

**Articles and Sermons :: Insidious Practice of Hype by Bill Walden**

**Insidious Practice of Hype by Bill Walden - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2012/3/12 13:21**

Ecclesiastes 10:1 Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's ointment, and cause it to give off a foul odor; so does a little folly to one respected for wisdom and honor.

Solomon tells us that a small thing can negatively affect a great thing.

I wish to address what may be a small thing. There is a tendency among some church to hype things.

The word "hype" is defined as follows.

hype

verb (used with object)

1. to stimulate, excite, or agitate (usually followed by up ): She was hyped up at the thought of owning her own car.
2. to create interest in by flamboyant or dramatic methods; promote or publicize showily: a promoter who knows how to hype a prizefight.
3. to intensify (advertising, promotion, or publicity) by ingenious or questionable claims, methods, etc. (usually followed by up ).

noun

1. exaggerated publicity; hoopla.
2. an ingenious or questionable claim, method, etc., used in advertising, promotion, or publicity to intensify the effect.

Some church leadership leans in this direction. In an effort to engage congregants and attract the unbelieving world, efforts are made to convince people that they need to be at the next conference, outreach, teaching series, church service, or other event.

Words and phrases like "life changing", "revolutionary", "once in a lifetime" or "epic" are used repeatedly. I wonder if these words actually have lost their meaning to many people.

Every pastor or lay minister believes in the power of God and the power of the Gospel to change lives. I do not mean to downplay godly efforts that are blessed by our loving God.

What I am concerned with is the overstatement which some church leaders think is needed in order to convince people that they ought to attend the next event.

Are some churches inadvertently creating an "artificial excitement" and hyping people and events up, believing that necessary way to convince people to attend? Are we creating a Pavlovian response in the people, in that they feel they need to be excited because the church leaders are excited, and that the next event will be epic? It is almost as if "excitement breeds excitement", as opposed to "Jesus breeds excitement".

Please understand that I am all for being excited about the work we do. I think it is great to read a facebook post from a pastor who is excited to teach a passage, and who is inviting his church to be there. A shared excitement is not what concerns me.

What does concern me is the "little fly in the ointment", which takes the next step ever so slightly. Pastoral excitement seamlessly turns into a gentle and/or extreme hyping up of the congregant. The importance of the next series, or the n

ewest book by the pastor, is treated as a “must see, must have, must do” opportunity that the congregant dare not miss.

We who preach are all about cause and effect. We want people to be affected for their personal blessing, and for the glory of God. We want them to be affected for the purposes of the kingdom of God. We want to see people changed. Are we trusting that Jesus and the Gospel are enough of a “cause” to bring to right affect/effect?

The question we must ask ourselves is this: Am I ever so slightly using carnal means to accomplish this? Are the godly intentions and biblical methods that I use, being slightly affected by the “little flies in the ointment”? Am I planting a mixed crop of godly living which is stirred up by mixed methods and reasoning that nudge the flesh in barely discernable ways?

Are my thoughts subjective and possibly wrong? Absolutely. Am I in the place of rightly judging how another pastor reaches people? That is not my place. I have my opinions, but I have been wrong many times.

Or, there may be truth in this.

May we who serve Jesus and serve people be ruthless in our self examination of such things.

May we be careful to strain out “the little flies in the ointment”.

**Re: Insidious Practice of Hype by Bill Walden - posted by Giggles (), on: 2012/3/12 13:55**

Good word.

**Re: Insidious Practice of Hype by Bill Walden - posted by lovejt (), on: 2012/3/15 17:32**

Glad to see this article from a local pastor I know in my area. Nice to see him here in SI. Appreciate his heart. You can tell by the words...

**Re: - posted by lovejt (), on: 2012/3/15 20:18**

I actually just ran into brother Bill at a Cafe and shared this today! He was surprised to see his article on here. Praise God. :)

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