

Pop Psychology.

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1 Timothy 4:16; “Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

Tyler Cowen once said about pop psychology books that; “The more of these books you read, you’re learning about some of your biases, but you’re making some of your other biases essentially worse. So the books themselves are part of your cognitive bias.” To illustrate what Cowen is saying here, I was waiting for the girls at Tygervally Centre last evening as we were going to have supper together, and chanced to spend that time in Exclusive Books. So I walked through the Psychology section and immediately picked up a few consistent titles such as; “Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff”; “How to Stop Worrying and start Living”; “Stop Thinking start Living”; “How to get from where you are to where you want to be”, and; “It’s not what you say, it’s how you say it”. Then I moved on to the Religion Section next to it and picked up a number of similarities such as; “Good health, Good life”; “The Approval Fix”; “Your best life Now”; “Get your hopes up”; and “Building Your Self-Image”. I don’t know about you but there is no difference between the shelves. Pop Psychology has invaded our television shows and advice columns, is thriving in the self-help industry, and, it seems to be alive and kicking in the pulpit as well where you have series such as “Seven Steps to a Healthy Marriage”; Three Steps to Obedient Pets”; and “Five Ways on having Contagious Success”. Now, when you look into the latter, this brand of writing and preaching which is intended to be appealing to the culture at large is devoid of the Gospel and its true message. But here’s the deal, the culture around us see right through it. The truth is this, relevance at the expense of the Gospel, can only result in one thing, and that is distancing many even further from the church. So the question is, do we follow the winds of today’s evangelical church culture, or do we consider Paul’s timeless strategy for evangelism (**Acts 17: 26 – 28**) that doesn't overreact, under-react ,counteract, distort, dilute, manipulate and, thereby negate the proclamation of a biblically faithful, never-changing gospel, that it is always being contextually appropriate ?