

Impressed with Numbers

Dub McClish

We notice it when a business or service attracts a large clientele. An advertisement recently stated, “15 million people can’t be wrong.” Likewise, when a religious group manifests rapid numerical growth in a short period, some say, “They must be doing something right.”

Whether intended or not, the foregoing expression implies that right and wrong behavior in morals and/ or religion may be gauged by the number of people involved. Does the number of adherents of a certain religious persuasion say anything about whether or not it teaches or practices true religion? The only source of true religion and morality – the Bible – answers with a resounding and emphatic, “No!”

Although majorities often prevail, the majority is not always right. Objective facts and truths are not subject to or affected by majority thinking or behavior. Ninety percent of mankind might deny that $2+2=4$, but 4 would still be the sum of $2+2$. North would still be north, even if all of mankind decided it was south.

This principle’s ultimate application is in religion and morals, in which areas the majority has almost always been wrong. History reveals only two occasions when a majority of men chose to serve God faithfully:

1. Adam and Eve before they sinned in Eden and
2. Noah and his family.

In all the rest of human history, the vast majority of mankind has lived in rebellion against God. The “many” continue to choose the broad way of destruction, while only a few find the narrow gate and way that lead to life (Mat. 7:13-14).

True religion and morality rest upon unchanging, objective principles that are unrelated to and unaffected by the numbers of people who believe or behave in a certain way. These principles remain constant and are no less true, even if all men repudiate them. Error in religion is error, even if multitudes believe and practice it. Truth is no less Truth if only a handful honor it.

Only fools would argue that automobiles are capable of writing their own operation manuals. It is no less foolish to argue that men are capable of writing their own “operation manuals.” In both cases, only the creator is capable of writing the “manual” for his creation. The Bible is God’s “manual” for men: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16).

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