

There Are Many Deceived Church Goers

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Question: I've heard it said Baptist churches have a lot of lost people in them that think they are saved. They are at least attending the Sunday morning services. I've heard it said a lot. And it's very grieving. I was wondering how you felt about that.

Paul Washer: Well, first of all it's true. We do, and it's not just confined to Baptist. It's not confined, it's rampant in Evangelicalism today. And the reason for it is, first of all, the gospel that is preached is no gospel at all. It's a gospel reduced from Christ the God man going to a tree and dying under the wrath of His Father, and rising again from the dead, and seated at the right hand of the Father, and calling all men, commanding all men to repent and believe; and that the proof of saving faith is the continued fruit in their life. We've reduced all that down to 'five things God wants you to know.' Or 'four spiritual laws' and if you jump through each one of those and say yes, and then pray the little prayer in the back, some evangelist who should spend less time preaching, and more time studying his Bible declares you saved. I'm very opinionated with regard to this. That's just the point. So our Gospel. Second of all. I don't consider the Catholic church to ever have been a church. But when I look at the Catholic church, when I look at Anglicanism and what was going on in England. When I look at what was going on in New England, and what goes on today. It seems to me that always the devil works it out so that the great assumption is: they're saved. The least amount of time it seems eventually is given to discerning 'what is the gospel,' and whether a person is truly saved. If they just walk up front and they pray that prayer we declare them saved, and start discipling them. We should maybe be working with this person for months that they come to a biblical assurance. And so our churches are filled with lost people, and it's by and large because [of] the superficiality of pastors. And most of them have gone to church growth schemes and turned their church into a six-flags-over-Jesus. And they no more are preaching the Gospel than a man on the moon.

Mack Tomlinson: It's not just a contemporary problem. I read this week where A.W. Pink, I mean, he got pretty discouraged at times and seemed like he could be harsh. But in his day, in the 1930s and 40s, He made the statement that 'he wondered if two percent of Protestantism were born again at all in America.'

Paul Washer: Well. even one of the greatest, most well known evangelists in America today has said that 'if even five percent of all the people that have been converted in his meetings are Christian' he would be happy. And another thing that is so important is the idea of a compassionate, loving, church discipline. I find it very strange that people do not practice church discipline because they love their congregation more than Jesus does. Jesus commanded them to practice church discipline. Not upon sinful people, we're all sinful, but upon rebels who show no fruit and will not turn. And the thing that is really bad is we have just come out of liberalism. There was a move among many denominations, especially in the Southern Baptist Convention, seeing that liberalism is out. It hasn't taken us not even a decade to go right back into

neoliberalism. Which in my opinion, the new liberalism is basically the church growth movement. Where everything is done on marketing strategies, and 'tell us what kind of church you want and that's what we'll give you.' Instead of asking God what kind of bride He desires.

Bill McLeod: I have a daughter named Joanna and she professed to be saved, was baptized, joined the church. And seemed to be a very genuine Christian. When she went to school she always had a Bible on top of her school books. The principle of the school told us, "We sure like having your daughter in our school." I said, "Why?" And he said, "If there's any hanky panky going on and your daughter finds out she blows the lid off this place," he said, "We're so glad she's there." Then during the revival she came to me one night and said, "Daddy, I'd like to be saved." I said, "What? You mean you're back-slidden?" She said, "Daddy, I've never known the Lord. I knew the language, I got the language from you and mom, but I've never known the Lord." And so I led her to Christ.

And then, before the revival I had an assistant pastor. Great song leader, and great teaching children. But he was with us six or eight months and the deacons and I felt he's not producing. We had talked with him, and finally we had to ask him to leave, and he did. During the revival, he phoned me one night long distance and he said, "Last night, I was praying and God showed me that I've never been born again. Can I come down to Saskatoon and you can spend some time?" I said, "Certainly." So we came down, we got some pastors together. And he knelt, and we all knelt, and we counseled with him, and he prayed. And I'll never forget, he suddenly cried, "God is real, God is real!" What a transformation! So there's likely lots of people like that, that know the language, they've heard it from others. But they don't know the Lord.

Bob Jennings: This must have been a burden for the Lord Jesus too. Because one time it struck me that almost all, if not all of the parables that the Lord spoke had to do with this matter of true and false profession. I mean the Two Builders, the Sower and the Soils, Wheat and the Tares, the Sheep and the Goats. And just almost all of the parables have to do with this very thing.

Moderator: Anything else brothers?

Paul Washer: Greatest mission field today is the church, or what's called the church.