

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: 2010/10/20 0:17

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, on: 2010/10/20 8:53

Quote:
 -----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.

None of that reflects life transformation, PERIOD!

Quote:
 -----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.

If he is asking for these church "businesses" to close down, that will never happen. Only individuals will stop worshipping

the 'gods of success' as the Holy Spirit pricks their conscience. The ungodly church system will continue. Their doors will always be "open for business".

It's all about "nickels, noses and numbers". Get all you can and can all you get.

Re: Worshiping At The Altar Of Success by David Ravenhill - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/10/20 13:50

This article is a keeper.

Lately it has been imprinted on my soul that the most dangerous place for most Christians (I knew this to be true for a non-Christian) to be on a Sunday morning is in a popular church, one that has spurned the lordship of Jesus Christ. The modern church is nothing more than a social club.

If this is the case, then why does God allow it to still exist? I do not know the answer to this question but do suspect that even though the messengers may be hell-bound, the fact they speak the name of Jesus may still be used by the Holy Spirit to convict someone and bring him to the LORD.

Success...yes, the only success we should be concerned about is one spelled O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E and that it be done joyfully. Now that is the rub. Too many times we are like the kid who was banished to the corner who says "I am sitting down but inside I am standing up!"

ginnyrose

Re: , on: 2010/10/20 14:21

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Quote:

-----The modern church is nothing more than a social club. If this is the case, then why does God allow it to still exist?

The same reason that He allows Satan, Sin and the World to exist. To try our hearts and test us to see if we will love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Yep, David's article is good. It is what God has been saying all along.

Re: Worshiping At The Altar Of Success by David Ravenhill - posted by LoveHim, on: 2010/10/20 17:57

Thank you for posting this article. I have been listening to Mr. Ravenhill's messages and I appreciate his clear-cut Jesus Christ message. There is no fluff, no tickling of the ears, just who Jesus is and what He calls us to. Mr. Ravenhill, Mr. Tozer, and Mr. Reidhead were such prophetic voices to the Ekklesia that we would do well to heed, I know I would.

Thanks