

For the Journal-Gazette
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An interesting phenomenon in our society is that of fads. They come and go like the wind, but like a river, always take some things with them and leave other things behind. Fads can range from very large in scope to very small. They can have various motifs and be dangerous or life saving. Without a doubt the longer one lives, the more fads he/she will see. Fads appear, effect many people, and then fade away.

The media is particularly effected by fads. When people assemble for a particular cause and make a splash about it, the media reports it. For a while it seems newsworthy, but in time, the media will look for something else to write about.

Diets are one of the most popular fads. People, who read of new diets, think they can lose weight fast without harming their body. Many different kinds have been tried, and most fail because the bottom line of losing weight is balanced eating with calorie intake less than calories expended. The saddest part about this kind of fad is that instead of health, the body is harmed.

Clothing is another fad in which people behave as if they are trapped. If we don't dress according to the current vogue, we're out of style--and we sure don't want that! The bottom line is that we can always dress well, and we don't have to follow the particular fad of styles which always seem to be changing.

But of all fads, the most tragic are those which involve the "Christian community." Individuals can be swept up by a flurry of religious excitement, only to later find that what they thought to be powerful and sound in the faith, to be a passing fad. Religious history is filled with such endeavors. Schemers have tried to discredit religious teachings, take money under the facade of saving souls, and control every aspect of people's lives by using fads.

Fortunately, the Scriptures are not silent concerning this kind of false doctrine. Jesus stated that any plant not planted by His heavenly Father would be rooted up. See Matthew 13:18-23; 18:36-40 and 15:13.14.

When religious fads appear, they look good on the surface. They usually are accompanied by great promises, pep, promotion, and publicity. As appealing as it might sound, is there any way to tell if this "new teaching" is really of God? Yes! The way to know whether something is of God is to see if it will be supported by sound Bible teachings. The Bereans were more noble than the Macedonians because they searched the Scriptures daily, checking to see if what they heard preached was what God had revealed in His word (see Acts 17:11). Religious fads will not last if they are not based on God's word.

To have a positive spiritual attitude means being level headed enough to recognize passing fads, and treat them that way. Our mature knowledge of the word will keep us on the "straight and narrow" and away from the fads that might lead us astray.