

# Plain Path

Weekly newsletter of the Fry Road church of Christ

Sunday, September 14, 2014

Volume 19, Number 37

“Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path... Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart” (Psalm 27:11-14)

THE

## ★ “AMERICA’S GOT TALENT”

by Bob Pulliam



CHURCH

SOME PEOPLE were surprised to hear the remarks of Victoria Osteen last month regarding what makes God happy. I can't understand why anyone was surprised. Victoria seems to be about the only one in the denominational arena willing to say what everyone is practicing. I think she hit the popular-worship-philosophy-nail right on the head. I'm not saying she's correct. I'm just saying that it's nothing new. And people who complained have

actually practiced it for years.

For example, for many years I've heard people use the argument that God gave them (or their son, daughter, niece, nephew, etc...) a talent to play the guitar (or

*“When we obey God, we're not doing it for God, ... we're doing it for ourself. Because God takes pleasure when we're happy. ... When you come to church, when you worship Him, you're not doing it for God, really. You're doing it for yourself because that's what makes God happy.”*

(Victoria Osteen)

piano, drums, etc...). They ought to be able to exercise that talent to the glory of God, we are told. Vocalists

have a great talent from God, and we should give them solo time. The reason? It glorifies God. If we don't let these people perform, then we must be holding glory

(Talent, continued on pg 2...)

## ENDNOTES On Our Singing and Meeting

WE HAVE CONCLUDED two very successful events this past week. We began with our annual singing last Saturday. If you missed this period of praise and edification, I hope you will make plans to be present next year (CD's are available). The sound was phenomenal, but the spirit attendant in the worship was the true joy and value. Our leaders did a wonderful job, and we thank brother Tomblin for organizing this event. The visuals crew, as always, did an outstanding job of placing the songs before us, and we thank them for their work.

Our gospel meeting with Joseph Casimier was a true feast in the word. You need to listen to these if you missed them (on CD, Endnotes, continued on pg 3...)

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(Talent, continued from pg 1...)

from God. That's the argument, anyway. But can you catch the same tone in Victoria Osteen's remarks? In both cases, it isn't about what God says. It isn't about what God wants. Instead, we assume that worship is about nothing more than making ourselves happy. You can claim that playing the guitar will make God happy. Isn't that the main thrust of the Osteen argument? It must make God happy because it makes us happy. In contrast you might read Isaiah 55:8 - 9.

Now consider this... if you argue that God is pleased because of the beauty expressed in the talent, you've just dismissed people without talent. Not having talent makes one person's worship better (pleases God more)

than another person's worship. Do you really want your argument to become an "America's Got Talent" argument? You've seen the show, haven't you? Someone wins at the end, and a lot of people lose. And people don't have to have talent to think they have talent. Now I want to know, will the Osteens let just anyone get on their stage and perform? It would make those people happy to show the world their love for God! Wouldn't that make God happy? And here's an even better question. Some people are much more happy spending their money on themselves, rather than giving it to the Osteen ministry. If making them happy is how we make God happy, then shouldn't they be encouraged to do so? *Selfish*, you say? I must confess that I do not see the difference between that and letting people "*spend* their worship" on themselves.

Denominations have auditioned performers (yes, I used the word *performer*) for many years. The music is carefully orchestrated. Why? We imagine that if it makes us happy, it makes God happy. Surely we realize that the praises of the angelic host is infinitely beyond the capabilities of the most talented human on earth!

God wants two things from our worship, as Jesus said in John 4:24 — "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Worshiping in *spirit* refers to worshiping with

the spirit. It has nothing to do with how lively the service is. Jesus is talking about a worship that involves the mind. It is a worship that is deliberate by thought, with pure motives. Worshiping in truth has to do with seeking *what God wants*. As opposed to the Osteen approach, Jesus said God seeks for us to do it *His way*. It isn't about making ourselves happy. It's about losing ourselves in the will of God, and being happy because we've obeyed Him. Paul wrote, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..." (Col 3:17). Doing something *in the name of* refers to doing it by the authority of. Our worship makes God happy when we give Him the place of authority He deserves. Rather than enthroning ourselves (by our talent or happiness), we lift up our creator in *His* prescribed way. This is to be the approach to our entire life: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all." (Eccl 12:13)

Allow me to leave you with a scripture that bears heavily upon this subject: "This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men." (Mt 15:8f) Jesus was making an application of Isaiah to the people of His day. We would be well served to do the same in this generation.

## THIS WEEK'S DAILY BIBLE READINGS

### NEW TESTAMENT READING

I CORINTHIANS 1 - 8

September 14 - 16

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

JUDGES 17 - 21

September 17 - 20

I TIMOTHY 4:13

### Think About It...

Would you rather watch someone worship the Lord, or actually worship Him yourself?

# FAMILY NEWS & NOTES

*News and Notes of Interest  
to Fry Road Members*

Because of the large number of visitors to our services, we would ask those wishing to identify with the congregation to do so by expressing this interest directly to the elders.

## Sick and Shut-Ins

*Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy*

*"...I was sick, and you visited me..."  
Matthew 25:36*

**Updates for friends and family members should be given to Bob regularly to keep necessary items up-to-date, and included in Plain Path.**

## Directory Info

### Sermons:

**Next Sunday:**

Does it Matter  
Which Church?

**Tonight:**

The Land of Forgetfulness

(Endnotes, continued from pg 1...)

or from the website). Brother Casimier touched upon many points we should be attendant to in our lives. Words cannot reflect the joy of the gospel he so ably preached.

We will be announcing our spring dates very soon. You should be watching for these, and note them on your calendar when given. The work continues, and we should all be diligent in it. 

## Visitors

**You are truly a blessing, and we are glad you chose to worship with us. Please take a moment to fill out a visitor card and drop it into the collection plate. Thank you.**

## Preaching Abroad...

*Ruben Amador* is in the Dominican Republic on a preaching trip. Please remember him and his hearers in your prayers.

## This Week...

The entrance to our parking lot from Fry Road will be blocked off at the beginning of this week. All traffic will have to use the entrance at the South end of the parking lot. There has been a problem with drivers (non-attendees) trying to bypass the light by running through our drive. There have been a number of cases where children and adults have nearly been hit. We understand that this will be inconvenient for some, but the safety of attendees is of vital importance.

# FOR THE RECORD

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

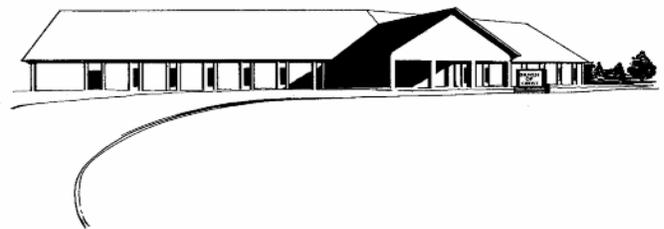
## MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS

Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy

IN KEEPING WITH OUR LONG STANDING AGREEMENT, THOSE SERVING PUBLICLY ARE REMINDED TO PLEASE DRESS IN A MANNER RESPECTFUL OF THE GOD WHOM WE SERVE.

### ELDERS:

Ruben Amador  
Matthew Heaton  
Donnie Mangrum  
Steve Voss



### DEACONS:

John Coleman	Ken Dunsmore
David Ellison	Ray Farrell
Aubrey Garner	Steve Geraci
Steve LaGrasta	John Light
Steven Martin	Mike McMurray
Jason Mock	David Stevenson
Glenn Tomblin	

### TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Classes	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Assembly	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Assembly	6:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes	7:30 PM

### EVANGELIST & EDITOR:

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