Grace to You :: *esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Junk Food
Scripture: 1 Peter 2:2
Code: B111107



We all know an exclusive diet of Big Macs isn't just a bad idea—it's more like suicide. But it's even worse to gobble down the half-eaten burgers and cold rubbery fries you find under the back seat of your car. Repulsive, right? But Christians are doing the very same thing.

It wasn't that long ago that Bill Hybels stood in front of his church—Willow Creek, one of the early pioneers of church growth theory—with his *mea culpa*. (I'd link to the video of Hybels saying, "We made a mistake," but they've apparently pulled it from their website. But here's a link to an early newsflash.) After decades of practicing church growth principles, Hybels said, "Some of the stuff that we have put millions of dollars into thinking it would really help our people grow and develop spiritually, when the data actually came back, it wasn't helping people that much." Yeah, kinda like fast food.

Today's church-growth gurus have repackaged the same church-growth theories in cool-sounding, ministry buzzwords like *incarnational*, *missional*, and *attractional*. After a few bites, it becomes apparent that it's nothing more than half-eaten burgers and cold fries. And it's not a meal that gets better with age.

One of the more distasteful aspects of the contemporary version of church growth is the franchising, the brand propagation. Cookie-cutter churches are popping up everywhere, powered by church-growth principles, launched with shrewd marketing strategies, legitimized by impressive stats, and stamped with the brand of the celebrity leader and his church franchise. In some cases, you'll even find the evangelical version of a PlayPlace and a clown. It's a pattern that works, established by corporate, coming to a church near you.

That's why John's last post was so helpful. Like an authoritative label from the FDA, he was able to peel off the wrapper, put the cold fries under the microscope, and tell us what's lacking. Many of the meals served in the chain-churches lack a high view of Scripture, a high view of God, and a biblical view of the church. Buyer beware.

A generation raised on Happy Meals has a hard time understanding what's wrong with Big Macs and Quarter Pounders. They need to learn a new diet, which is what we endeavor to teach in the coming months on the GTY blog. Ronald McDonald may not be happy—could cut into his bottom line—but we want Christians to eat well, grow strong, and become mature. We'll map out the course in the

next post.

Travis Allen
Director of Internet Ministry

Available online at: http://www.gty.org

COPYRIGHT (C) 2024 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (https://www.gty.org/about#copyright).