

have been so "wowed" by these theatrics that they could never sit in an ordinary Bible Study, where the text is critically applied.

Insecure religion must quote the Bible, while drawing attention away from the Bible. This is not hard to do with the popular social gospel. Those who love truth want religion that enthrones God in the heart, rather than in the trite use of phrases (*i.e.* "hallelujah, praise the Lord"; "praise God, amen, and amen"; etc...), and emotionalism.

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Sunday: Bible Study 10:00am
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Wednesday: Bible Study 7:30pm

JUDGE NOT
by Bob Pulliam

Perhaps it seems that speaking the truth becomes too forthright at times. Perhaps it would seem that I am judging you (or someone else). Jesus said, "Judge not, that you be not judged" (Mt 7:1). But if you will look at the context of that passage, you will find that Jesus was speaking of judging others in hypocrisy. Note the very next verse, "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." (Mt 7:2)

Now Jesus also said, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." (Jn 7:24). We are to judge; but such must be done by means of God's word.

It seems that many like to pull Matthew 7:1 out to silence anyone saying things they do not like. That is very convenient; but ignores the truth of God's word. The ostrich buries its head in the sand when danger appears; and as you can imagine, such does not save the foolish bird. Many people want to bury a conversation when it does not go as they would like. Such also will not save.

APOSTLES NEED NOT APPLY

by Bob Pulliam

Many today are of the conviction that you have to receive some special experience from God before you're saved. They tell us, that at the time the experience occurs you are saved by God. The bottom line is, if you don't have a religious experience, you're not saved. Added to this doctrine is the concept of voting one into a particular church. Not every denomination does this, but some do. Before the voting takes place, the candidate must tell of his/her experience (testify or witness). The congregation listens and then votes on the individual's acceptance into that church. The experience *must* meet two criteria for the person to be voted into a church:

- The experience must be out of the ordinary.
- The person must feel salvation as a result of the experience.

Now allow me to give you a case on which a church might vote. Consider this story in light of the two criteria above, and determine whether or not you think your local denomination would vote this person into it's ranks....

A man and his associates were on a business trip to a particular city. They were on the main highway into town when he saw a light. No one else in the car saw the light. However, they did hear a voice that spoke. This man seemed to carry on a conversation with this unseen voice, and then told the men to take him to a particular place in the city.

*This man **knew** that he had spoken to the Lord, but yet he didn't feel complete. He was so distressed that he didn't eat anything for three days. This experience, according to this man, was not a saving experience. He claims that salvation came when he was baptized three days later.*

By the criteria already noted, this story wouldn't even get the apostle Paul voted into a church today. I'm sure you already realize that it is the apostle Paul's story that I related (with a few modern details... read Acts 22:6 - 16; Acts 9:1 - 19). Strip away the identity (keeping the order of when salvation came) and not one denomination today, that practices voting on members, would accept this case.

The apostle Paul would be unwelcome in a church that votes on folks for acceptance into their church.

Does that tell you anything?.....

AN INSECURE RELIGION

by Bob Pulliam

The inspired word of God tells us that *it* is sufficient to produce faith in the hearts of men. Paul told the Romans that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17). The Thessalonians were called by the gospel (II Th 2:14). All of the people in Acts were taught the word of God that they might believe, and the apostle John wrote his gospel that men might believe (Jn 20:30f).

Correct me if I am wrong, but doesn't this indicate that an unbeliever could find a Bible, read it, believe it, obey it, and be saved, all without ever hearing one of these modern religionists speak in tongues? When the subject of modern day miraculous (supernatural) activity is discussed, we usually end up in the same place every time: "Well, God must work miracles today so people can believe and be saved!" These people deny by this very statement what is clearly affirmed in the Bible. The "gospel is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom 1:16). It would seem that the gospel has no power within it by the reasoning of those who demand modern day miracles. This, to my mind, would indicate an insecure religion. Such is sadly the case for two reasons:

- 1) They do not wish to follow the scriptures (as if ashamed of them).
- 2) That which they engage in becomes a show.

The scriptures speak of things that embarrass these people (*i.e.* no women preachers, modest apparel, narrow way, etc...). They must have a "reasonable" way to distract from that which embarrasses them. The result?... They become modern apostles, revealing the word of God anew. Fortunately, the scriptures defend themselves against such pretenders:

"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8f)

Insecurity might manifest itself in any number of ways in people. One very certain way is by turning to exhibitionism. They place themselves on display with boisterous activity, drawing attention to themselves. Gimmicks are common place, and words like "spectacular", "extravaganza", "stupendous", etc., flow like water. The attention they draw does not point one to the Bible. The attention focuses on them and their brand of religion. In evidence of this, you have their followers who