

EARNESTLY CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH – Oct. 2026

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GOING BY FEELINGS AND EXPERIENCE

Years ago, a famous song had the line: *"It can't be wrong when it feels so right."* Sadly, that has come to define the "theology" of huge segments of professing Christianity.

Hyper-charismania, fueled by the likes of pastor Bill Johnson of Bethel Church in Redding, California, is often governed by extreme subjectivism (truth determined by personal experience and/or feelings) and mysticism (spiritual intuition based on subjectivism). It is so bad that, in practical reality, experience and feelings for many have become the spiritual authority that governs their life.

Bill emphasizes getting your mind out of it and letting experience guide. In this case, in practical reality, "feelings" now take precedence over sound doctrine. Of course, there is a place for experience and feelings, but they must always be the caboose and not the engine. Emotions, feelings, and experience must always be in submission to SOUND DOCTRINE!

In their "sacramental" book, *"The Power of Communion"* by Beni and Bill Johnson, Beni recounts meeting with a cessationist deep in study mode. He had his Bible open and all kinds of notes. She says that after having an interesting discussion with him, she walked away with one thought: *"No one can deny your testimony... People can argue with theology, but your testimony is your most powerful tool"* (p. 54). In effect, this line of reasoning puts experience above the Bible. In that same book, she claims she had been to heaven. She spoke of a lady who is *"anointed in taking people on heavenly encounters. She leads people in encounters with the Lord in which they get to experience Heaven with Him"* (p. 74). You can't make this stuff up!

In his book *"The Supernatural Power of a Transformed Mind,"* Bill says, *"A normal Christian is one who obeys the revelations and promptings of the Holy Spirit without understanding"* (p. 73). In his book, *"The Way of Life,"* he says, *"truth is to be known by experience"* (p. 72). Again, he says, *"Often times, I would not have been able to explain what I had just read, as it hadn't touched my mind yet. ... My mind would eventually catch up"* (p. 142). In his book, *"Dreaming with God,"* Bill says, *"The believer who governs his Christian life through the mind is the carnal Christian..."* (p. 58). On page 141, Bill says the Holy Spirit *"told me that it meant [Eph. 3:19] that I could know by experience what would be beyond the reach of comprehension."*

This emphasis on **"getting your mind out of it"** is the opposite of true Christianity. Christianity is a **"thinking person's" faith!** God desires all to be saved *"and come to the KNOWLEDGE of the truth"* (1 Tim. 2:4). Salvation begins with a KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH! Peter says that God's divine power has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness *"through the KNOWLEDGE of Him"* (2 Pet. 1:3). Peter says grace and peace are multiplied to us *"in the KNOWLEDGE of God and of Jesus our Lord"* (2 Pet. 1:2). Peter says as we ADD to our faith we will not be unfruitful *"in the KNOWLEDGE of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2 Pet. 1:8). Peter had the incredible experience of the Mount of Transfiguration, but he says, *"we have as more sure the prophetic word"* (2 Pet. 1:19). Peter's last words were, *"grow in the grace and KNOWLEDGE of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"* (2 Pet. 3:18). – [Emphasis mine]

We are to be transformed by the *"renewing of your mind"* (Rom. 12:2). As we pray, we are promised that the peace of God *"will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 4:6-7). False prophets share delusions from their own experiences (cf. Jer. 14:14; 23:16; Ezek. 13:2). The heart is deceitful above all things (Jer. 17:9). It can't be trusted! There is a way which seems right, but the end is the way of DEATH (Prov. 14:12). The Bible explicitly says that the time would come when professing Christians will no longer endure sound doctrine, but rather will heap up to themselves false teachers who will tell them what they want to hear (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1-4). We are there! Sound doctrine is out! Self-pleasing subjectivism is in!

Thot: *"If any angel should appear on my windowsill, I would tell him to wait a minute while I got my Bible to check out what he says."* – A.W. Tozer

Earnestly Contending, Pastor Dwight J. Oswald