

Is Hyperactivity Real Discipleship?

Written by Josh Winslett

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Recently I have noticed a disturbing trend among Christianity. I have been guilty of the trend many times in my life and did not necessarily even know I was guilty. The trend will be detrimental to Christianity in America. The trend is replacing personal discipleship with hyperactivity. You may ask what the last statement means. Replacing personal discipleship with hyperactivity means that although a person may be very active in many church activities, they have almost completely ignored personal discipline and self control. We can easily be active in every church event on the calendar and not walking close to our Savior. People can seek their self fulfillment from religious hyperactivity and not through repentance towards God.

A person can be involved in evangelism, feeding the poor and widows, bible studies, and other church events; yet not be pleasing God with their words, actions, ethics, and intentions of their heart. Always remember, we are not just disciples when we are at formal worship or other church functions. We are the Church all the time. When we cuss, steal, fornicate, make sinful jokes, we are displeasing to God even if we are hyperactive in different church activities.

American Christianity is stepped in non-biblical auxiliaries that can often distract the believer from the primary goal of penitent service towards God. I fear that these auxiliaries are more mind numbing distractions than growth mechanisms. Nevertheless, that is a topic for another day. Continuing on, we often equate hyperactivity with true discipleship by quoting many passages from James 1 and 2. Whereas repentance and conversion should always lead to action (faith without works is dead), actions must always first come from a penitent person. Works only come from a person that is self aware and actively trying to conform their lives to emulate that of Christ's. Yes we often fail but that should not be a crutch for apathy to sin. Notice Christ's admonitions to two of the seven Churches at Asia; Ephesus and Laodicea.

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To Ephesus: **Revelation 2:2-4**, *"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."*

Ephesus seemed to be a very hyperactive church. I dare say that any church would wish to have the description given in verses 2 and 3. Yet Jesus tells the church at Ephesus that they were doing all the right things without the proper motivation. They had left their first love. Instead of serving God from deep love for him, every action was done out of necessity and repetitious tradition. If they would not take heed to Jesus' words they would have their candle stick taken from them. Hyperactivity without the proper motivation seems to be very serious.

To Laodicea, **Revelation 3:14-17**, *"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:"*

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Laodicea was a church that I believe best describes general Christianity in America. This church was complacent and didn't even know it. They were not self aware or self disciplined. The church at Laodicea felt, well, comfortable. God relays to them through John that if they fell to repent, he would vomit them from his mouth. God considers complacent Christians the same as vomit; quite sobering.

You may say, "I am not complacent, I attend all the church functions." As I stated early, actions without proper motivation and/or situational ethics are not true service. This is not passing judgement on anyone. We are our answerable with are own conscience to God. Yet, there is a continually theme of God's disapproval of sacrificial action without a penitent heart. Study the following verses; Ezekiel 33:31, Isaiah 23:19, Matthew 15:8, Mark 7:6-7.

Take note of these verses for what God truly desires from his children.

Psalms 51:16-17, *"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God,*

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thou wilt not despise.

Dear reader, repentance and discipleship are more than just hyperactivity. Christianity is more than just a show. True service starts from the heart and is self aware, penitent, and ever seeking to glorify the Lord in EVERY action; not just the ones "at" church. God desires more than just lip service. He commands more than an outward show of Christianity. He deserves more than mediocrity. Whether at work, in your family, with your friends, at school; He deserves our ALL. This subject is of a serious nature. It is serious enough that God has taken away the identity of churches and nations over this issue. So, what is the cure? I will step off my soap box, stop rambling, and leave you with Joel 2:12-13.

Joel 2:12-13, *"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."*

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