

More 'correct' religion, less God

As you may already know, I am God's dog. The main difference between the men of God and God's dog is that the men's narrative deceives ordinary people that their problems can be fixed magically and quickly by God, and the dog's narrative gives the guidance that the Omnipotent is currently in divine rest and cannot intervene.

Last Sunday, one of the pastors who talk on *Impact FM* and *Dream TV* from 7am expressed the astonishing view that the (Pentecostal) Born Again Faith is the only valid religion.

If the statement came from a high-ranking cleric in mainstream Christendom, it would make the ground shake.

Although at different fora the other pastors also generally express the same opinion, they were clearly taken aback when their colleague broadcast it so bluntly in a multi-faith society that is frequently terrorised by electronically amplified Pentecostal noise. They awkwardly tried to patch up the outrage, but the damage was done.

That was last Sunday. But the Sunday before, another pastor at the same programme had lamented that an anti-God spirit (*omwoyo*) was growing in the country.

Now, as God's dog, I get intrigued by such voices coming from the most self-righteous group among Uganda's men of God.

You see, the *Impact FM* voices have been long touting the position that the Pentecostals now rank Number Two, or even Number One, in numerical strength in the country. They do not like it, and they never stop grumbling in their broadcasts, that Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) ranks the

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On the Mark



Catholics and the Anglicans as Number One and Number Two respectively.

Their insistence is in spite of the fact that many Anglicans and Catholics sometimes attend Pentecostal church worship to enjoy the theatrical entertainment but without converting to Pentecostalism or submitting to water submersion initiation as the correct form of baptism.

We also know that reformed (*balokole*) Anglicans are sometimes confused with Pentecostal (*balokole*).

However, if we grant that Pentecostals are now top, or next to top, several questions must follow.

Has this Pentecostal expansion been accompanied by an expansion of religious arrogance, since the Pentecostals see themselves as the only correct religious faith?

Pentecostals promote a type of spiritualism that we encounter in primitive (or pre-modern) religious traditions.

Without any evidence that the Holy Spirit is delivering more miraculous results than

primitive ancestor and other African spirits, has the expansion of the Pentecostal faith inadvertently triggered the alienation from God that Pastor Joseph Sserwadda was lamenting?

In other words, has more Pentecostalism led to less God in Uganda?

In any case, is there anything in the actions of the men of God that would nudge normal (non-fanatical) Ugandans to love God?

The Inter Religious Council is cobbled from Uganda's major religious organisations. Its original goals were foggy, but it is now clearly a tool used to put a sheen on ugly government.

Immediately after President Museveni's January re-election, the council members rushed to the President's private residence for thanksgiving. Who knows the rewards the holy men got?

Subsequently, the same council members paid a (token?) visit to Robert Kyagulanyi's traumatised family.

One of the pastors in the group complained, or noted, that Ms Kyagulanyi had not served them tea but had served tea to a group of journalists who had visited on another occasion!

The mindset of the men of God that has narrowed in inverse proportion to the increments in the cynicism of the men of power may be good for their mutual benefit. But it does not wake God in the hearts of the citizens.

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