WHO ARE WE TO JUDGE?

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What gives those of us who live in the West the right to dictate what does or does not "count" as "real" allegiance to Christ in very different cultures where God is at work?
Category: Church: World

If you read missionary literature or some of the more inflammatory Christian magazines and websites, you will have come across the concept of "insider movements"

> *"that is, movements of people to faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord, while remaining "inside" their former and surrounding faith communities, or at any rate not leaving those communities in a visible way by joining an established Christian church (or creating one in the traditional image)."*

Again, depending on which literature you read, you might have strong views on these movements. You certainly don't have to go far to find people hurling all sorts of invectives at them.

> *In missiological circles, the debate has raged over whether insider movements should simply be recognised (where they are even visible to "outsiders" at all), with a humble acceptance of the sovereignty of God's Spirit to work where and how he wishes, or whether such insider movements should actually be fostered and encouraged as a matter of mission strategy, or actively discouraged as a betrayal of the gospel and a serious threat to people's genuine salvation.Â And for some of us, another question arises:Â* ***What gives those of us who live in the West, who live and breathe one of the most syncretized forms of Christian faith the world has seen, the right to dictate what does or does not "count" as "real" allegiance to Christ in very different cultures where God is at work?Â*** *Why must we, in our habitual urge to manage and strategize, be the ones to provide the labels and taxonomies and criteria?*

I just wish that I'd said it. The quotes come fromÂ Christian Mission in the Modern WorldÂ by John Stott, updated by Chris Wright (emphasis mine).