

Emphatically

by Geneva Brown Smith

The American public became fascinated with Theodore Roosevelt, the twenty-sixth president of the United States. Known for his maverick ways, he broke up unfair monopolies and pushed for food inspection and workplace safety laws. He was an avid environmentalist who was determined not to, in his words, “rob by wasteful use the generations that come after us.”

According to historians, Mr. Roosevelt possessed a somewhat brash and macho nature long before Americans had ever heard the word “macho.” One historian said, “his life was characterized by passion and zest and a drive to achieve great things.”

In one of his famous speeches, he blasted the idea of “hyphenated Americans” and insisted that foreigners learn English and adopt American values and customs. He said of himself, “I have been president emphatically.”

After reading an article from the local newspaper (from which many of these ideas came), it occurred to this writer that Theodore Roosevelt’s example as a courageous president could in some ways parallel the courage and passion of the Christian.

Please do not misunderstand. I am not recommending that a Christian should always think and live outside the walls of traditional thinking. There are times, however, when the majority may be leaning toward liberalism or some other “ism” that a Christian must disagree and speak out. The Word of God must be studied and carefully handled making sure the interpretation is correct so as not to “rob by wasteful use the generations that come after us.” Not only that, but his idea of hyphenated Americans could apply to Christians. Where does The Bible say anything about Baptist-Christians, Methodist-Christians, etc.? It just says they were called Christians first at Antioch (Acts 11:26).

As Mr. Roosevelt’s life as president was “characterized by passion and zest and a drive to achieve great things,” so should be the life of the Christian. The lukewarm Christian is very distasteful to deity. “So then, because you are neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth (Revelation 3:16).

Last of all, one must be a Christian “emphatically.”

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, this word emphatically means “bold and definite in expression and action, positive.”

A woman who is a Christian may sometimes disagree just as a man may. If she honestly disagrees with something being taught by the elders or the preacher, she can discuss this with them in a respectful manner, explaining where and why she disagrees. Her attitude and manner will determine how she will be perceived. It is not her place however to try and tell either the congregation or any member what is to be done. Some have tried this, and it does not speak well for womanhood. It degrades her in the eyes of the congregation, and shames her husband. Let us as women try and live our lives every day in a bold and courageous manner, that is, doing the things taught in the Bible. However, let us remember that we are women, and have our own special place in the church. “In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing. But which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission” (I Timothy 2:9-11).