

22T14b Rant on Quotes

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table.

Rant! I want to apologize before I start today. But today, I have another rant. Something to get off my chest. I just need to Rant.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father please guide our discussion today. Help me to stay out of the way, so you can use me. We trust you and we know you have promised the wisdom we need to understand your word in the Bible. Help us to let the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us. Bless our time together and I pray all these things in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Okay, rant. Rant is defined as speak or shout at length in a wild, impassioned way. Another word is tirade. So I'm going to speak in an impassioned way about quotes. Before I start, I'm not intending to pick on pastors and teachers today. I'm a teacher too, so I'm picking on myself and others like me.

Why do pastors and Christian teachers use so many quotations from other people in their messages. Well this is speech writing 101. Every speech coach, including mine, will tell you. You have to quote sources to make your points credible. What this means is you quote others to give your message credibility. Did you hear what I said. Christian teachers and pastors use quotes to give their messages credibility. But, we need to ask Why?

Now I personally write, teach and speak in the Christian and non-Christian forums of the world. In the non-Christian world, without quotations to make your point, people would ask who are you. Why should we listen to you? Who gave you the authority to make your claims? I have to ask why? What makes quoting someone else a way of getting credibility? I'd say, who are they?

It hit me recently, Christian pastors and teachers don't need this approach. In fact, we should not use it at all, and this is why.

First, Why should you listen to me. Simple answer is I'm talking about God and God's word. That is a pretty good reason to listen to me and other Christian teachers.

Second, Who gave me the authority to make my claims? Well God did. God told us to study, meditate and teacher others about the work of God.

The real question is, do Christian teachers and pastors need credibility? Well of course. But the real question is how to get that credibility. This is why most Christian pastors and teachers quote other people, bible commentaries, books, etc. By quoting, they feel they are gaining credibility from those other sources. But who gave the other sources credibility? Can you see the never ending trail? Teacher#1 quotes teacher #2 for credibility., Teacher #2 quotes teacher #3 for credibility, Teacher #3 quotes teacher

#1.... You can get the picture. It's a never ending cascade of quotes on quotes on quotes. But, is this what credibility looks like. Well of course not.

So, who is the only source of truth and credibility? Yes, of course, God. So isn't quoting God the only way a Christian pastor/teacher gets credibility? Of course, yes. In fact, the only source of true credibility is from the Bible.

So, if I'm teaching the Bible is there any need for more credibility. Well No. Unfortunately what I often hear are quotes that don't add anything to the text or subject being discussed. More times than not, the quote is just for the purpose of having a quote. I'll hear something discussed in length, then the speaker pulls out a quote from someone which says nearly the same thing... Why, you just said it. You based your talk on the Bible. So, what's the purpose of the quote.... Well, nothing.

Think about it for a second. There are many sermons or talks recorded for us in the Bible. Paul, Peter, John, Jesus and many others. Did they use quotes? Well yes in some cases. Who did they quote? God, Jesus or the Bible. I never heard Paul say, well Peter said this. Or John in one of his letters quote Barnabas. No they quoted Jesus, God and other scriptures like the Psalms or prophets.

Quoting a modern person or any post Bible-era person is not the same. None of these would consider their words or writing as inspired scripture, so don't give them the same level of importance or higher level of importance than the Bible. When we quote them, we are saying what they say or how they interpret something is more valuable or more important than the Bible itself.

Now for my rant. Is quoting the Bible not enough. When did quoting God's word begin to require us to quote some one else to give God's words credibility? That's what we've been doing folks. So Why? Maybe this is insecurities about our interpretations of God's word. Maybe it is speech writing 101. Maybe it's messages that are not rooted in God's word, so we need other people's names to give it credibility.

Now why is this potentially a bad thing. Well do you know the person you are quoting? What makes what they say more credible than what you say? Who made them the authority? Now okay, now I'm going to rant for real. I believe you better be careful when you are quoting someone. When you quote someone from the pulpit or in a video, you are endorsing that person. You are using their name for your credibility, so you are saying they are an authority. So whatever they say goes. Whatever they say, write, teach is to be believed. Now that's a high target. That may not be what you mean but the people listening only know that you think this person you quoted is an authority. You just gave that other person your credibility, did you really want to do that. Especially in today's era.

Now I'm going to give you some outrageous examples.

Here are a couple quotes from famous people “ Ideas are more powerful than guns”. This seems like a very sensible quote doesn’t it.

Here is another, “words build bridges into unexplored regions”. Both of these seem okay. You might even agree with what was said.

But what if I told the first quote was from Joseph Stalin and the second from Adolf Hitler. Now has your opinion of the quotes changed.

Even if I like what the phrase says, I bet you would not want to quote either of these names to gain credibility for your Christian talking points. And you sure would not want anyone who trusted you to believe everything or anything either of these men taught or wrote. You would not want to associate yourself with their thoughts or actions.

So, why do you think in Christian circles we quote people so randomly. When you quote someone, you endorse them and all their issues both good, bad and ugly.

Let me give you another example. I listened to a famous Christian apologist for years. I loved what he said, his talks, debates, books. I had many phrases I heard first from him that were quote worthy. Then he was exposed for who he really was, not Christ like at all. He was disgraced. Anything with his name on it was expunged. No one wanted to be associated with him anymore. What if you routinely had quoted him? What if you had routinely used his name and words for credibility? So. How is your credibility looking now?

What if your messages were recorded, now you have a credibility issue.

So, then what? Do we need the quotes for credibility? Of course not, Not if we speak the truth of the Bible. We can read and learn from others of course. But to teach using other’s names is dangerous and unnecessary. It undermines the sufficiency of the Bible as are authoritative source of truth. If we need others to give us credibility, then what.?

Unfortunately, I have many more examples sadly. But I think my rant is over for today.

Father God, thank you for giving us your peace and assurance. May we trust you with everything we have. I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen

One last thing before I let you go today. God is enough. God’s word is enough. I think if we spent more time in God’s word and less time reading about what others say about God’s word, we would be better off. The Bible is amazing because it can be read and understood by anyone. You don’t need PhD or seminary degrees. You just need you and God. Sure you won’t understand everything, but those commentary guys don’t understand everything either. Some of your sources are probably just wrong, others are speculating. You have the only source of credibility in front of you in the Bible. God is enough. God is truth. God can be trusted. Amen. If you hear something from me that

you like or you feel was said well. Don't quote me, just use it. Any truth is from God. You don't get credibility from me or anyone else, only from God.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today. Again, I want to apologize for my rant today. I just felt like I needed to say something.

See you next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.