

Once In Our History It Was All About Truth Part One

There was a time in our country that truth superseded all things in the church and in the Christian publishing world. However, that is not true today. Today it's all about large crowds, and money. Recently a popular author and scholar in the academic world was told by his publisher that his new book would not be popular in the church world because it was too concerned with Bible truth.

I have witnessed the birth and growth of menacing trends within the church (The Laughing Revival, Promise Keepers, The Prayer of Jabez, and The Purpose-Driven Life), several of which could be called evangelical pragmatism – an approach to ministry that is endemic in contemporary Christianity. The average Christian never researches material. They never run a simple reference to see if it is Bible or not – much less investigate to see if it lines up with the context in which a quote is made. For example, the book by Rick Warren (The Purpose-Driven Life) claims to be Bible based – but which Bible, and what Paraphrase. True, it has some excellent points, but most of the points are not from reliable translations and are taken out of context to prove a point. If there is one thing that I learned at Liberty University, it was, beware of those who do not rightly divide the Word of God. Many are caught up in pragmatism and don't even realize it. Even some well meaning Bible study groups are caught up in pragmatism. How many Bible study groups do you know that takes an open Bible and studies from its context?

Bible study is learning about God and how that He works in the affairs of man. It is not about good self-esteem, problems, success, getting my needs, and all the other things that we are told that make life fulfilling. Life can only be fulfilling to a Christian when he walks (lives) by faith. We learn this by simple study of God's Word.

Pragmatism is robbing the church. If people would only study, they would not be running around in a state of panic, or waiting on something new for the church to adopt when the old program has run its course.

What is pragmatism? Basically it is the philosophy that results determine meaning, truth, and value – what will work becomes a more important question than what is true. Now do you understand why I said pragmatism is robbing the church? As Christians, we are called to trust what God says, preach to others, and leave the results to Him. But many have set aside God's standard for the church. And as a result, Christians have no real growth. Churches have abandoned the most important thing in a Christian's life for something bigger and better. However, there is nothing bigger, better, or more important to a Christian than truth – and truth can only be found in the context of Scripture.

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