

Conclusion...

The religious catch words and phrases sound impressive to those who do not discern the word of God wisely. This practice plays upon the insatiable desire to sound religious. It takes little involvement before the practice is involuntary, and eventually quite ridiculous ("My brother won a trip to Hawaii, praise the Lord!"). It pleases the emotions and ears of men (II Tim 4:3 & 4), but is not rooted in the firm truth of God's holy word. Such language cannot help but become profane and vain babbling (II Tim 2:16). Beware!

NEWSWORTHY NOTES:

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IF I WERE A SOLDIER
by Bob Pulliam

*If I were a soldier, a hero I'd be.
I'd valiantly fight against all enemies.
I'd never desert my dear comrades in arms,
subjecting them to a bold enemies harm.
The General would give me a medal of gold,
and with that reward great respect I would hold.*

*But now in God's service true danger I face;
a soldier compelled to this perilous race.
I "can't" get to services where comrades meet.
It seems with dishonor I accept my defeat.
The greatest commander in all of creation,
gives me my medal - my own condemnation.*

KEPT AWAY BY HYPOCRITES

(Author Unknown)

The man who says he is kept away from church by hypocrites is not influenced by them anywhere else. Business is full of them, but they do not keep him from business. Society is crowded with them, and yet he never thinks of becoming a hermit. Married life is full of them, but that does not make him remain a bachelor. Hell is full of them, and yet he isn't doing anything to keep from going there. He makes you think that he is trying to avoid the association of hypocrites, and yet he makes not a single step toward the only place where there will be no hypocrites. Do you think he is being hypocritical about going to church?

THE SPIRITUAL HICCUPS

by Bob Pulliam

We all know what the hiccups are, and most of us have experienced them first hand. Although we know what they are, a definition is important for the point of this article; so please bear with me. Webster defines *hiccup* as, "a sudden, involuntary contraction of the diaphragm that closes the glottis at the moment of breathing in so that a sharp, quick sound is produced" (Webster's New World Dictionary, p660). Notice that hiccups are *sudden and involuntary*.

I have had many occasions to wonder about the speech of the religious world abroad. They say "praise the Lord" and "hallelujah" in every other sentence. And if they aren't using those they are saying "amen". Some have wondered why members of the church don't engage in such. Others, with perhaps a better view of things, wonder why people in the religious world do it. Either view-point presents a question that should be answered from the Bible.

Spiritual Hiccups...

If you pay very close attention, I believe you will come to the same conclusion as myself. These religious words, or phrases, have become *sudden and involuntary* on the part of the speaker. A phenomenon we might call "spiritual hiccups". A great many of these people never think about where they are inserting these words and end up putting them in the silliest places. I am not attacking their motives. I have no doubt that they

believe their actions to be just and beneficial; but believing such does not make it so.

Two Problems...

I see two fundamental problems with the constant use of "praise the Lord", "hallelujah", and "amen" in every other sentence. The first is introduced above. The action becomes involuntary. Praising God does not come simply by speaking the words "praise the Lord". It is action prompted by intention that constitutes praise. We can open an hymnal and sing every song in it and never praise God. If the words are not offered with the spirit and the understanding, they hold no benefit (John 4:24; I Cor 14:15).

The second problem is found in a familiarity with the scriptures. Even the apostle Paul didn't talk the way these people speak today. When Paul *did* praise the Lord, he made it clear that he was cognizant of his words. Today you'll hear something like, "I took my fish to the vet and he's still alive, praise the Lord!" Or perhaps, "This sure is a beautiful day. Amen?" Speaking according to the scriptures does not manifest itself in selected phrases that pop out in one's speech every ten seconds. Speaking as the oracles of God involves speaking what God inspired men to write (*i.e.* the New Testament). ***And one's speech is irrelevant if the life and worship of the individual is out of keeping with God's will.*** Why the emphasis on three or four phrases when so much of the scriptures are being ignored? For example, Paul thanked God that the Romans had "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which" they were delivered (Rom 6:17). Oh yes, Paul thanked God; but do you know what that *form of doctrine* involved?... Baptism for the purpose of gaining eternal life (see vv 1 - 7). Try to find that in the teachings of a person that has the "spiritual hiccups"! You won't!

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Something to Think About...

Too many of us are like the old deacon who prayed, "Use me, O Lord, in thy work - especially in an advisory capacity."