

General Topics :: Entertainment in the Pulpit

**Entertainment in the Pulpit - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/15 22:55**

There are a series of five, short video clips on You Tube about entertainment in the pulpit. This link leads to (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wn0vVzEbF1s>) Clip #1. They're done by a group called White Horse Inn. (I'm unfamiliar with them.)

I expected the clips of today's churches doing things like this, but then they go back to classic preachers and show how the church helped bring this trend of entertainment in the pulpit about. Even then, I wasn't surprised... until I got to ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npT3c\\_zpDg&featurerelated](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npT3c_zpDg&featurerelated)) Clip #2 where they lay into Charles Finney, saying that he came into town the same way the circus did and was quite a showman. So much so that churches started to mimic his "performances."

Being new to this, I wanted to know what others thought of these clips. Who is "White Horse Inn"? Are these things true about Charles Finney? I just have a really hard time grasping this.

**Re: Entertainment in the Pulpit - posted by tjservant (), on: 2008/2/15 23:14**

Quote:  
-----Being new to this, I wanted to know what others thought of these clips. Who is "White Horse Inn"? Are these things true about Charles Finney? I just have a really hard time grasping this.  
-----

Have not watched clips, but...

The White Horse Inn is a nationally syndicated radio talk show hosted by Michael Horton, Rod Rosenblatt, Kim Riddleberger and Ken Jones. On the air since 1990, the show features a regular roundtable discussion of Christian theology and apologetics.(taken from site)  
Highly regarded...especially among the Reformed theological crowd.

As for Finney...

He catches a lot...from a lot of people. I'm sure others with far more knowledge than I will have something to say about him.

Grace and peace brother

**Re: Entertainment in the Pulpit - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/2/16 11:52**

Keith,

Thanks so very much for posting this link! I had no idea entertainment in popular churches is this bad...it just about makes me sick. Presently, I am too upset to post any more rational thoughts on the subject.

Hope this info gets a broader audience and perhaps in the process convict some...

Blessings,  
ginnyrose

Re:, on: 2008/2/18 9:16

Quote:

-----I had no idea entertainment in popular churches is this bad...  
-----

It's really bad. A recent trend lately is to give "sexual satisfaction" center stage, and this is meant to attract people to come to church.

Ask my wife... I'm not a prude when it comes to marriage, and a God honoring relationship between a husband and a wife... but what is happening in the church today is way out of line.

For instance:

CHARLOTTE SOUTH FELLOWSHIP IN MATHEWS, NORTH CAROLINA, featured a five week series in February 2007 called "Sex Crazy." Two of the messages were "Single and Sexually Satisfied" and "Raising Sexually Satisfied Kids."

In February-March 2007 EASTLAKE COMMUNITY CHURCH IN KIRKLAND, WASHINGTON, had a "Thank God for Sex" campaign. Sermons titles included "Sex is Good" and "Learn Some New Moves."

ROCKY RIVER COMMUNITY CHURCH IN CONCORD, NORTH CAROLINA, had a "Desperate Sex Lives" campaign in February-March 2007. They fretted that "the only time most churches talk about sex is when they speak against it" and promised to "bring sex out of the dark and into the light."

REVOLUTION CHURCH IN CANTON, GEORGIA, also got into the sex campaign business. To accompany the sermon series they used secular rock, including "Feel Like Making Love" by Bad Company and "Your Body is a Wonderland" by John Mayer. In his message on "Creative Sex" Pastor Gary Lamb said things that cannot be quoted here.

GRANGER COMMUNITY CHURCH IN GRANGER, INDIANA, had a "My Lame Sex Life" campaign featuring billboards with two pair of feet in a very suggestive configuration. One sermon title was "The Greatest Sex You'll Ever Have."

CORNERSTONE CHURCH IN CHANDLER, ARIZONA, had a "Bringing Sexy Back" campaign in August -September 2007. One of the sermon titles was "Greatest Sex Ever."

THE GATHERING IN SEVIERVILLE, TENNESSEE, had a "Red Hot Sex" campaign in October 2007. It claimed that a "red hot sex life empowers every part of marriage." One sermon title by Pastor Gene Wolfenbarger was "God has designed you for sex and how to make it hot."

REVOLUTION CHURCH IN LONGBEACH, CALIFORNIA, kicked off their "God Loves Sex" campaign in July 2007 with a "sex party." The web site explained, "Nothing dirty or weird--just an opportunity to celebrate God's gift of sex and intimacy." The advertisement said, "God wants you to have great sex," and one of the sermon titles was "Leather, Whips and Whip Cream."

OAKLEAF CHURCH IN CARTERSVILLE, GEORGIA, had a "Your Great Sex Life" campaign in March 2007. The advertisement complained that "the church either ignores sex or brings down a judgmental hammer." (On December 23 this "church" is featuring "A Rockin' Christmas Eve Eve.")

Brothers and sisters, this is carnal and foolish and wicked. Bible-believing churches have always taught God's people what the Bible says about sexual relations, but there is no place for this type of thing. What about the single people who attend these campaigns? What are they supposed to do when the church focuses on great sex! In spite of the churches' claims to the contrary, these campaigns are not holy and are not faithful to God's Word. The Bible never deals with this issue in a shocking or lascivious manner.

"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

Krispy

**Re: - posted by Nellie, on: 2008/2/18 10:53**

May God be merciful to these people.

I didn't realize these things were being taught in Ga., but realized long ago that we aren't the Bible belt, as some would say.

Thanks for bringing this to our attention.

God Bless all.

Nellie

**Re: Entertainment in the Pulpit - posted by enid, on: 2008/2/18 11:14**

There is a church currently having a 30 day sex challenge.

Don't ask for links. I didn't watch the video, I just read the headline. That was enough for me.

God bless.

**Over the rails - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/2/18 11:22**

Tell me this isn't true ... Have re-written this a handful of times, it seems almost like something out of some fantastical imagination wanting to bring reproach on the faithful ... If only it were so!

I am just stunned, staggered ... tear the robe, sit down in dust and ashes ... weep between the porch and altar ... Oh God

**Re: Over the rails, on: 2008/2/18 11:45**

Sadly it is true. Our local news here in Asheville even did a piece on that church mentioned over in Sevierville TN, and the one in Charlotte. The church in Sevierville made the news because they went so far as to mail fliers out to everyone in town and rented a billboard... and people complained about it because their children saw it in the mail and on the billboard.

Isn't that pathetic? The world has to tell the church when they have crossed the line of public lewdness.

Krispy

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/18 12:43**

I'll be honest with you, I'm not shocked by this at all. I did, however, come out of the Word of Faith movement which is all about emotions and self. Yes, it's horrible, and yes it's wretched, but what else can we expect from the world? Even a worldly, deceived church? What I've always found particularly disgusting is how the entertainment-driven church has come to embrace the world's insults by labeling *themselves* "Jesus Freaks." If they only knew whose name they were attaching the world "freak" to! These people are lost.

What I was hoping someone might know a bit about, is how these video clips addressed Charles Finney. In Clip 2 (previously linked to) and (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?vB18xXCo-TJk&feature=related>) Clip 3 They go into how he was quite wild and was very much a showman in his days, likening him to a circus.

This is part of what this series of clips is about: How some of the early churches helped usher in this age of entertainment in the pulpit. They talk about Aimee Semple McPherson, but I've already read about her background. If she were alive today, she'd surely be in the Word of Faith movement. But it just shocked me about Charles Finney because of his writings. When I read Finney's writings and then hear this background about him, it doesn't compute in my head. It's like two completely different people.

This post is long enough. I'll leave it with my question about Finney. I have another question that I'd like to bring up in the next post.

Re:, on: 2008/2/18 13:32

Is this what they may be referring to?

<http://greatsfandf.com/AUTHORS/CharlesGFinney.php>

Katy

Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/18 13:34

I think most, if not nearly all, of us agree that entertainment in the pulpit is sin. So, what kinds of entertainments *are* okay for Christians?

I'm asking this question not because I'm searching for entertainment, but because, for most of the "Christians" around me, this is all they know. This is what they were raised with. I have a friend who is part of a large team that runs the sound and light board for the "worship team" at his mega-church. He talks in entertainment terminology. They play contemporary Christian music - very loudly.

This is how the churches they know *are*. They don't see it as wrong. After all, this is what Christian radio plays. They don't see it as performance. They don't see it as the congregation dancing like they do at nightclubs. *This is Christianity, and the church, as they know it!*

These are the same people that still go to the movies and say things like, "It wasn't that bad. There was only one sex scene and they didn't show anything. The language wasn't "as bad" as most other movies out there." We live in an age of rationalizing everything so Christians can participate in it!

Have you seen the so-called Christian movie review websites? Websites where Christian parents, and others, can go to find out how much sex, violence and vulgar language there is in a movie so they can decide if they want to go, or send their children to it. One movie the "Christian reviewer" reviewed noted that the kids in the movie were constantly using the Lord's name in vain, but there wasn't any swearing in the movie. He said, "Some may find this offensive." Some? He still ranked the movie with 2.5 stars out of 5 and said that children under 12 shouldn't see it! The Lord's name is taken in vain and he recommends this movie at all?!

Even our Christian culture encourages partaking in the world's entertainment! No wonder saints like brother Ravenhill and Washer say they'll be surprised if 2% of those, in America, who profess to be Christians really are!

So, when you're asked what kinds of "entertainment" are okay for Christians, how do you respond? Here are specific things I've been asked about:

- Christian comedians like Chandra Pierce, Mark Lowry, and live performances like the Christian troupe "Triple Espresso"?
- Christian music concerts with Michael W. Smith and others who produce Godly music. "After all, you like Keith Green and he gave concerts."
- Christian movies like *The Gospel of John*, *The Apocalypse* (with Richard Harris as John), etc.,
- Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany Georgia has gotten into movie-making to reach the lost. They made *Flywheel*, *Facing the Giants*, and are in production on their third movie, *Fireproof*, starring Kirk Cameron.
- *Way of the Master* with Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort is entertaining.
- Movies in the theatre that are rated G and PG.
- The *Narnia* movie, based on C.S. Lewis' books. And *The Lord of the Rings* movies were written by Tolkien, who was known to be a Christian. But these are fantasy-based movies, which are considered "bad". "God gave us imagination and creativity, too."

- Churches that have drama groups that go out and perform in other churches and other outreaches. (Actually, even John Piper's church has a drama group, now that I think about it.)

I am basically being asked where the line between sinful entertainment, right entertainment and legalism is supposedly drawn by "true Christians." I can't avoid their questions, but, being only a month old as a biblical Christian, I'm not quite sure how to respond. I have the matter in prayer, but I'm hoping for some feedback from my brothers and sisters, too. The only thing I've been able to say to these people is to pray before they do it. They either remark that they have or that we don't have to pray about every single thing we do. To which I can only respond, "Why not?"

Any insightful thoughts or wisdom you can give?

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/18 13:40**

Quote:

Katy-did wrote:

Is this what they may be referring to?

<http://greatsfindf.com/AUTHORS/CharlesGFinney.php>

Katy

No, it's not. The Charles Finney mentioned in your link died in 1844. They're definitely talking about the Charles Finney who lived from 1792-1875.

**Re: - posted by enid, on: 2008/2/18 13:52**

SimpleLiving,

Concerning your entertainment question there are 2 scriptures that come to mind.

Romans 14v23, 'But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith, for whatever is not from faith is sin.'

If one has to question what they are doing, and feel guilty doing it, then they should not be doing it.

This scripture refers to food, but says also whatever, all inclusive.

Also in James 4v17 it says, 'Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.'

That scripture speaks for itself.

Also God has given us His Spirit as a guarantee of our salvation, 2 Cor 1v22 and 2 Cor 5v5. He has redeemed us with His blood, Rev 5v9, what more do we need?

Just a few thoughts for those who ask you any more questions.

God bless.

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/18 14:02**

Thank you, sister.

Quote:  
-----Romans 14v23, 'But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith, for whatever is not from faith is sin.'  
-----

I can tell you now that they don't see what they're doing as sin. They're not questioning what they're doing for entertainment. They're asking me as a result of my bringing up the topic. They're fine with it.

Quote:  
-----Also in James 4v17 it says, 'Therefore, to him who know to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.'

That scripture speaks for itself.  
-----

It does speak for itself, but, again, this isn't helpful in this case where people are fine with what they're choosing and doing. They see it as Christian entertainment and it's good to them, because they're not out there going to rock concerts and x rated movies.

**Re:, on: 2008/2/18 14:14**

Thank You, Keith for clarifying.....that was not the same Charles G. Finney.

But I did find this and wondered after I read.

<http://www.mt.io.com/articles/aissar81.htm>

If the Cross is not preached that our old adam is crucified with Christ, and this article seems to state Charles G. Finney did not preach the Cross, then it would seem to be our old nature is getting out of control. Just food for thought.

Maybe too much emphasis on the Holy Spirit and gifts etc, and very little on Christ crucified and Risen, or the GOSPEL Message in general.

Katy

**Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/2/18 14:24**

So I am guessing this might be a good question, what if anything are we folks here doing about all this stuff were judging or exposing? and if all were doing is exposing it "here" is this enough? I really think this is a couple good questions.

Re:, on: 2008/2/18 14:29

Quote:  
-----I think most, if not nearly all, of us agree that entertainment in the pulpit is sin. So, what kinds of entertainments are okay for Christians?  
-----

Depending on the entertainment, I don't think that being entertained is a sin in and of itself. But in America we are conditioned to be entertained 24/7. We have radios, cd players... and now DVD players in our cars. People arrange the furniture in their homes around the TV. We have plasma TV's that rival theaters! Heck, with all the surround sound home theater stuff we have... why spend \$10 for a movie ticket? It looks and sounds better in our living rooms!

It's excessive, and anything in excess is bad.

But to sit down with your wife and enjoy a good movie... that's clean... is not a sin. Enjoying music for the sake of music is not a sin (tho there are a few on this forum that will argue against that). Enjoying a good novel is not a sin.

But all things in moderation. If you get caught up in a novel and neglect the Bible, well that's a problem.

Most Christian I know will sit in front of the TV for 4 or 5 hours a night... and complain that they don't have time enough in a day to study God's Word. That's a problem.

God designed us such that we do need a break from our everyday work. Even God took off the seventh day of the creation week for some much needed R&R. He dictated it to the nation of Israel. And tho we do not keep the Sabbath as a law, the principle still stands... man needs rest.

And sometimes entertainment can play a part in resting. When we begin to try and dictate what sort of entertainment is acceptable for the believer we run into problems because people want to turn it into legalism. That's a problem too.

If you like jazz... turn a jazz CD and relax and enjoy it. Want to watch a movie with your family? Watch a movie. Enjoy a good book! (it doesn't have to be a deep theological book either... read a John Grisham novel.)

It's ok so long as it's done in moderation, and it doesn't become a god in your life. Seek ye FIRST the Kingdom of God.

And keep Phillipians 4:8 as your guideline to what make acceptable entertainment. If you follow it's advice you won't need a man-made list of entertainment that some Christians will want to enforce upon you:

**Phillipians 4:8** *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Krispy

Re:, on: 2008/2/18 14:34

Quote:  
-----So I am guessing this might be a good question, what if anything are we folks here doing about all this stuff we're judging or exposing? and if all we're doing is exposing it "here" is this enough? I really think this is a couple good questions.  
-----

Love ya, Bill... but you ask this because you get annoyed when we "expose" your pastor.

Fact is, brother, I don't belong to those churches, therefore I don't have a say in how they do things. But what they are doing is done publically, and should be marked and avoided publically... just as I have done.

Paul said to Timothy to "mark and avoid" false teachers, not go to them and show them their error. Now, Timothy could have

ave done that because he did carry the authority to do so... but I dont.

Now, I grow a little weary of this debate back and forth that we should not expose, but go to the false teacher in private. No where is that scriptural. Going to someone in private concerns personal matters between brothers, or matters within the confines of the local assembly... not me going to Benny Hinn privately. This is a twisting of scripture.

This is not what this thread is about, so if you wish to bat this around more, Bill, please start another thread.

Krispy

**Re:, on: 2008/2/18 14:35**

More food for thought.

The emphasis on visions and dreams, special extra-Biblical revelations, and the guidance of the Spirit through these revelations all belong to the tradition of mysticism. No wonder there is such a striking resemblance between revivalism and the modern charismatic movement!

Yet, mysticism is contrary to the Scriptures -- it is a theology of emotions, a theology of feeling, with little regard for doctrine.

For example, consider the life of Charles Grandison Finney, the early-19th century revivalist in the Northeastern part of the United States, and a kindred spirit of John Wesley. (Finney doctrinalized Wesley's "second experience" teaching.)

Finney's introduction of new methods for getting converts and the orchestrating of emotion and excitement in huge revival gatherings was clearly based on his heretical understanding of being born-again (12/25/95, Christian News, p. 7). Finney writes that he repudiated all the fundamental doctrines of the faith, including the vicarious nature of the atonement of Jesus Christ, in the interests of preaching revival:

"These doctrines I could not receive. I could not receive his views on the subject of atonement, regeneration, faith, repentance, the slavery of the will, or any of their kindred doctrines" (The Memoirs of Charles Finney, p. 48).

Revivalism, then, is clearly the friend of pragmatism; i.e., using whatever method works in getting men to "make decisions for Christ," or in getting them to "weep and wail before God as evidence of a renewed commitment to godly living," regardless of the Bible's condemnation of any such method. Finney again, writing in 1834, declared that revival is "a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means." In other words, Finney's purpose was solely to convince the human will and produce decisions and commitments (12/25/95, Christian News, p. 7). (See note at end of this report.)

This pragmatic approach appears to be grounded in the revivalist's faulty view of conversion; i.e., the revivalists were, for the most part, like Finney, preaching that salvation was dependent upon the individual, and that the preacher must prepare the individual's heart by preaching the law so as to put him in a spiritual frame of mind either to "accept" Christ or "reject" Him. The "decision" was solely up to the individual.

Revivalists typically hold to the false doctrine that salvation rests in man's hands, and that a "decision" can be encouraged if only some kind of "unusual" and/or "extraordinary" experience can be generated. In the end, the intensity of the "experience" becomes the revivalist's test, not only for the genuineness of the conversion, but for the personal assurance of salvation as well.



**Re:, on: 2008/2/18 14:45**

Sis Katy, could you give the link to where you find your articles.  
In this one case, I'd like to look further.

Thanks Sis.  
Love.

Annie

**Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/2/18 14:50**

Katy-did,

Is this your writing or someone else?

**Re:, on: 2008/2/18 14:56**

I found it. Forgot the Google method. :-?

Edit: I'm sorry Katy and crschk. I wanted to read more of the person's view and also didn't see that post from crschk when I posted above.

**Re:, on: 2008/2/18 15:24**

Wanting to keep this on topic, found Finney's name brought forth, could open a doctrinal can of worms rather than being about "entertainment".

That is why I needed to go look at the source first, before replying to the thoughts expressed.

I read it and understand now.

I understand the gist - but we'll find ourselves in a debate on theology if we go to Finney - Revivals - Cessationists against non-cessationists - and back to possibly opening back up the same old debate on Calvinism vs. Whatever. I do appreciate the gist though. I had a Pastor once, for a short time - that would scream out his sermons and jump on top of the pews and the finishing touch for me was when he jumped on top of the communion table - screaming from a top it. It was not the volume of someone like a David Wilkerson neither. It was theatrical.

But, back about the entertainment being discussed - some have posed some good questions that I was reading along with. Keith on page 2 and others posed some food for thought for me - being the anti-entertainment type.

edit to add pg #

**Re: - posted by Tears\_of\_joy, on: 2008/2/18 15:47**

I am very, very sad how the makers of the video connecting Charles Finney with the foolishness in the churches. The video is made by calvinists. Most of the calvinists hate Finney (some say even that he is not saved) and they try to discredit him with all they might. This is very sad. I believe that everyone who has read his autobiography or some of his articles, the Spirit will testify to his spirit that this man knew God and walked with Him in deep way.

If you haven't read something, start to read first 30-40 pages of his autobiography, and let the Spirit talk to you. You will be convicted of the testimony of this man's life and to seek the Lord as never before. To say that Finney introduced entertainment in the church is not just frivolous, but very strong accusation without serious ground. As far as I know, Finney was against calvinistic doctrine, and to throw accusation because someone is against your doctrine, is very, very sad.

**Worldly Amusements - Finney**

[http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id=11636&forum=34](http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=11636&forum=34)

**Re: Entertainment - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/2/18 16:31**

Annie,

Thank you. Glad you picked up on that.

It is really easy to get only part of a picture and think Kire is also making a good point there. Keith, did watch through the clips earlier and while it was tedious to have to listen to some of the 'entertainment' being presented before hand ... I think their premise of where we are needs not a lot of explanation but thought it was also quite a reach to lay this as something foundational to Finney's feet. Quite a bit of it is misconstrued to further a point, somewhat pragmatic. Certainly there are questionable aspects to Finney's theology and it would become more convoluted to get into it all here, many a postin g elsewhere.

Brother what did occur to me as I went out for a bit thinking on all this is just your example since you have graced us with your presence. Maybe the answer to the questions you are getting is just yourself, your testimony of late. What made you turn out of the way? Like yourself, myself, Krispy and others all having come out from underneath WOF teacher\teaching even further just the more modern day representation of what is being presented here ...

I guess I want to say an alternative or just a reaching back, the 'Old Paths' as we are want to describe it all. Something authentic over precisely dogmatic (some things are worth being dogmatic over but I am not speaking to the micro ... management of particular theology).

This is what by and large is presented here in these largely forgotten ways and manners, spiritually speaking. These sermons and messages and articles. Maybe it is to say less towards those that are also so well entrenched into it that everything is seen as an attack or an affront and just to say, well I found this .... and it challenged my thinking on what the church is, what Christianity is about, what the Lord is really after. Something to that effect.

Seems if we could get our character and integrity, our hearts aligned rightly all the secondary issues of entertainment and the like would fall into place much easier. It just often seems we are going about it all from the wrong end of the spectrum, dealing first with the results rather than the roots.

Just some thought's brother.

**Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2008/2/18 17:20**

Quote:

-----Most of the calvinists hate Finney...

-----

I would be careful saying things like this. It may be that Calvinists in general oppose Finney's theology, but to declare they hate him...

Anyway, I have read Finney. I had not, until this, heard any "Calvinists" come against Finney for his endorsement of entertainment, but I have read and heard many Calvinists, and Arminians as well, call him on his theology (moral government theology)...and on what some consider abusive alter-call methods and tactics.

As for throwing accusations simply because one holds a differing view...it is very, very sad indeed.

**Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/2/18 17:32**

Quote:

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KrispyKrittr wrote:

Love ya, Bill... but you ask this because you get annoyed when we "expose" your pastor.

This is not what this thread is about, so if you wish to bat this around more, Bill, please start another thread.

Krispy

-----  
Ok I will start a new one your right, what's wrong with me, I must have thought I would have been treated like the Prodigal Son by responding with my line of thinking, but the spirit within me told me better, guess it was more like Joseph. :-o

**Re: - posted by Tears\_of\_joy, on: 2008/2/18 18:12**

Quote:

-----tjservant wrote:

I would be careful saying things like this. It may be that Calvinists in general oppose Finney's theology, but to declare they hate him...

Probably that was not the proper word, but according to my experience of watching the reactions contemporary calvinist s on Finney, to say that they just 'don't like him' seems to me pretty light expression. These are my observations. And those videos are pretty good example of that. If some has read just a bit from Finney without prejudice, and let the Spirit talk to him, I think you wouldn't dare to make such connections and accusations on this subject.

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/18 19:14**

Thank you all for your thoughts and opinions. Thank you to those of you who did research and took the time to think about your posts. I'm encouraged and appreciative of that. I prayed this thread would not turn into another debate. Anyone whose read even a few of my posts knows that I don't like, or participate, in debates. I believe most of them are people just needing to be "right" or justifying their own views. Thank you, Annie, for bringing this thread back to the topic of entertainment, instead of veering off down the doctrine trail.

To be honest, I was thinking, *Heaven spare us from another doctrinal debate!* Finney's doctrinal beliefs have *nothing* to do with this thread. I was wondering about his methods. Perhaps it's just me, having been through so many years of being deceived by men, with my eternity carelessly played with, that I simply have *no* tolerance for debate. I want to enter debate threads and ask, "Who has put this subject into real prayer, without their own agenda, and feels they have truly heard from God on the matter?" I've done this before. Even here. But no one ever responds. The question is overlooked and the debate just continues. If someone hasn't put the matter they're debating into serious prayer and heard from God on the subject, then they have no good reason to be debating in the first place and need to examine their motives. I have never seen a Calvinist become an Arminian or an Arminian become a Calvinist because of a debate. I don't even know who these people are! I want to be transformed into the image of Christ, not Calvin. I want to live scripturally, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, not by the leading of Armin- whoever. These things are confusing to new Christians who see the debates. Why isn't the Holy Spirit enough?

I also didn't start this thread to expose or judge anyone. I haven't got the wisdom, or the Christlike life, to be able to do that.

What I'm carrying away from this thread are two things that were said: Krispy spoke about moderation. This is a good point when it's combined with discernment and prayer. I think this is a good combination to avoid legalism.

I found a lot of wisdom, and comfort, in Mike's paragraph:

Quote:

-----Seems if we could get our character and integrity, our hearts aligned rightly all the secondary issues of entertainment and the like would fall into place much easier. It just often seems we are going about it all from the wrong end of the spectrum, dealing first with the results rather than the roots.

This is a wonderful example of the freedom we have in the Truth! How is our integrity? Our character? Our motives? What are we seeking first, the kingdom of God or our personal satisfaction and comfort? It's one thing to know the scriptures, but are we acting on them? There's the difference. What Mike wrote brought to mind Colossians 3:1-3 (particularly verse 2):

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Do you see it? If our affections are on the things above, *that* will be our guide when it comes to the secondary things (as Mike appropriately called them) like entertainment.

So, I realize that I don't have to present a list of "do's and don'ts" or "good and bad" to the people asking me about entertainment. I'm not the Holy Ghost, Jr and I can't make them see the Truth. It's not my job to do that. But, I can plant a seed by presenting them with what Mike said and Colossians 3:1-3. After that, I can pray and trust the Holy Spirit to do the work He's here to do.

And, as for Charles Finney... Well, he's dead. I choose to continue to glean from his writing those things that are beneficial to me by testing them against scripture. His methods of presentation are really "secondary" and not of concern to me anymore. I have peace on this subject now.

**Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2008/2/18 19:56**

Quote:

-----Finney's doctrinal beliefs have nothing to do with this thread. I was wondering about his methods.  
-----

Most people's methods come from their doctrinal beliefs. It's hard to talk about why someone does something unless you know what beliefs caused the action in question.

Sorry if I added to your no-debate-stress-factor, that was not my intention. I believe an understanding of Finney's doctrine explains why he used the methods he did and I thought that's what you were after. I apologize.

Grace and peace brother

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/18 20:41**

Quote:

-----  
tjservant wrote:

Quote:

-----Finney's doctrinal beliefs have nothing to do with this thread. I was wondering about his methods.  
-----

Most people's methods come from their doctrinal beliefs. It's hard to talk about why someone does something unless you know what beliefs caused the action in question.

Sorry if I added to your no-debate-stress-factor, that was not my intention. I believe an understanding of Finney's doctrine explains why he used the methods he did and I thought that's what you were after. I apologize.

Grace and peace brother

Brother TJ, you have never been a stress to me, but always a blessing!

No, you didn't add any stress. I wholeheartedly apologize if I came across as being stressed, or even accusatory, in my post. I didn't intend that at all. (And, if I had been, that would be something for me to address with the Father because

of an issue / had, rather than because of anyone else.)

Reading your post, I can see *how* doctrine *can* play into the issue of how a teacher/preacher delivers their sermon. It's just that when someone is accused of coming into town like a circus show and delivering their sermon like a carnival barker, what doctrine fits in with that? That's why, in this case, I saw it more as a presentation/entertainment question than a doctrinal one.

As I've said in other posts, I do believe debate has its purpose and place. It can be very beneficial (when conducted maturely) but *in moderation*, along with everything else. If someone comes to a forum and is seen to debate everything, how does that affect their witness?

I tend to post in generalizations when it comes to people. I never intend to be sly or infer that I'm speaking about someone in particular. If I have ever given any other impression, to anyone, then I am deeply grieved by this and I beg for your forgiveness. It can be difficult to determine, at times, a person's true attitude or reflections from their posts because we have very little to go by in the way of "tone" or inflection. Both can be misread. Believe me when I say that if I have a problem with someone, I have no qualms about discussing it with that person; privately, not publicly.

And, so I'm not guilty of taking my own thread down a bunny trail, and since I've had my own purpose for this thread satisfied, feel free to let the conversation, if it should continue, go in whichever direction it does. It's natural for a topic to veer into other points and should be okay when the original post is covered.

**Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2008/2/18 20:55**

You, my brother, are a blessing as well!

I would like to respond to this one point. Who knowsÂ...it may even shed some light!

Quote:  
-----It's just that when someone is accused of coming into town like a circus show and delivering their sermon like a carnival barker, what doctrine fits in with that? That's why, in this case, I saw it more as a presentation/entertainment question than a doctrinal one.  
-----

Some of his critics claim that he did not believe in the sufficiency of scripture, or should I say sovereignty of God, and that he believed man was partially responsible for drawing men to Christ. Thus he relied on theatrics to compel men to come to Christ.

This is why I introduce the theological aspect.

Grace and peace

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/18 21:20**

Quote:  
-----  
tjservant wrote:  
You, my brother, are a blessing as well!

I would like to respond to this one point. Who knowsÂ...it may even shed some light!

Quote:  
-----It's just that when someone is accused of coming into town like a circus show and delivering their sermon like a carnival barker, what doctrine fits in with that? That's why, in this case, I saw it more as a presentation/entertainment question than a doctrinal one.  
-----

Some of his critics claim that he did not believe in the sufficiency of scripture, or should I say sovereignty of God, and that he believed man was partially responsible for drawing men to Christ. Thus he relied on theatrics to compel men to come to Christ.

This is why I introduce the theological aspect.

Grace and peace  
-----

Thank you for showing me such grace with your explanation, brother. I see your point very clearly now. I apologize to everyone for making a mountain out of a molehill.

Although the brothers who created this series of video clips about entertainment in the pulpit have a point, it now appears, to me, that there is a doctrinal agenda attached to it as well. I think it would have been sufficient to reference how this style of preaching isn't just in today's churches, but that it's happened in the past. To focus as much time on they did on those who aren't even alive anymore can only be a doctrinal issue they have with them. What other benefit could it have?

I watched all five clips in full. Most of the focus was on those who have long-since died. They barely mention the entertainment-driven, seeker-sensitive churches of today, which should have been the focus because they are the reality of *right now*. How does pointing out the theatrics of a couple of long dead saints matter, and resolve, what's going on with an incredibly large number of churches today?

As someone once said, and I can't remember who, "There are only two days before me. Today and Judgment Day."

**Re:, on: 2008/2/18 21:27**

I don't quite think it's doctrinal in all cases.

My first Church was an Af/Am Methodist Church in the South. Very expressive but not out of line at all. But a sister from that Church and I, whom I lived with, with her Mom and Dad, used to go Church hopping together to all the special meetings at other Churches and some were very over the top demonstratively speaking.

Then when I moved from Virginia - the next U.S. base I was stationed at, I met another girl in my barracks and she took me to the AoG.

I stayed AoG for some years. Visited many. All Pastors had a different style. Some more expressive than others.

Then, much later, when we couldn't find an AoG in our area where I had moved again - we started trying the CoG - the one that had split with the AoG.

Now that's where we found the most cookie-cutter Pastors. They seemed all to scream and perform. One minute at the pulpit and in a blink of an eye - flying down the aisle, etc..

BUT - I also happen to know, that not ALL CoG pastors are like that.

And not all Presbyterian & Baptist Pastors "are not filled with the Holy Spirit" neither.

So - maybe it's more, just what the person feels or just part of their character or what they'd been taught, generationally and what "the people's" preferences are.

Some folks used to say David Wilkerson "yelled", HA - even his wife asked him to try to tone it down some. He mentioned that in one of his sermons and all laughed, but I never thought he was 'yelling'.

To each their own. Viva la difference. Whatever?

Other nations have other means of expression too.

Re:, on: 2008/2/19 8:15

Quote:  
-----Ok I will start a new one your right, what's wrong with me, I must have thought I would have been treated like the Prodigal Son by responding with my line of thinking, but the spirit within me told me better, guess it was more like Joseph.  
-----

Bill... my friend and my brother... I have no idea what this means. :-?

Krispy

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/2/19 16:27

SimpleLiving,

Quote:  
-----Most of the focus was on those who have long-since died. They barely mention the entertainment-driven,  
-----

SL, perhaps you forgot the introduction at the beginning of each video? The clips of entertainment that is now presented in churches? The compilers, as I understand the videos, is that old-time revivalists resorted to theatrics to gain attention, audience, that it is nothing new. Although having said that I surmised these guys thought it was awful. And I agree. What goes on in churches today is a far cry from yesteryear.

I did have one question about these compilers: if they are Calvinists, from formal churches would not a smile or a soft laugh in a church service scandalize those people? Just wondering...

A few years ago we attended a couple weddings at some liberal Mennonite churches. At the one the preacher's subject had to do with intimacy in marriage. I was so embarrassed it was not funny. It was a subject he should have discussed with them in private. I hated it that we had children in that audience. Then later at the other wedding, the sermon the preacher presented was more like a stand-up comedy. Oh, it was clean and it was fun. But the entire service spent in comedy? Ya'll know I love my fun and humor, but there is a time for restraint... Don't know what I will do if it happens again...Hey, I just might be brave enough to just up and walk out....might reach maturity some day...

Seems to me as though the 'church' today is in worse shape spiritually then what it was back during the time of Reformation, the 1500's. Any comment on this? How close to right or far from right am I?

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/2/19 16:42

Krispy,

I cannot imagine **any** godly person resorting to this type of thing. It is sickening. No, it is obscene, vulgar. So bad it totally repulses me. Now ex-rated programs in the church?

I do have another question: you read about those people who review movies and then rate them. How can a clean mind look at filth that much and not be tainted by it? Psalms 101:3 "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me" says David. Does this not apply to moderns? So, how should one make an application?

It is encouraging to read of the outrage that others experience concerning this deadly thing. You all bless me!

ginnyrose

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/2/19 16:53**

Quote:  
-----SL, perhaps you forgot the introduction at the beginning of each video? The clips of entertainment that is now presented in churches? The compilers, as I understand the videos, is that old-time revivalists resorted to theatrics to gain attention, audience, that it is nothing new. Although having said that I surmised these guys thought it was awful. And I agree. What goes on in churches today is a far cry from yesteryear.  
-----

Hi sister,

I do remember the modern church entertainment openers for each clip. But those were all the focus the modern church received in those Clips. The rest of the 8.5 - 9 minutes was spent exposing and talking about the long since dead saints . It seemed to me that they were focused on discrediting and playing the "blame game" instead of focusing on finding an answer to the problem.

**Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/2/19 17:01**

Quote:  
-----  
KrispyKrittr wrote:  
Bill... my friend and my brother... I have no idea what this means. :-?

Krispy  
-----

Hey that was the idea, so you did get what it means, Jimmy Johnson has a deciphering handbook you can get from his website.:-?