

What is Wrong with the Entertainment Driven Church? Titus 2:1

Introduction:

1. There was a church that Jesus rebuked in **Revelation 3:14-19**. This church was very needy, yet in verse 17 Jesus reveals their attitude. They thought they had need of nothing. They were wealthy and prosperous and thought they had need of nothing.
 - This is an accurate snapshot of so many churches today.
 - Many churches are like the church at Laodicea. They are wealthy, prosperous, enjoy big crowds, big buildings, and big budgets, yet they are spiritually anemic.
2. In an effort to maintain outward prosperity, many churches have become entertainment driven. Many churches believe that you can best draw the masses by taking the Christian faith and wrapping it in a package of entertainment.
3. As one author wrote, "We live in a society that embraces the superficial, lives to play, will pay almost any amount of money to be amused, and prizes fun as the highest pursuit of life."
4. Should the church cater to our culture's insatiable appetite for entertainment? Should we give them what they want? Should we take the gospel and sugarcoat it with a glaze of amusing entertainment? Wouldn't more people accept it if we did?
5. In this message, we will examine these questions, and get answers from God's Word. We will examine two of Paul's epistles to his sons in the faith (Titus and 2 Timothy).

What are the inherent dangers of entertainment?

1. It is no big secret that we live in an entertainment crazed society. People feel that it is their absolute, inalienable right to be amused constantly. This was the case at Crete. **Titus 1:12**
2. In our culture, the ultimate sin is to be bored. Children have cable TV, DVD players, movies, radios, endless toys, board games, video games, hand-held games, computers, etc., and still complain, "I'm bored."
3. What are the inherent dangers in digesting large doses of entertainment on a daily basis?
 - **It requires little thinking and reasoning. 2 Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14** ("fables" - a tale, fiction)
 - The word "amuse" comes from "muse" which means "to think" and the alpha prefix "a" means "to negate" or "not."
 - To amuse oneself essentially means **"to not think."**
 - Webster's says the word amuse suggests that one's attention is engaged lightly or frivolously.
 - Entertainment often trivializes life and the serious things of life. It would be the opposite of what the Bible calls sober-mindedness.
 - **Its main business is to please the crowd or person. 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:11**
 - As a rule, it has no regard for your well-being or your child's spiritual well-being.
 - Entertainment is selling a product, so it must please the crowd. It is man-centered by its very nature.
 - **It is usually about self-gratification. 2 Timothy 3:2,4; Titus 1:15-16**
 - "Self" is seated on the throne and says, "Entertain me and amuse me."
 - **It depends on emotional manipulation. 2 Timothy 3:13** ("seducer" - a wizard, an imposter); **Titus 1:10**

How has entertainment in our culture impacted the church today?

1. Churches have "dumbed down" Christianity.
 - They offer short little sermonettes that are basically self-help talks. Bible terminology has been abandoned. Songs of substance are replaced with songs that are shallow and lacking pure doctrine. Drama and entertainment have replaced solid Bible teaching. Doctrine is down-played. Music takes precedence over the Bible. The preacher's performance becomes more important than what is taught.
2. The church's focus begins with people's felt needs.
 - Remember, the first goal of entertainment is to please the crowd.
 - A study of John 6 would be helpful. This is the day Jesus lost His crowd.
3. The church's focus is to make church fun and make people feel good about themselves.
 - Churches want to fulfill that desire in people for self-gratification.
4. The church thinks if they move the emotions, they have been successful.
 - Churches design their services to touch the body and soul, but true spiritual change takes place at the spirit level through God's Word. **1 Thessalonians 2:13**
 - Sermons of substance are replaced by emotional appeals.

How should the church respond to our entertainment-driven culture?

1. Our focus must be to study and teach God's Word. **Titus 1:9, 2:1; 2 Timothy 2:7, 15, 3:14-17**
 - In **2 Timothy 2:7** the word "consider" means to "exercise the mind, to comprehend" and the word "understanding" means "a mental putting together, intelligence, intellect."
 - As you can see, Christianity is designed to be a **thinking** faith. God desires for His people to consider, reason, analyze, study, and understand.
 - The masses may want a dumbed down, entertaining form of Christianity, but God's Word forbids it. It is not what people **need**. Entertainment will not create a lasting change of the heart; only the solid food of God's Word will transform lives. **2 Timothy 3:16-17; Titus 2:1-2**
 - This is why Paul told Timothy in **2 Timothy 4:2**, "Preach the Word..."
2. Our focus should be to please the Lord. **2 Timothy 2:2-4**
 - Entertainment is all about pleasing the crowd or the person. Churches today have bought into this concept and designed their churches and sermons to please people. What will bring popularity, crowds, and money determines the program.
 - Paul never led Timothy or Titus to believe that he could have a Bible-based ministry and be widely popular. **2 Timothy 1:8, 15, 2:2-4, 9, 11-12**
3. Our focus must be to tell people the truth about themselves. **2 Timothy 4:2-4; Titus 1:13-14**
 - As we said, entertainment's focus is to satisfy the person's desire for self-gratification.
 - Paul lists this as a sign of perilous times in the last days. **2 Timothy 3:1-2, 4; Isaiah 30:9-10**
 - He commands Timothy to deny the temptation to tell people what they **want** to hear, but rather to tell people what they **need** to hear. **2 Timothy 4:2-4**
 - Paul said that the gospel is an offence to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles (**1 Corinthians 1:23**), but the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth (**Romans 1:16**).

- In an effort to make the gospel entertaining and palatable, we have removed its power. It's the clear, straightforward preaching of the gospel that changes lives.
1 Corinthians 1:17, 18, 21, 2:4
4. Our focus must be to see people repent and accept the truth of God. **2 Timothy 2:24-26**
- Many churches have entirely wrong goals. Their goal is to insure that attendees have fun, have a good time, and leave happy and feeling good about themselves. They touch the emotions as all good entertainment does.
 - Unfortunately, none of these goals can be found in Scripture. The church's job is to confront people with the truth of God (in love and meekness), and seek repentance on the part of those who are enslaved to Satan.
 - This requires systematic teaching and preaching of God's truth. Preachers have become expert entertainers, but woefully pitiful at rightly dividing the Scripture and teaching pure doctrine. **2 Timothy 2:15, 4:2-3; Titus 1:9**
 - Only the proclamation of pure, unadulterated truth will set people free. **John 8:32**