

General Topics :: Where did "every eye closed, every head bowed" start?

Where did "every eye closed, every head bowed" start? - posted by dougr777 (), on: 2010/4/11 23:15

Does anybody know where/when this practice in the church began?

Where pastors at the end of most sermons they add on an evangelistic practice of "every eye bowed/every eye closed" and start the "if you believe God wants you saved, raise your hand"., "I see that hand,... now pray this prayer", etc.

Doug

Re: Where did "every eye closed, every head bowed" start? - posted by iansmith (), on: 2010/4/11 23:43

I honestly don't think anyone could pinpoint it. There are many practices in Evangelicalism that are taken for granted... they may have started out of convenience or conviction. It may have been a preacher or evangelist sensing the prompting of the Holy Spirit, or it could have been someone with good motives. Honestly, I think its a practice that has become second nature to many preachers and evangelists and isn't going anywhere.

I must confess I have used it, and I have seen people respond... upon following up with them (which is the most important part) these people showed true concern for their souls, a desire for Jesus and repentant hearts. However, it is only one tool in the tool box, and I have only used it on two occasions -and both because I sensed a prompting to do so.

How is walking the saw-dust-trail any more scriptural or orthodox? They are both means to encourage people to move from conviction of sin to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Some people have frowned upon the use of all altar-calls.

Re: , on: 2010/4/12 11:46

Doug... you should not ask questions like these. It messes with people's traditions. We should dispense of truth in order not to confuse the rank and file.

Of course I am not being serious...

A great book to read is called PAGAN CHRISTIANITY by Frank Viola. You would be amazed how much stuff that is done on Sunday morning across the world that has absolutely no basis in the Bible. Doesn't make these things wrong, necessarily. But I have to laugh at people who would just have a hissy if someone messed with the traditions... yet don't lift a finger outside of church to reach the unsaved.

Krispy

Re: Where did "every eye closed, every head bowed" start? - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2010/4/12 15:56

My personal feeling on this is that it came about because the preacher didn't want to make the responder uncomfortable with every eye on them. But along with some of the fiery preachers like Whitfield, if you are embarrassed you aren't read yet.

Re: - posted by jlosinski, on: 2010/4/12 16:11

"We're going to play that song just one more time..."

Sometimes I look around to see if anyone raises their hand when asked, I'm pretty sure that last time it happened, I saw the preacher say "I see that hand" when nobody in the section he was addressing raised one. Not a 100%, but pretty sure.

I often wonder what the equivalent to the "alter call" "I see that hand", ect.. is in other countries.

Joe

Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/4/12 17:07

jlosinski,

Around the time I found sermonindex and began listening to all these God-fearing men and women of God, I started getting very disgusted with organized religion and I was doing the powerpoint and sound for the church. And it didn't help that I was about two feet up above everybody else in the back and was watching when the pastor would say, "There's a hand... thank you, there's another one..." and I saw no one raising their hand.

It opens the door to deception and lying. Let all things be done decently and in order. Jesus never begged anybody to be converted.

This is praise sidebar: Years ago, when I was first converted, I was in the lunch room (at work) eating by myself and another girl came in (she dressed and looked like Janis Joplin) and she asked me honestly, "Who took you to the altar?" I said, "What do you mean?" She told me that every time she came and went to church with somebody from work, they always tried to take her down front to get saved. I told her that I had never heard of such a thing and then that led to a conversation about explaining how the Lord had drawn me to Him.

I hope and believe that she has had or still will have that beautiful experience of being woo'd by the Lord!!

Re: Where did "every eye closed, every head bowed" start? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/4/13 20:40

This question troubles me as does the one about how to do 'church'. I get the sense that people are knocking structure, wanting to replace it with no structure.

I understand the concern where structure has been depended upon to bring about revival, holiness or whatever you are wanting to achieve.

If one were to take this to its logical conclusion, one could also say that to ask for prayer to bring about revival is another aspect of structure.

God is an orderly God; structure is all around us, without which nothing could exist. 1 Corinthians was written to correct the lawlessness that had crept into the church at Corinth. They were to do, put away and not do. And this was spoken to Believers who were beginning to act like ungodly folks.

This may not make a whole lot of sense. But I am very concerned about the mindset of some who would want to put away with structure...God will use whatever, however He wills to bring about his honor and Glory. God's honor and Glory is not one of disorder or lawlessness.

Blessings,
ginnyrose

Re: Where did "every eye closed, every head bowed" start? - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/13 22:44

Very interesting post. Goes right along with who was the first person to use the "unspoken" prayer request?

I actually know of a minister who sometimes says, "Every head up, every eye open, who wants to accept Christ?" I think his approach was that if you did not want a group of Christians to see you turn to Christ, what of the world?

I am not sure it matters one way or the other. I think in all corporate gatherings as well as in personal ministry we must be led of the Holy Spirit and do as He leads. In that respect, tradition can get in the way.

So rather than to say we should do it in manner x or in manner y, I would say we should be sensitive to the leadings of the Holy Spirit and do it that way.

Travis

General Topics :: Where did "every eye closed, every head bowed" start?

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/14 1:33

Quote:
-----Sometimes I look around to see if anyone raises their hand when asked, I'm pretty sure that last time it happened, I saw the preacher say "I see that hand" when nobody in the section he was addressing raised one. Not a 100%, but pretty sure

We had a pastor who did this as well, and my only response to it is they will see judgment for this since its pretty deceptive. I understand their intentions but like the old saying goes The path to hell was pathed with good intentions.

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/4/14 7:15

Quote:
-----"There's a hand... thank you, there's another one..." and I saw no one raising their hand.

The problem here is lying, not the giving of the invitation itself.

I have been in a church when the pastor felt led by the Holy Spirit to give an invitation at the end of the morning sermon. He normally did not do that and people responded. Really - it was no lie.

It is all about being led by the Holy Spirit. When man depends on methods (a no-method is a method, too) we fall into the trap of trying to be the Holy Spirit and doing his work. All He wants is OBEDIENCE. Are we living there?

Blessings,
ginnyrose

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/4/14 12:43

Did loingirder get banned? I'd be curious to see his thoughts on this.

EDIT:

As for the OP, I would say the practice originated somewhere post-Charles Finney. He was instrumental in establishing a response-based ministry time during church services. He is also the main originator of the altar call practice, utilizing what he called the "anxious seat." As most things do over time, the practice was watered down to the 'head bowed-eyes closed' practice of today.