

Craig and Moreland on The Church Condition and It's Relevance on Indonesian Churches

Author: Vincent Tanzil

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In their (latest?) book, 'Philosophical Foundation of a Christian Worldview' Craig and Moreland is proposing a view about the church's condition as this:

'Despite their Christian commitment, they remain largely empty selves. What is an empty self? An empty self is a person who is passive, sensate, busy and hurried, incapable of developing an interior life. Such person is inordinately individualistic, infantile and narcissistic.

Imagine now a church filled with such people. What will be the theological understanding, the evangelistic courage, the cultural penetration of such a church? If the interior life does not really matter all that much, why should one spend the time trying to develop an intellectual, spiritually mature life? If someone is basically passive, he will just not make the effort to read, preferring instead to be entertained. If a person is sensate in orientation, then music, magazines filled with pictures, and visual media in general will be more important than mere words on a page or abstract thoughts. If one is hurried and distracted, one will have little patience on theoretical knowledge and too short attention span to stay with an idea while it is being carefully developed. And if someone is overly individualistic, infantile and narcissistic, what will that person read, if he reads at all? Books about Christian celebrities, Christian romance novels imitating the worst that the world has to offer, Christian self-help books filled with slogans, simplistic moralizing, lots of stories and pictures, and inadequate diagnoses of the problem facing the reader. What will not be read books that equip people to develop a well-reasoned, theological understanding of the Christian faith and to assume their role in the broader work of the Kingdom of God. Such a church will become impotent to stand against the powerful forces of secularism that threaten to wash away Christian ideas in a flood thoughtless pluralism and scientism. Such a church will be tempted to measure her success largely in terms of numbers - numbers achieved by cultural accommodation to empty selves. In this way, the church will become her own grave-digger; for her means of short-term 'success' will turn out in the long run to be the very thing that buries her.' (p. 5)

Is this how our church looks like? If so what should we do? Indonesia is known for its tendency to imitate what is popular in the west (New Age, Culture, Video, Cinemas, Lifestyle). Is what Craig and Moreland said about the church are also coming to Indonesia? Do we have any stopping power? Discussion would be warmly welcomed!

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See more at www.vincenttanzil.wordpress.com