

Why Is There Chaff in My Wheat?

And Why Is Revival So Messy?

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Section 1 of 9

Introduction

In western society today, we tend to live in an artificially controlled world. We live in comfortable, climate-controlled houses. We go to work in climate-controlled office buildings. Climate-controlled malls provide us with opportunities to go from store to store, shopping to our heart's content, without worrying about the weather. Of course we get there in our climate-controlled car. On our home computers we can even live out virtual fantasies in cyberspace with no need to relate with the real world at all.

Our society has become a consumer-oriented culture. We have become disassociated with the processes that produce our food, homes, and the vast array of manufactured goods that we use every day. Because we only interact with the finished products, that's what we naturally focus on. The only waste we normally see is the packaging our products come in. This has migrated into the financial world as well. Before the introduction of limited liability companies (corporations in the United States), investors had to actually know how to operate a business to make money. They had to know both the process that made the goods they sold and the market they sold them in. Investors in limited liability companies could leave these details in the hands of the corporate officers. The investors became disassociated from the products that the corporations made. This caused a shift in focus from the process of production to the financial bottom line. Many businesses have had their manufacturing processes harmed and therefore suffered long range financial damage because of short sighted decisions made to satisfy the financial bottom line. We're no longer in touch with the realities of life that produce the things we need to survive. Our consumer culture is focused only on the finished product and the bottom line. All of this has given us a society that is somewhat out of touch with many realities necessary to our existence.

This consumer culture mindset has also come into the church. Most of the focus goes to the bottom line: how many people and the size of the offering. We have become Christian consumers instead of producing Christians. We are very thankful for the evangelism that is occurring and every soul that is won to the Lord. However, with very few exceptions, the majority of the members of our churches were ready-made Christians who came from other churches. Most church growth strategies do not focus on how to produce new Christians, but only on how to attract more Christians to the church's facilities. We've become master recyclers moving the Christian population from church to church. Because we see new faces in church we've fooled ourselves into believing that we're dynamic, alive, and impacting our world.

A reality check outside the four walls of the church reveals that the Church in the western world is in decline. Year by year Christians have become a smaller segment of the population (in both real and per capita numbers). And the morality of western societies has declined right along with the Church. The growing unchurched population in western countries sees the Church as

irrelevant. Our influence in our society has waned to the point that our critics openly call the believing church “politically incorrect.” The anti-Christian laws that are being enacted today are a simple reflection of this fact. We have trusted in our laws to keep us safe, but laws are not our salvation. The next election will not save us. Political parties are not our salvation. Charismatic candidates espousing the correct rhetoric are not our salvation either. Our government won’t save us and our constitution cannot save us. We need to repent for looking to these things for our salvation. The only one who can save our people and our land is the Lord Jesus Christ. A revival that impacts our land and turns the hearts of our people back to Him is the only way we can turn things around. We must change from being Christian consumers and learn again how to produce Christians.

There are reports of isolated outbreaks of revival in the land. Rumors of miracles and changed lives are circulating. It’s said that people are being overcome by the power of God and falling down in a jumble on the floor. There are rumors of strange manifestations that come in too much variety to recount them all. It has been said that meetings have been interrupted and speakers have been unable to finish their messages when the power and glory of God has settled down upon them. By all accounts it is very disorderly and messy.

Is this right? Should it be this way? In this study we will look in the Bible for our answers. First we’ll answer our title question and explore the mystery of the relationship between wheat and chaff. Then we’ll see how this relates to the role afterbirth plays in the life of a baby. We’ll look at what it takes to build something of value in the Kingdom of God. The scriptures will reveal to us the fact that there are some things beyond our ability to know at all. We’ll see why there are problem people wherever we go. Finally, we’ll see what our study has to tell us about our second question: “Why is revival so messy?”

The Bible passages we’ll be studying all assume that the reader is familiar with the real world illustrations that are used. As we noted above, we tend to live in an artificial world with a consumer mindset. So we’ll reintroduce ourselves with the realities of life that the illustrations expect us to know. Are you excited? Are you ready to grow? Then come along with me and I’ll give you “An Ode to Reality.”