

WHY IS THE CHURCH NOT GROWING? PART II

Last week we examined two reasons why the church is not growing as it should. This week, I wish to examine two more reasons why the church is not growing as it should: apathy and ignorance.

One of the main reasons that the church is not growing is apathy. Society has long taught that man needs to look out for himself alone, and this idea has found its way into the church. Millions upon millions of souls in this world are lost in sin, and many in the Lord's church could not care less! In many instances, it is not that members of the Lord's church don't know that their friends, neighbors, relatives, etc., are lost. They even realize that it is their responsibility to take the gospel to them, but they just don't care! Apathy finds itself cloaked in all kinds of excuses. "I'm just too busy," "I don't have the money to support that work," "that is why we pay the preacher," are just some of the excuses in which apathy attempts to hide. The Lord disdains apathy. Consider the following passages—Lk. 12:16-21, James 2:15-17, and I Jn. 3:17. These passages deal with those who are apathetic to the physical needs of those around them. However, those who are indifferent to the physical needs of their fellow man are equated with those in whom the love of God does not dwell and those who have a dead faith! The church certainly cannot grow if apathy is cultivated and nourished. Apathy will kill church growth (Rev.3:14-17).

The greatest problem the church faces concerning obstacles to church growth is ignorance. Ignorance has given rise to apathy, materialism, and ecumenism. When I say ignorance I do not mean a lack of knowledge concerning the goings-on of this world. I speak concerning a lack of knowledge of, and an even greater inability to apply the knowledge gained from God's word. The world has always attacked the Holy Word of God, and these attacks grow louder every day. Despite the attacks, the Bible stands tried and true. No attack man may muster will ever destroy the inerrant word of God (1 Pet.1:25). In spite of this futility, many have chosen to lay God's word upon the shelf and take up the theories and opinions of a world determined to destroy Christianity. Too many Christians have fallen prey to this attack. The church of our Lord was once known as a Bible-toting, Scripture-quoting people. Sadly, most in the Lord's church today cannot even give book, chapter, and verse as to what one must do to be saved (Hos.4:6). The church will never grow as long as those in the Lord's church do not know who their enemy is, or what sin is. The church will never grow as long as those in the Lord's church do not know beyond a shadow of a

doubt that those who are outside of Christ, outside of the church of Christ, those who have not been baptized for the remission of sins, are lost, doomed to an eternity in hell unless they obey the gospel (Eph.2:12; 2 Thess.1:7-9)! Until we are convinced of this, the church cannot, and will not grow.

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