

Using The Church Rather Than Being A Blessing

Over the years, countless businesses were built upon using people. This is not necessarily sinful, but without a doubt, they use people: whether Amway, Mary Kay, vitamins, or investments, most of these are legal, but we want them to stay out of our church.

Providing for their families is the pressure all of our members face. Of course, we love one another and want to help each other, but using your church members as prospects is wrong.

Some years ago, one of our good men got his license to sell auto insurance. He had passed all the tests and was excited to begin. He told me something like this, "Just think of all the church members I can sell insurance to." I kindly responded, "Yes, ABSOLUTELY NONE!" This a church, not a place for you to get prospects; go elsewhere to sell your services.

On occasion, someone brings his "business" into the church. Church members become prospects and are literally used by "up line" business members. I have found these people to be worse than those selling lambs and exchanging money in the temple. These people create false hopes; they use people; and the root philosophy of gaining wealth unscripturally is taught. Occasionally, over the years, I have stood in the pulpit and explained the following principles. I find myself needing to make this principle clear at least once a decade (sometimes twice); I want people to keep their business out of our church. We have many craftsmen and professionals in our church who offer services to the world: mechanics, carpenters, bankers, loan officers, real estate brokers, and many others. I always let these professionals know that before they interact business with a church member, they should send the church member to someone on staff before the relationship begins. This policy protects the church from the wolves in sheep's clothing. An honest man has no problem getting a referral; a man who is bothered by needing a referral from leadership is a man who has something to hide. These are the basic principles I outline from the pulpit when needed.

Let me quickly get to the point: church members are not prospects! When you get paid a wage for an hour of work, that is a job. How can you tell the difference?

I have listed signs of the wrong kind of business (not sinful, just something we WANT TO KEEP OUT OF OUR CHURCH):

1. When I get paid for bringing my friends into your business (that is a pyramid scheme).
2. When the first thing I need to do is buy, invest, or change my world, and the person above me makes money off my investment.
3. When I need to go to weekly meetings to get pumped up (not sinful, just a sign).
4. When my church asks me to keep my business out of church and I get mad at my church. (That is one of the final signs of missing the point of Matthew 6:33, "Seek ye first...")
5. When I am invited to a home for a mystery meeting and have no idea of the goal of the meeting; it is a scam. It is a fraudulent business that must be covered and camouflaged in order to get you involved (we call that deceitful). Deceit is not a Christian attribute. McDonald's sells food; Arco sells gasoline and food; Walmart sells everything; there are big signs out front -- they need not hide anything; they are HONEST.
6. When the business promises great pay and amazing success with little effort. Of course, once you join, you are told you need to work the business to succeed, but that is not the selling point -- again, we call that deceitful. Again, deceit is not a Christian attribute.

In summary, our church members are here for church, not to be your prospects! Come to church to serve, to learn, to give, and to help. Come to church to be a friend, to go soul winning, to teach a class, to participate in the rest home ministry or jail or bus ministry. Do not come to church thinking of who you might "recruit." I love our military, but I do not want a recruiter coming to church looking to get others to sign up. That is deceitful. Deceitfulness is not a Christian attribute.

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