

KEYBOARD RELIGION

Joe Slater

Why are the letters on a keyboard arranged in such a weird order? Q-w-e-r-t-y . . . Whose bright idea was that? Actually, they have been that way since the “writing machine” was invented back in the 1860s. Oddly enough, this arrangement was deliberately used to hold down typing speed, thus preventing the typewriter keys from jamming!

Studies have shown that there are better ways to arrange the letters. Years ago I saw advertisements for computer keyboards with superior key arrangements. They promised dramatic increases in speed (with no jamming, since we’re talking about keyboards, not typewriters). I didn’t buy one, and I doubt that very many were sold. I never see the ads any more. Evidently most of us are content with the way keyboards are now. We don’t want to take the time or trouble to learn a different pattern.

Here I sit at my computer writing this article. I can type words while scarcely even thinking about it. My fingers are trained to react by reflex. In fact, if I think too much about the typing process, I make more mistakes, and my speed drops sharply.

Some folks have a keyboard religion. They react by reflex, with little or no thought. Worship is something they do simply because that is what they are accustomed to doing. They go to the same place, sit in the same pew, listen to the same teaching, and sing the same songs in the same way they have always done. Religion is routine and ritualistic for them.

God is not glorified by keyboard religion. He looks for reflective, not reflexive, worship. Jesus said, “*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship*

in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Just going through the motions is not acceptable worship. Our intellect and emotions must be engaged as well.

So, when you worship, ask yourself why you are doing what you are doing. Is it merely because that’s what you have always done? Does your worship consist of what God has authorized in the New Testament? What if you discovered changes that would bring your worship into closer alignment with the New Testament? Would you remain satisfied with the way things are, or would you take the time and trouble to learn the new pattern?

Reflexes are fine for typing; but let’s not have a keyboard religion!

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To Push or Not to Push?

As preachers, elders, and teachers, we are commissioned to preach, persuade, reason, and exhort. We are not authorized to coerce. We are not policemen. Forced belief, brought about by pressure to conform rather than by persuasion, is not really belief at all.

“A person convinced against his will

Is of the same conviction still!”

SONG OF CONFUSION

A little girl was drawing a picture of Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, and the shepherds. Off to one side sat a portly old gentleman in a suit and tie.

“Who is that?” asked her teacher.

“Oh,” said the little girl, “That’s round John Virgin!”

--both short notes above via *Preacher Talk*

Blind Leaders of the Blind

Jesus said of the Pharisees, “*They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a ditch*” (Matthew 15:13, 14).

A man driving through the Colorado mountains ran into a snowstorm so heavy it blinded him; he lost all sense of direction. He looked out his car window and saw a snow plow. Relieved, he followed as close as he could while it removed the snow in front of him.

After a while, the plow stopped. The driver came over to the car and asked, “Mister where are you headed?” The man answered, “I’m on my way to Montana.” The snowplow man said, “Well, you’ll never get there following me. I’m plowing out this parking lot!”

Spiritual blindness is even more serious. Satan can keep us so wrapped up in worldly affairs that we go around and around, never getting anywhere, but blindly following the ungodly thrills of the world. Paul described it this way: “*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them*” (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4). It is our choice: we can follow the world of darkness or submit to a loving God Who wants to give us the blessing of being His own special children.

Peter warned, “*You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked*” (2 Peter 3:17).

Jesus said, “*I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*” (John 8:12).

--Cecil Burch (Angel Fire, NM) via Old Paths (adapted)