

Prophetic International

Eternal Nappies Christian Day Care

A New Low for the Christian Church?

"And now back to a familiar theme" - or so I was thinking when I started this.

Shortly before I left a church I had been part of for three and a half years, one of the regulars said: "we are really blessed here to have such good teaching." The pastor smiled and nodded, no doubt being thankful for a vote of confidence. However, for me it was yet another of life's mysteries.

To paint the full picture, this church did have a little general teaching from time to time, and it had its share of quirky irrelevant or funny (sometimes without meaning to be) teaching, but like many Pentecostal places, it rarely had any good, systematic, a joy to listen to, or meaty teaching!

A couple of months later I left because I was finally tired of not being asked to do anything, and it was obvious that despite some comments to the contrary, the pastor did not want a teacher in the house (this was confirmed because he never phoned or talked to me about leaving). However this highlighted quote from one of the regulars has certainly made me think.

Could it be that the western church in general has found a new low? Could it be that the new generations of members are now so distant from real healthy Bible teaching that it can no longer recognize it; or (like the frog placed into the slowly heating water) has it just become used to a continual comfortable rise in water temperature, so now mysteriously prefers to do without?

This possibility is quite disturbing to me. To be blunt, if this is true then the church has sentenced itself to inglorious fade out. If this is true (for at least half the western church), then I predict that the church attendance in western style countries per percentage of population will drop by up to half between the years 2005 to 2025. (I do hope I'm wrong - in fact these days as a prophet I prefer to be wrong).

The real head scratcher is that some of these churches could have good or even excellent teaching. In the years I was at the above mentioned church I was only asked to preach twice. Bad discernment has always destroyed churches and will increasingly continue to do so. There is no point being philosophical about the lack of bums on seats. The problems are mostly of our own design; we have to face the facts, when a restaurant slowly lowers the quality food it doesn't even have a fighting chance.

This is a growing problem, I am personally aware of two other good Bible teachers that now sit at home most Sundays - they also grew tired of being ignored and/or controlled. **Let the teachers teach!** I don't get around that much, so if I know of two others, there must be bucket loads of frustrated Bible teachers out there being bored to tears (literally) by bad teaching or people not even bothering to teach. Meanwhile at most churches, people occasionally drop into church for a Sunday or two but most of them are never seen again.

Is there an answer? Yes, the obvious one that's being ignored. It's that funny thing called body ministry where the ministries and gifts of the people work together.

If only! We need to pray people! small churches across the land are slowly dying, this trend toward big ones is counter productive. If the small ones can stop strangling themselves they can live again.

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