

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes for April 19-20, 1997

"Do Not Quench the Spirit"

Dale Whitehead

I Thessalonians 5:19

Part IV

The Church Growth Movement

The emphasis upon numerical growth within this movement opens the door for the quenching of the Spirit.

It begins when the emphasis on numerical growth changes our measure of what constitutes from "obedience" to "increasing numbers". Once the measure of what constitutes success changes then an environment is established which can diminish the centrality of the Scriptures in the life of the Church.

Though numerical growth should not be a measure of success it should be expected (Matthew 16:18).

We should expect that as we are faithful in the presentation of the gospel that people will come to Jesus. But we cannot in any way measure our success as a steward on this basis. We cannot do this because the growth which occurs in respect to it's timing or to it's degree has nothing to do with us, but rather God alone (1 Corinthians 3:5-7).

Once the numerical goal is established and is used to measure the success of a church in respect to it's mission the church then is vulnerable to compromising it's commitment to teach the whole counsel of the Word of God (John 6).

What does the scriptures indicate to us will be the tendency in our day and age? People will flock to those teachers who will tell them what they want to hear (2 Timothy 4:1-3).

Churches must move away from the present emphasis upon filling their buildings with people and seek rather to fill their buildings with disciples.

Establishing "seeker services" is a great strategy for filling buildings with people but ultimately it is a very dangerous strategy (1 Corinthians 5:6).