

Mistaking Effect for Cause

by A.W. Tozer

Mistaking the effects of revival for its causes leads to misguided advice and spiritually damaging counsel.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, James 1:5

Topics: "Discernment", "True Revival"

Description

A.W. Tozer warns against the error of mistaking effects for causes in the church, emphasizing that sincere ministers without discernment lead to false conclusions. He critiques the notion that engaging in activities like foreign missions or social justice will automatically result in spiritual revival, arguing that these are merely effects of true revival rather than its causes. Tozer likens this misguided reasoning to a doctor advising a sick patient to play sports to regain health, highlighting the danger of such advice in spiritual matters. He calls for a deeper understanding of the true causes of revival to avoid confusion and spiritual stagnation.

Transcript

No matter how sincere they may be, ministers without discernment are sure to err. Their conclusions are inevitably false because their reasoning is mechanical and without inspiration. I hear their error in our pulpits and read it in our religious periodicals; and it all sounds alike: revived churches engage in foreign missions; hence let us plunge into missionary activity and spiritual refreshing is sure to follow. The healthy church wins souls; let us begin to win souls and we will surely be revived. The early Church enjoyed miracles, so let's begin to expect mighty signs and wonders and we will soon be like the early Church. We have neglected the "social implications" of the gospel; let us engage in political activities and charitable endeavors and all will be well again.

Miserable counselors these, and physicians of no value. Their advice is not only poor; it is spiritually damaging.

What doctor in his right mind would tell a patient dying of tuberculosis, "Healthy men play football; go out and play ball and you will regain your health"? Such advice given under such circumstances would reveal only that effect was being mistaken for cause; and that is exactly what is happening these days in religious circles. The effects of revival are being mistaken for the causes of revival. And this to the confusion of everyone concerned and to the effective blocking of the spiritual refreshing for which so many are praying.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/mistaking-effect-for-cause/>

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