_creek_re.html) Willow Creek Repents?

A feature by Todd Friel from Way of the Master Radio (it's roughly around the last third) :

(<http://podcast.wayofthemasterradio.com/audio/podcasts/1107/WOTMR-11-05-07-Hour2.mp3>) Way of the Master Radio , November 5, 2007, Hour 2

Re: Bill Hybels repents of the Seeker-friendly method?! - posted by rookie (), on: 2007/11/6 2:09

Thankyou for finding this...

Your brother in Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/11/6 2:45

Quote:

-----Hybels confesses:

We made a mistake. What we should have done when people crossed the line of faith and become Christians, we should have started telling people and teaching people that they have to take responsibility to become 'self feeders.' We should have gotten people, taught people, how to read their bible between service, how to do the spiritual practices much more aggressively on their own.

Quote:

-----Does this mark the end of Willow's thirty years of influence over the American church? Not according to Hawkins:

Our dream is that we fundamentally change the way we do church. That we take out a clean sheet of paper and we rethink all of our old assumptions. Replace it with new insights. Insights that are informed by research and rooted in Scripture. Our dream is really to discover what God is doing and how he's asking us to transform this planet.

Well there is something of "repentance" here but definitely not anything ground breaking at this point. Hybel's methods have influenced 10,000's of churches to cater programs for people selfishly and really offer a worldly substitute for a spiritual reality.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2007/11/6 4:33

Brother Greg wrote:

Quote:

-----Well there is something of "repentance" here but definitely not anything ground breaking at this point. Hybel's methods have influenced 10,000's of churches to cater programs for people selfishly and really offer a worldly substitute for a spiritual reality.

Up until these last few months I had not paid much attention to this type of movement. But I have come to realize that the Brethren in Christ denomination has been infected with this movement.

I would suggest that everyone listen to the radio segment that is recommended on this thread.

I have entered the battle to lift our local congregation out of this worldly system...

Your brother in Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by enid, on: 2007/11/6 7:35

For my part they haven't repented. The whole thing seems to be treated as a big joke.

The eternity of souls are at stake here, and all they seem to be doing is research and quoting statistics.

Just because someone admits they are wrong does not mean they have repented.

2 Cor 7v10, 'For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted, but the sorrow of the world produces death'.

If they have really repented, some people might leave the church and go to another seeker church.

Some might like the change toward God.

The fact is, the 'repentance' came about because people were asking questions about why they were not growing in God etc, not because of any conviction or remorse.

Time will tell.

God bless.

Re: - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2007/11/6 9:25

Quote:

enid wrote:

The fact is, the 'repentance' came about because people were asking questions about why they were not growing in God etc, not because of any conviction or remorse.

The presumption here, which I don't think they have is that there previous methods were unbiblical and heretical.

The bible is very vague as to what the church as a collective did to encourage growth in individual members. This, I believe, is where we get all these different 'programs' to get people involved in the life of a church.

I think that it is amazing that they even took the time and the money to ask the question 'what is the average spiritual depth of our flock?' Maybe, that in itself was the start of God trying to bring correction and balance to their church.

Friends, this should bring us great encouragement, God speaks, and thankfully it seems like they have heard.

Let us pray that they have wisdom in how to change the direction and ultimately the very fabric of their church. Let us pray friends!

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2007/11/6 9:32

Hello...

After reading the article, I can't tell what they are "repenting" about. It doesn't appear that the leaders are repenting over the massive self-promotion/church-growth methodology. Rather, it appears that they are simply disappointed that some of their church-growth methods are not working as hoped (and hence, a "waste" of financial resources).

It would be nice for the leaders of this church (and the thousands who copy their philosophy) to first realize the damage done to the Body of Christ by resorting to the virtual "begging" of people into the Kingdom. This "giving-people-whatever-they-want-to-attend-fellowship" doesn't seem to be depopulating Hell in the least.

:-(

EDIT:

I don't have a problem with programs within a local fellowship. Programs can serve to meet the needs of the congregation and community and bind believers together in holy service. However, I do have a problem with programs if the primary motivation is simply to increase the membership numbers of the local fellowship.

Re: - posted by enid, on: 2007/11/6 9:59

ZekeO said, 'The bible is very vague as to what the church as a collective did to encourage growth in individual members.'

Vague?

Acts 2v46, 'So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart'

Also,

Acts 17v11, '...in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so'

The methods they are using are unbiblical. If not, show me where they are in scripture, where Jesus or the apostle surveyed people to ask their opinion about the church or anything.

They are also heretical because they teach another gospel.

Do I have to quote Galatians 1v8-9?

God bless.

Re: - posted by OverSeer (), on: 2007/11/6 10:41

"Directly or indirectly, this philosophy of ministry—church should be a big box with programs for people at every level of spiritual maturity to consume and engage—has impacted every evangelical church in the country."

This philosophy of ministry? As Christians we are to have a "theology" of ministry and never a "philosophy" of ministry. Apostate churches and movements are marked by using philosophy (leaning on their own understanding) rather than theology (trusting the Lord with all their hearts). Philosophy is man's best thinking; theology is God's revealed wisdom!

"The methods they are using are unbiblical." Amen!

Grace and peace
Olan

Re: - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2007/11/6 11:01

Quote:

enid wrote:

ZekeO said, 'The bible is very vague as to what the church as a collective did to encourage growth in individual members.'

Vague?

Acts 2v46, 'So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart'

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Acts 17v11, '...in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so'

The methods they are using are unbiblical. If not, show me where they are in scripture, where Jesus or the apostle surveyed people to ask their opinion about the church or anything.

They are also heretical because they teach another gospel.

Do I have to quote Galatians 1v8-9?

God bless.

I have read your post.

Re: - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2007/11/6 11:11

Quote:

OverSeer wrote:

"Directly or indirectly, this philosophy of ministry—church should be a big box with programs for people at every level of spiritual maturity to consume and engage—has impacted every evangelical church in the country."

This philosophy of ministry? As Christians we are to have a "theology" of ministry and never a "philosophy" of ministry. Apostate churches and movements are marked by using philosophy (leaning on their own understanding) rather than theology (trusting the Lord with all their hearts). Philosophy is man's best thinking; theology is God's revealed wisdom!

"The methods they are using are unbiblical." Amen!

Grace and peace
Olan

Overseer, this is your opinion and you're welcome to it, but I disagree.

Re: - posted by alan4jc (), on: 2007/11/6 11:57

Quote:

-----It would be nice for the leaders of this church (and the thousands who copy their philosophy) to first realize the damage done to the Body of Christ by resorting to the virtual "begging" of people into the Kingdom. This "giving-people-whatever-they-want-to-attend-fellowship" doesn't seem to be depopulating Hell in the least.

I don't see where begging people into the kingdom is at all against scripture. If we consider Paul's urging and exhorting. I do agree with the giving whatever people want idea, being rooted in selfishness.

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiiss (), on: 2007/11/6 12:05

Hi alan4jc...

Quote:

-----I don't see where begging people into the kingdom is at all against scripture. If we consider Paul's urging and exhorting.

I suppose there is a difference between pleading with unbelievers to consider the eternal condition of a life without Christ and begging people to join a Christian fellowship that operates a lot like a social club designed to meet sociological "needs" in a modern world. Paul didn't work or preach to get people to enter the congregational door of a local mega-church. He preached to have people turn to Christ (and thus, turn away from sin) and enter the Kingdom of God.

:-)

Re: - posted by iansmith (), on: 2007/11/6 12:22

Satan loves when we spend our time fighting each other and not him.

Mark 9:38-40

And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.

But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

For he that is not against us is on our part.

Re: Willow Creeks say They are NOT Repenting... - posted by JCGarc55, on: 2007/11/6 13:59

Willow Creek thinks there is no sin involved so no repentance is necessary.

Reveal Now is the website they put together for this whole issue.

<http://blog.revealnow.com/>

below is taken from their website:

2. Willow Repents?

The Leadership Journal blog started with this question, and the answer is NO. Repenting, in my mind, deals with confessing sin. There is absolutely no sin involved in this deal. Just good, old fashion learning. What you are seeing is a set of leaders coming to grips with some new facts and deciding to do something about it. This is nothing new for us here at Willow. We are passionately committed to learning. Redeeming this broken world through the love and power of Jesus Christ is just too important for us not to be in a constant state of learning. We've always been a church in motion and REVEAL is just another example of Willow trying to be open to God's design for this local church.

Re: - posted by JCGarc55, on: 2007/11/6 14:02

My response to the willow creek is the pastor is responsible for FEEDING the sheep. Jesus charged Peter to feed the sheep and he tells all shepherds to do the same. Since their people say they are not feeding them, what does that say to them? hello!

Re: - posted by JCGarc55, on: 2007/11/6 14:05

So long as the people involved in a discussion treat one another in love of Christ, I see no problem with continuing to search the scriptures and see what the Lord says on the matter.

Re: Is Willowcreek really just kidding themselves? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/11/6 14:19

It seems that Willowcreek was examining the level of spiritual maturity in their flock, and surely we ought to give them credit for that! I know of churches whose surveys "proved" to them that their churches were spiritually healthy - while, really they were dead. They had asked the wrong questions! At least Willow Creek asked a good question, and are admitting they blew it. No cover-ups here! These leaders have done what few do: begin to surrender their (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id7446&post_id56714&order1&viewmodeflat&pid0&forum35#56714) Most Sacred Idol - ie, their "righteousness". They are not in complete denial, that's for sure.

True, they have a long way to go, and don't seem to have arrived at the core problem: the human bent to trust in religion and self instead of God. (That problem is not unique to them!) Perhaps they are still in the distant lands, like the prodigal, covered with the stench of the world. Maybe they are, just maybe...starting to change direction. Is that not the beginning of repentance: to change direction.

Jesus said: It is not the healthy who needs a doctor but the sick.Â”

Are they beginning to see their need for the Doctor? Will the leaders at Willowcreek cry out to Jesus, and seek wisdom from above?

Let's pray that they will. This could launch them into revival, could it not?

Do you think that the Lord could do something with their present aim -- like adjust their mindset, lead them to seek HIS solution for sin, etc?

That we take out a clean sheet of paper and we rethink all of our old assumptions. Replace it with new insights. Insights that are informed by research and rooted in Scripture. Our dream is really to discover what God is doing and how he's asking us to transform this planet.

(I admit, I am out of touch with this whole scenario, so I really have no idea what God is seeing right now. Still, when it comes to the work of God, how often has he surprised the sceptics?)

Diane

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiss () , on: 2007/11/6 15:01

Good perspective, Roadsign...!

I will certainly be praying for God to have His way in WillowCreek and other mega-Church empires.

My problem with the mentality of such mega-churches is that they typically feel that it is a God-breathed desire to have thousands of people in attendance with their local congregation. I have some friends who are pastors of such churches, and they willingly admit that their church "*is all about the numbers.*" They will do whatever it takes to get these numbers in the door (usually with a sincere desire to see them meet Christ). They create program after program designed to facilitate a comradery within the congregation and constantly add new members (since many come, stay for a while, then leave). Most of these congregations literally PARADE their various programs (typically referred to as "ministries" on stage in order to bolster involvement). If people are involved in ministries, the leaders suggest, they will decide to stay and get involved.

The question is whether or not this is truly an example of what God intended for a local Church. Did God really want organizations to grow into little corporations? Is God truly pleased when we will use any method in order to attract people to a Church? Are we even supposed to be attracting unbelievers to a congregation -- or are we supposed to simply introduce the gospel of Christ Jesus so that the multitudes will fall in love with God? Has the "good news" been relegated to proclaiming a "vibrant local institution with programs for the whole family" instead of proclaiming Christ's exemption for a world heading to Hell?

Perhaps this study identifying a lack of maturity within the congregation will cause the leaders of such institutions to rethink their strategies and mission. I will certainly pray. God is certainly able to perform wonders in this situation!

Several years ago, I read about an entire cultish denomination that was transformed when the leaders decided to seek the Lord. They freely proclaimed that the founders of their denomination were in error, and the new leaders wanted to serve the God of the Bible. It would be interesting if some of these mega-churches realized that "the end does NOT justify the means" and changed their views.

Change is the natural metamorphosis that occurs when a person is born again. To disavow that change should take place is to rob the Holy Spirit of his convicting power. We should NOT compromise the holiness of God in order to attract people to a Gospel that negates any responsibility of holy living from the believer.

:~)

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2007/11/7 3:06

John Macarthur begins one of his sermons in this way...

In this Age of Show Business, truth is irrelevant; what really matters is whether we are entertained. Substance counts for little; style is everything. In the words of Marshall McLuhan, the medium is the message. Unfortunately, that kind of thinking rules the church as surely as it does the world.

A. W. Tozer wrote these words in 1955:

For centuries the Church stood solidly against every form of worldly entertainment, recognizing it for what it was—a device for wasting time, a refuge from the disturbing voice of conscience, a scheme to divert attention from moral accountability. For this she got herself abused roundly by the sons of this world. But of late she has become tired of the abuse and has given over the struggle. She appears to have decided that if she cannot conquer the great god Entertainment she may as well join forces with him and make what use she can of his powers. So today we have the astonishing spectacle of millions of dollars being poured into the unholy job of providing earthly entertainment for the so-called sons of heaven. Religious entertainment is in many places rapidly crowding out the serious things of God. Many churches these days have become little more than poor theaters where fifth-rate "producers" peddle their shoddy wares with the full approval of evangelical leaders who can even quote a holy text in defense of their delinquency. And hardly a man dares raise his voice against it. 2

By today's standards, the issues that so inflamed Tozer's passions seem trifling. For example, churches were attracting people to Sunday evening services by showing Christian films. Young people's rallies featured up-tempo music and speakers whose specialty was humor. High-energy games and activities were beginning to play a key role in church youth work. Looking back, it may seem difficult to understand Tozer's distress. Hardly anyone these days would be shocked or concerned about any of the methods that seemed radically innovative in the fifties. Most of them are generally regarded as conventional today.

Tozer, however, was not condemning games, music styles, or movies per se. He was concerned with the philosophy underlying what was happening in the church. He was sounding an alarm about a deadly change of focus. He saw evangelicals using entertainment as a tool for church growth, and he believed that was subverting the church's priorities. He feared that frivolous diversions and carnal amusements in the church would eventually destroy people's appetites for real worship and the preaching of God's Word.

He was right about that. In fact, Tozer's rebuke is more fitting than ever as the church approaches the end of the century. The incipient trend he identified has come into full bloom in our generation. What the church was flirting with thirty-five years ago has now become an obsession.

.....

Macarthur continues...

Driven by Pragmatism

There's no denying that these antics seem to work—that is, they draw a crowd. Many churches that have experimented with such methods report growing attendance figures. And a handful of megachurches—those that can afford first-class productions, effects, and facilities—have been able to stimulate enormous numerical growth. Some of them fill huge auditoriums with thousands of people several times every week.

A few of these megachurches resemble elegant country clubs or resort hotels. They feature impressive facilities with bowling lanes, movie theaters, health spas, restaurants, ballrooms, roller-skating rinks, and state-of-the-art multi-court gymnasiums. Recreation and entertainment are inevitably the most visible aspects of these enterprises. Such churches have become meccas for students of church growth.

Now evangelicals everywhere are frantically seeking new techniques and new forms of entertainment to attract people. Whether a method is biblical or not scarcely matters to the average church leader today. Does it work? That is the new test of legitimacy. And so raw pragmatism has become the driving philosophy in much of the professing church.

Pragmatism is the notion that ideas may be judged by their practical consequences. A pragmatist concludes that a course

e of action or concept is right if it brings good results, wrong if it doesn't seem to work.

What's wrong with pragmatism? After all, common sense involves a measure of legitimate pragmatism, doesn't it? If a dripping faucet works fine after you replace the washers, for example, it is reasonable to assume that bad washers were the problem. If the medicine your doctor prescribes produces harmful side effects or has no effect at all, you need to ask if there's a remedy that works. Such simple pragmatic realities are generally self-evident.

But when pragmatism becomes a guiding philosophy of life or ministry, it inevitably clashes with Scripture. Spiritual and biblical truth cannot be determined by what works and what doesn't. We know from Scripture, for example, that the gospel does not usually produce a positive response (1 Cor. 1:22-23; 2:14). On the other hand, Satanic lies and deception often are quite effective (Matt. 24:23-24; 2 Cor. 4:3-4). Majority reaction is no test of validity (cf. Matt. 7:13-14), and prosperity is no measure of truthfulness (cf. Job 12:6). Pragmatism as a guiding philosophy of ministry is inherently flawed.⁶

Nevertheless, an overpowering surge of ardent pragmatism is sweeping through evangelicalism. Methodology has replaced theology as the main issue many church leaders are concerned with. Pastors are turning to books on marketing methods in search of new techniques to help churches grow. Many seminaries have shifted their pastoral training emphasis from Bible curriculum and theology to matters of style and technique.

Perhaps most telling is the growing number of churches that now feature drama and entertainment instead of traditional services where God's Word is proclaimed. The new pragmatism sees preaching as passé. Plainly declaring truth is deemed too offensive and utterly ineffective. We're now told we can get better results by first amusing people and thus wooing them into the fold. Once they feel comfortable, they'll be ready to receive biblical truth in small, diluted doses.

just a thought...

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/11/7 6:10

reading through this I thought of these words from Scripture:

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

the axe is laid unto the root

Having a Christian name means nothing.

Re:, on: 2007/11/7 9:28

I'm just amazed it took them this long to figure this out. Maybe instead of reading all those books about corporate management, they should have been reading the Bible. It's the best Book on church growth ever written.

And I don't see anyone in that article repenting. They were just stating that many of the programs they had weren't working. Big deal. Companies do that all the time.

Some of this article though was encouraging. Just surprised they didn't "get it" before now.

Krispy

Re:, on: 2007/11/7 16:14

Like any Pastor, or anyone of us for that matter when your life has no spiritual significance, you'll try anything to jump start something. And after lives have been invested into a system that wasn't working for them, it's kind of too late to reverse gears, because thousands if not millions of people have been indoctrinated. Many upon hearing Hybels repent may just end up forsaking Christ altogether. Nothing any worse than a leader of a large organization begin to rethink his theology. It's like as if Paul would have said after he established Churches begin to doubt that the letters that he sent out were even truth. I would have shuddered if those words would have passed from his lips. But thankfully they did not.

For Bill Hybels, the bad seeds have already been sown, they've been planted, it's too late. It would have been better if he had said nothing to anyone and kept it quiet, repented before God, asked the LORD for direction and re-teach the people by incorporating truth. A little bit of truth here and there will eventually kill off the leaven.

(Just an FYI, Salt directly in contact with yeast slows down production of leavening activity and eventually make it of non effect)

Quote:

-----Mark 9:50 Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

Interesting eh?

Re: - posted by OverSeer (), on: 2007/11/9 15:09

My prayer is that the Lord will open the eyes of many to the deception and dangers of these apostate man-centered (see ker-sensitive, purpose-driven, emergent church) movements. While much damage has been done, there are many who can be snatched from the fire (see Jude 20-23).

There are three major symptoms that characterize apostasy: (1)apostates depart from the Word of God - they replace th eology with philosophy, (2) apostates defile themselves with the world - hence the man-centered approach, and (3) apos tates deceive themselves with their works - they judge according to appearance using pragmatism as their standard for determining truth (see Hosea 8:1-14).

These man-centered apostate movements have their roots in Pelagianism and can be easily traced to the "father of the Mega-church movement" - Robert Schuller.

Listen to this sermon if you get a chance.

www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?sermonID=10210723013

Grace and peace

Olan

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2007/11/9 18:50

I wanted to fan the flame of hope here abit... Roadsign was actively seeking to see the merit in Bill's Hybel's recent admission.

Quote:

-----True, they have a long way to go, and don't seem to have arrived at the core problem: the human bent to trust in religion and self i nstead of God

In some ways, it could be faithfully said that they don't have that far to go at all. Behold I stand at the door and knock. Th at is to say, I've never known real repentance to be a gradual process as much as it is a genuine response.

For instance consider this quote from a recent article on the proliferation of

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/07/arts/music/07prais.html?ex1195016400&enb96ced0ce9a830f9&ei5065&partnerMYWAY>) seeker-sensitive rock bands.

Dressed in a faded black T-shirt, jeans and skateboard sneakers, he bent his shaved head. "God," he said, "I hope t

These songs we sing will be much more than the music. I know it's so difficult at times when we're thinking about chords and lyrics and when to hit the right effect patch, but would you just help that to become second nature, so that we can truly worship you from our heart?

I believe this young man is mistaking his desire to play music for worship. Thus he feels that despite his surrender, something beyond his control is hindering him from worshipping God from his heart. (I know, because I remember this prayer well...) In truth, if this musician really wanted to worship God from his heart, he could simply unplug his technocratic schemes and get to it.

Even our yearning prayers can reveal our idolatry. The Lord has not made it difficult to worship him...we have.

Now as an organization, Willow Creek might indeed have to go through a process, like turning the Titanic away from the Iceberg. There are new coordinates to be determined, new values and mission statements to be debated, new by laws and organizational restructuring. But we shouldn't suggest that passengers aboard the ship need worry about all that. The real question here might be whether the captain loves his people more than his ship. (It might not be that he trusts in religion so much as he trusts in infrastructure.) The right captain might order the passengers to be transferred to a more seaworthy vessel. Besides, it's the people inside the ship that is the first order of duty for a captain, not the engineering marvel itself.

Sometimes we needn't wait for an iceberg. When a ship is discovered to be defunct or unsafe, we scuttle. This is perhaps the surest way to prevent harm coming to passengers.

Just my thoughts.

MC

Re: - posted by Tears_of_joy, on: 2007/11/9 19:20

Quote:
-----Compton said:
Now as an **organization**, Willow Creek might indeed have to go through a process, like turning the Titanic away from the Iceberg. There are new coordinates to be determined, new values and mission statements to be debated, new by laws and **organizational restructuring**.

Brother, let me give you my opinion on this subject, based on your example of Titanic. Brother, I don't believe that this is case of "*turning the boat away from the Iceberg*", but totally missing the boat! Wrong boat, instead of going to "South Africa", you (not you personally) have missed the boat and you go now to "USA", and you are reasoning now, "Well, we needed to arrive in north cost, and now we made mistake and probably we will arrive in south cost, it's ok, we will go by bus to the other cost!" And you are not realizing that you have missed the whole continent!

What I think is that passengers need to get out from the boat, and get in to the other boat, that is going to right direction. New foundation.

And I emphasize the word "organization". The church is not called to be in bondage of organization, but to be organism.

Organization is artificial and human made.
Organism is living body and God made.
Organization depends on men.
Organism depends on God.

The church is the Body of Christ. The Body functions naturally. You don't need artificial and human made things and programs to keep it.

When you put organism into bondage of the organization, the result is death of the organism, because it cannot live naturally there. It is depended on other things, besides those of God. The Church is depended just from God and His mercies and provisions for everything.

I think this quotes is staggering:

Quote:
-----"If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference."

Quote:

One hundred religious persons knit into a unity by careful organizations do not constitute a church any more than eleven dead men make a football team. The first requisite is life, always.

These are some thoughts brother, feel free to share yours on them!

Thank you and God bless you,
Kire

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2007/11/9 23:53

Good thoughts Kire.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/11/10 7:38

Quote:
----- What I think is that passengers need to get out from the boat, and get in to the other boat, that is going to right direction.

Well, if the institutional church is the "wrong boat", then so is the entire world – and we can't get off of it - except by death! Even that doesn't get us on the "right boat". (I include this comment, not in response to anyone here particularly, but towards the all-too-common mistake that "If I get out of the place physically ie, the institutional church I am safe.")

Now that we have diagnosed the right prescription for Hybel's church, we also admit that none of us are in the position to actually TELL them what to do. We're not God. That is a very good thing! For indeed, we would wish to "help them along" and set fire to the entire infrastructure – and expect a instantaneous unravelling of all misconceptions (some of which we ourselves may still have). Surely we can expect God to bring about a change in individual hearts through the rocky process of trials and failings. Some will get it, and, as is normal, the masses won't. Those will just construct another "edifice" to fulfil their expectations. Meanwhile, praise God for the voices out there who DO offer godly direction to the disillusioned. And, above all, praise God for his word and his Spirit. No one can deprive seekers of that!

Quote:
----- "....simply unplug...."

I tried this once - as a teen. It was an attempt to keep my sister from watching TV when I needed to practise. Actually, I tried something better: cut the cord! Only I forgot to unplug it first! ".... After risking my life, my dad fixed the plug the next day, and my sister kept watching TV. So much for my measly efforts! Unplugging isn't always so simple. Sometimes we just have to wait for God to "pull the plug". (Still, I hear ya, MC - there's a time to pull the plug - just not to force our will)

Speaking of boats, the first hurdle to overcome is the realization that there is indeed a right boat and a wrong boat: (<http://www.quiteexcellent.com/thewayback.net/articles/cruise.htm>) Destinalional Cruise of a Lifetime

Re: Bill Hybels repents of the Seeker-friendly method?!, on: 2007/11/10 7:51

Quote:

intrcssr83 wrote:

Here's the report from Christianity Today:

(http://blog.christianitytoday.com/outofur/archives/2007/10/willow_creek_re.html) Willow Creek Repents?

A feature by Todd Friel from Way of the Master Radio (it's roughly around the last third) :

(<http://podcast.wayofthemasterradio.com/audio/podcasts/1107/WOTMR-11-05-07-Hour2.mp3>) Way of the Master Radio, November 5, 2007, Hour 2

I've been wanting to comment here all week but didn't have the time. So here goes... I don't know how much repentance has gone on over this and if they truly have, then great! But when I went to the website what stuck out to me was that they've written yet ANOTHER book to sell to the masses, have conferences and makes millions and for who?

I hope that as huge as they are, they go out and help people in the Chicago community not just their members.

Jesus helped the majority of people who came to him and not all followed him. My point is if we only help those who follow us and give to us, then what good are we?

I don't think they've changed their seeker sensitive ways, they've created a different approach to the same thing. Read what Greg Hawkins wrote from the link above (except it's part 2)....

3. Is Willow Re-thinking its Seeker Focus?

Â• Simple answer Â– no. My boss would say that Willow is not just seeker-focused. We are seeker-obsessed. The power of REVEALÂ's insights for our seeker strategy is the evangelistic strength uncovered in the more mature segments. If we can serve them better, the evangelistic potential is enormous, based on our findings.

The whole point from what I got from Bill Hybels video segment was that the "more mature segment" was they didn't feel they were being fed. Which is true. The seeker-sensitive church I went to for 4 years had a revolving door. People would come and stay a few years and then leave for no reason and when you'd talk to them later it was the same thing, "I was practically starving to death." We could have been a huge church with an old growth forest (in believers) had the pastor figured out that what people needed was spiritual food, not being worked to death.

If I were a betting person, I'd say that might have been the basis for willow creeks research... finding out why the "more mature segment" was leaving in droves.

But that's just my opinion! What they need is ... well, we here at SI KNOW what they need to do but won't!! LOL

God bless us all as we seek Him!!!

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/11/10 8:17

Quote:

-----the pastor figured out that what people needed was spiritual food,

It would be worth going back a few years and remember the voices that said: The church is overfed (Bible knowledge), and needs to start practicing what it knows. I remember a well-respected (godly) leader say: We don't need more of the Bible, we need more of Jesus!

(Let's admit, we were arrogant, proud of our Bible sword drills, memory contests, factual knowledge, five syllable doctrinal terms, etc.)

How can we keep from flipping the pendulum back too far the other way again? (I suppose our postmodern aversion to propositional truth will prevent that possibility)

Diane

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2007/11/10 9:11

Quote:
-----Destinational Cruise of a Lifetime

LOL. Nice link there Diane! Very appropo.

Quote:
-----Unplugging isn't always so simple

Yeah, I know. These days we moderns seem to need every aspect of our spiritual lives to be caffeinated, amplified, and above all, punctual. Well, it isn't my style to cut the television cord. (Being a man, I prefer taking control of the remote. ;-)

Maybe the prayer from the musician I quoted below, was really the cry of a worshipper trapped aboard an entertainment cruise ship. Remember Shostakovich's testimony about his 5th symphony? Beneath it's exaltant melodies you can hear the whisper of a crushed spirit, "My business is to rejoice, my business is to rejoice."

I can relate to poor Dimitri...pretending on a church stage, starving among the overstuffed, dying among the overstimulated.

We would meet in plush buildings built with our consent and money, but would have nary a cent for one another's needs, let alone the poor. We would sing of putting on garments of praise but cared nothing about the naked. We gorged ourselves with feasts and music, but we were shadows and skeletons of God's people. We reveled in exciting prophecy, but our prophecies were only straw to line our beds with at night.

And one day I didn't have to unplug anymore...one day light fell upon the stage and ruined the illusion for me. The triumphant processional was only a cardboard cavalcade, painted scenery ready to be blown over by the slightest disturbance. For another year or so I stayed on the stage out of 'loyalty'...sharing my concerns over the falseness of the festival. Of course everyone knods in deep agreement, solemn, pious. But like the governments of this world, they cannot be stopped by good intentions...the very system we turned on has become our energy source...and we must be plugged into it to stay animated. It is our IV, our massage chair, and our iron lung. The machine has taken over and we are its blissful stimulated captives. Even the pastor's eyes are rolling in the back of his head, flickering under the stimuli.

It's not the machines that need unplugged. It's us...and when we are we become heartbroken at where we find ourselves, and what we have done in church.

By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. Upon the willows in the midst of it. We hung our harps. For there our captors demanded of us songs, And our tormentors mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

In the meantime, remember...our business is to have church, our business is to have church.

Blessings sister,

MC

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/11/10 9:53

Quote:
-----remember...our business is to have church, our business is to have church.

Around here it's hockey! Church is mostly for the conservatives and seniors. I don't think we're as churchy as our friends south of the border. Maybe the plug was pulled long ago.

Quote:
-----Remember Shostakovich's testimony about his 5th symphony? Beneath it's exaltant melodies you can hear the whisper of a crushed spirit, "My business is to rejoice, my business is to rejoice."

Funny, some of the most observant people I know seem to be agnostic or athiest - also creative and artistic. At least they are free of the illusion - and just maybe, that frees them to risk talking about spiritual things.

Last night, at a benefit concert, one singer sang the most depressing songs imaginable. He (obviously) used his moment under the spotlight to vent a lot of anger at society. Everybody was mad at him, as a result. After his stint, the rest of us dutifully cheered up the atmosphere with happy songs.
I am praying for an opportunity to share Christ with this singer.

Quote:
-----In the meantime, remember...our business is to have church, our business is to have church.

Oh yes, I almost forgot, thanks for the reminder!

Diane

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2007/11/10 10:54

Quote:
-----Around here it's hockey!

Well for us, much of what goes on in our churches is hockey. (Sorry, I couldn't resist...don't take me too seriously) :-D

MC

Re: Hockey and church - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/11/12 7:27

MC said:

Quote:
----- don't take me too seriously

Why not Â– when you are on to a good analogy.

Quote:
----- much of what goes on in our churches is hockey

I never doubted this comparison! However, I admit, I had no idea just how intense this game has become in the USA until my husband had me watch a TV documentary called Â“God is on my SideÂ” which presented the religious scene in

Texas and area - the southern fundamentalists – and how tied it was to nationalism and hype!
The same day my attention was also drawn to this article in the Toronto Star:
(<http://www.thestar.com/living/Religion/article/275393>) In a Consumer Society: Browsing for belief

I ask, Is it really that bad down there !?!! My goodness, by comparison, we Canadians only play “hockey” on the back streets. (Marketing religion is nothing new here - just on a smaller scale. Mission societies, Bible colleges, etc have been doing it for some time - before Hybels was around)

MC, As your creative analogies suggest, this kind of religious sub-culture can be compared to an intensive care unit where everyone tries to keep a body alive by hitching it to numerous machines. And all the while the EEG is flat (dead brain). So, if you pull the plug, what do you have left?

As for me, on Sundays I pass mostly Amish buggies on the way to church. Now, there you see another form of the “artificial lung machine”. Mind you at least the Amish don’t permit hockey because it is a competitive sport. Likewise, their religion is not so attached to nationalism and hype. And they don’t lure me.

I am gaining an appreciation for the alarming reactions expressed by our American posters. It must surely be intensely distressing to be surrounded by this all-season hockey-like sub-culture.

I guess I needed to have my eyes opened a bit wider. Yet both reports were a drain on my spirit. Sure, the reporters exposed the shame in the house of God. But they failed to restore hope in God or his word. Likewise both failed to present anything about what God is doing, has done, or is capable of doing. So the world is still left in the dark – likely more cautious than ever to stay away from the Christian religion and especially that Bible which, as I was once told “is the cause of so much division”.

Such reports are just another offensive strategy for our relativist opponents. (they play hockey too!) Let’s be careful we don’t hit the puck back to them.

Without a doubt, I too have been guilty of presenting the dark side of the church at the expense of keeping the Light from shining brightly. But these days, more than ever, that Light needs to shine! It is the only way out of the dark.

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matt 5:16

Of course this idea is nothing new! And it certainly is not referring to artificial light.

Diane