

Heretical “Purpose Driven” Church principles have been used to push “contemporary” worship

Why bring up the Rick Warren problem? Because his specious methods are being used by pastors to insert the modern contemporary rock music into the church.

Many church members are being driven out of their churches by pastors who were set on modernizing their worship services by borrowing from pop culture. They are sheep driven out of the flock by the very shepherd who was suppose to protect them. Of all the problems that are involved in the so-called “worship wars,” this one is so scandalous. It is a systemic problem within the modern worship movement and is not accidental. It is “purposeful.”

The new pastor at South Norfolk Baptist in 1993, previously referenced in another paper on this webpage, followed the Rick Warren method of the “purpose driven church,” who’s growth materials urged changing their worship services.

Here’s how it worked then, and still works now. The pastor’s noble purpose is to reach more unbelievers for Christ. How? By attracting them with modern worship services of relevant pop music and messages that affirm their own selves. Reduce or eliminate all the boring parts of the service and eliminate all the old “traditional” worship, because the un-churched were polled and said they didn’t like that. (This hidden agenda of polling is addressed in a previous paper on this page.) Now, the pastor wanted to make the un-churched feel comfortable by removing all the “righteous” standards and dress casually (and this includes the choir, now called “praise singers.”)

The pastor has to keep the young people under age 30 from leaving the church, so he keeps them interested by promoting one of their generation to “worship leader,” a position that is not biblical.

Next, to help his flock worship God more intimately, they must experience a great emotional feeling that God is really present in the worship time...just like the worship at the pastor training conferences he attended. Enter the charismatic side of the pastor, lifting up “holy hands,” and all the other unbiblical emotional clap-trap.

To connect his little church to the “church at large,” the pastor initiates breaking out of the sectarian and denominational boxes, seeking unity. This is what happened starting in 1993, when the pastor left the Virginia Baptist General Association, and opted into the fundamentalist conservative movement group.

Sounds good, but the pastor also had to deal with some unpleasant little side effects, i.e., some of the members of his church had legitimate concerns about the methods

and outright worldliness of the entertainment-driven mindset invading their church.

Rick Warren to the rescue with his “Purpose Driven Church” movement, which, to date, has trained over 400,000 of these fundamentalist/evangelical pastors. He taught the pastors in sessions starting in 1995: “Once you have decided on the style of music you’re going to use in worship, you have set the direction of your church in far more ways than you realize. It will determine the kind of people you attract, the kind of people you keep, **and the kind of people you lose.**” (from Warren’s “The Purpose-Driven Church,” p. 280.)

Now sheep are expendable for the sake of the greater cause of increasing church attendance numbers. And the pastor who came to South Norfolk in 1993, carried on this insensitive attack on good Christians with other comments such as, “the pillars of the church are there to hold things up,” a rebuke clearly targeted at members of a church who resisted his programs. He even called up some deacons on the telephone, and told them to resign!

Of course this pastor, and others of his ilk, ran, and still run into stiff resistance from mature members who rightfully questioned the pastor’s motives and methods. The current pastor has been repeatedly questioned by senior members of the church, both in leadership positions and other workers, with a reply, “that’s the way it’s going to be,” response, which is, in essence, **“throwing you off the bus.”**

The “church growth movement” has pushed other business principles, especially those by author Jim Collins, whose book, “Good to Great,” states that he sees four stages for building great organizations, and if people don’t ultimately cooperate, then they should “get off the bus.”

Rick Warren to the rescue again: he now responded with “The Purpose-Driven Life,” a book that indoctrinated the sheep into his worship philosophies and broke down their resistance to change.

If 40 days failed to convert or drive out the unfit sheep, the pastor would continue to put on the pressure in sermons; and the pastor at South Norfolk did. One of this man’s sermons was so forgettable: “Stinking Thinking,” in which he castigated the South Norfolk congregation. “People are dying and going to hell because you won’t change your worship; God is doing a new thing and you need to get out of his way; we will lose all the young people because of your personal preferences; for those who disagree, there are other churches in this town.”

Just before the present pastor came, one associate youth pastor publicly rebuked the senior adults in another forgettable sermon, in which he physically stripped off his suit, tie, white shirt, and pants, to reveal jeans, and other old clothes underneath! Talk about harassment! And the senior members are still being ignored to date: budget allotments to senior’s programs as well as their promotion, has dropped.

And then Peter Drucker, the management guru, is one of Rick Warren's mentors. Is it any wonder then, that Purpose-Driven pastors now see themselves as leaders who must "get all the right people on the bus, and all the wrong people off the bus?"

(My thanks to Dan Lucaroni's book, "It's Not About the Music" which gave me deeper insight into the problem of contemporary music from the "purpose driven" standpoint.)