

Growing Numbers Do Not Guarantee Increasing Quality

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer warns against the dangers of prioritizing numbers and quantity over quality in the work of the Lord.

Scripture: Matthew 7:13

Topics: "True Discipleship", "Quality of Faith"

Description

A.W. Tozer addresses the misconception that growing numbers in the church equate to spiritual success, emphasizing that true quality in faith and practice is often sacrificed for the sake of quantity. He critiques both the isolationist approach of some Christians who prefer a select gathering and the more popular movement that prioritizes attracting large crowds without offering substantive spiritual nourishment. Tozer warns against the dangers of using gimmicks to draw people in, which can lead to a superficial understanding of the Gospel and a neglect of Christ's lordship. He calls for a return to genuine discipleship that values depth over mere attendance, urging believers to focus on the true message of Christ rather than the allure of numbers.

Transcript

The question of numbers and their relation to success or failure in the work of the Lord is one that disturbs most Christians more than a little.

. . . There are Christians, for instance, who dismiss the whole matter as being beneath them.

. . . They prefer to sit around the Lord's Table in a select and tight little circle, admiring the deep things of God and, I very much fear, admiring themselves a wee bit also. This is a kind of Protestant monasticism without the cowl and the beads, for it seeks to preserve the faith of Christ from pollution by isolating it from the vulgar masses. Its motives may be commendable, but its methods are altogether unscriptural and its spirit completely out of mood with that of our Lord.

The other and opposite school is the most vocal and has by far the largest following in gospel circles today. Its philosophy, if it can be called a philosophy, is that "we must get the message out" regardless of how we go about it. The devotees of this doctrine appear to be more concerned with quantity than with quality. They seem burned up with desire to "bring the people in" even if they have not much to offer them after they are in. They take inexcusable liberties both with message and with method. The Scriptures are

used rather than expounded and the Lordship of Christ almost completely ignored. Pressure is exerted to persuade the people (who, by the way, come to the meetings with something else in mind altogether) to accept Christ, with the understanding that they shall then have peace of mind and financial prosperity, not to mention high grades in school and a low score on the golf course.

The crowds-at-any-price mania has taken a firm grip on American Christianity and is the motivating power back of a shockingly high percentage of all religious activity. Men and churches compete for the attention of the paying multitudes who are brought in by means of any currently popular gadget or gimmick ostensibly to have their souls saved, but, if the truth were told, often for reasons not so praiseworthy as this.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/growing-numbers-do-not-guarantee-increasing-quality/>

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