

Fickle Subjectivism

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Our times are characterized by religious convictions based solely upon feelings and experiences. This phenomenon has always been a trademark of Pentecostalism, but it now infects and affects all of the sects (and not a few brethren, as well). Multitudes of religionists trust their eternal destiny to no more than what they like or their feelings. Mormons profess to believe in Joseph Smith and his *Book of Mormon* because they prayed about it and God confirmed it by a “burning in their breasts.” Some describe a “better-felt-than-told” sensation that told them to go to a certain street corner and do this or that. All such things are only as “certain” as the feelings, emotions, and moods of those who “testify” about them. Perhaps only the weather is more fickle than human feelings and emotions.

Such professed “experiences,” notions, and feelings leave men with no standard, no measuring stick. They rest entirely upon capricious sensations, thus they are all subjective. The insincere impostor can claim experiences and fake feelings equal to or even better than those of the most sincere devotee. Pentecostals are inconsistent in their rejection of Joseph Smith and the *Book of Mormon* as sent from God. Smith’s “experiences” deserve at least as much credibility as those the Pentecostals claim. In fact, the subjectivist who claims to believe in Christ because he “feels” a certain way cannot consistently disallow the Hindu who sincerely relies upon his own feelings as evidence that his worship of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva is right.

While not intending to impugn the sincerity of anyone, it must be a very convenient form of religion that rests on *it is so because I say/feel it so*. Webster identifies *subjectivism* as “a doctrine that individual feeling...is the ultimate criterion of the good and the right.” *Subjectivism* thus describes the practice of relying upon things that arise from within oneself (i.e., the “subject”), and allowing these thoughts and emotions to determine one’s behavior. Subjectivism is the mother of the idea that each person has his own “truth,” otherwise known as Postmodernism. Those who smite their breasts and declare, “I wouldn’t trade the feeling I have right here for a stack of Bibles!” are bowing before subjectivism’s throne.

Neither the Lord nor His apostles ever rested the salvation they offer upon subjective elements. Nor did they ever count mere feelings or emotions as evidence of salvation. The authority from which their Gospel (**the** Gospel, Gal. 1:6–9) sprang was not from the imaginings, “hope-so’s,” “think so’s,” or personal feelings of anyone—their own or others. Their message was not, “Look what we are doing for Jesus,” but “Look what Jesus has done and can do for you.” The message they preached was **objective** (as opposed to subjective), that is, it was/is an

inflexible standard, independent of the thoughts, opinions, and feelings of men—the Truth revealed from Heaven. Jesus told Pontius Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). In the same vein, He declared, “My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me” (John 7:16). His Word remains static, even if all men reject it in their subjectivism—because it exists apart from human origin and from what men think of it.

The Gospel of Christ, faithfully communicated to us in our New Testament, is **God’s** thinking, not man’s (John 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:10, 13; Gal. 1:11–12; 1 The. 2:13; et al.). When men wanted to be saved they were not told to pray till they **felt** a certain way, but to obey the Gospel commands that would put them in touch with the cleansing blood of Christ (Acts 2:37–38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3–4; et al.). Only by obeying this objective Gospel can one who believes in Christ know that he is saved.

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