

**General Topics :: Preaching another's Sermon**

**Preaching another's Sermon - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/4/7 17:58**

Brothers, I need some outside-of-my-church advice, largely because I do not want to cause a rukus, and I feel that talking to it with other congregants would not be in submission to Matthew 18 (if it is even necessary). So I am hoping to gain wisdom from many counselors here.

Somehow it dawned on me one sunday evening that my pastor was borrowing sermons from the internet/devotional books. I really don't know how I knew. I just did.

I have indeed found many of them--some almost word-for-word and some that were very similar, although his own stories were put in place of the ones mentioned.

I need advice on what to do. Am I being legalistic or overly critical?

**Re: Preaching another's Sermon - posted by Lysa (), on: 2014/4/7 18:32**

Years ago, in the 1990's, I read this great sermon from David Wilkerson I got in the mail and then on Sunday at church the pastor read it word for word and the accolades that people gave him upon leaving about what a good word he brought forth and HE ACCEPTED IT and never said otherwise!!

In my opinion, there is nothing wrong with using another person's sermon as long as you let the people know that it is not solely yours. Yes, the word of God is free but when the people praise you for words that aren't yours and you accept it, there's a huge problem. I might be over reacting but I think it not just borders on theft but reveals what's in that pastor's heart.

God bless you,  
Lisa

**Re: - posted by a-servant, on: 2014/4/7 22:50**

myself i can be a very harsh critic at times, then again there is something similar to synchronicity that makes you wonder why different people have the very same message at the same time

to the best of my knowledge: you cannot put a copyright on the messages of God, therefore i would say be discerning, but also let it go. The words are what's important, not the messenger. Don't put your focus/attention on him.

**Re: Preaching another's Sermon - posted by Sree (), on: 2014/4/8 0:51**

People ask Brother Zac Poonen whether they can share his message in their Church. He does not tell them to mention that it is Zac Poonen's message, instead he tells them that make sure you first live it before you deliver it. So the only thing we need to be concerned is, is your pastor living what he preaches? Jesus lived what he preached. Even if your pastor does not live it, is he humble enough to acknowledge that he too earnestly wants to walk in the way that the word says today? All these things are important.

Someone asked Brother Zac Poonen how long it took him to prepare his sermons, he said 40 years. Which means these are things that he learnt in 40 years of his life by walking with Jesus. These are not sermons that he prepared Sunday morning.

I too share God's word in my church here. I also listen to lot of sermons, I cannot avoid having an influence of other sermons in the words that I share, I agree there is an influence. But I always make sure the theme of what I share is exactly what God wants me to speak to his Church. Normally God confirms it through some sign. Mostly I use only the revelation

n that God gives me, but some are also revelation that I heard directly from someone or a revelation that I got when hearing someone. Irrespective of whatever it is I make sure I always consider myself as a donkey who carries Jesus to Church.

Once after Sadhu Sundar Singh gave his sermon, people flocked around him to greet him. Someone observing these things asked Sundar why he accepts glory from men and let them flock around him. He replied that when Jesus entered Jerusalem sitting on a donkey, the donkey also got to experience the warm welcome that people there showed to Jesus. He said I am just the donkey it is not I who is honored here but the Jesus I am carrying.

**Re: Preaching another's Sermon - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2014/4/8 1:25**

Hi havok20x,

I see you are feeling the effects of what God reprimanded the prophets of Israel for before being sent into captivity. The prophets had not dwelt in the holy place and had not heard from God. Because they were expected to speak, they did several things that showed that their words were not from the Father. First, what you mentioned, they borrowed their words one from another. Second, they shared the things from their own heart and imaginations. Both of these things are wicked before God.

In today's time, some may say that this does not apply. 1 Peter 4, when talking about how we are to serve each other in Body, the Peter says that we are all to do our work in the power of God. The person who preaches has what seems to be an even more strict requirement because they are to preach as the very oracles of God. An oracle is no light thing to speak, it carries weight and requirement. This can be a call to repent or a warning of things to come like how God spoke through Jeremiah. He was sent out to speak to the people and in the hearing of his word one of the priests was struck down. The Word records Jeremiah's response that he wept and cried out to God, just seeing one apostate priest fall let alone the people who would later be judged.

**Re: - posted by davidkeel (), on: 2014/4/8 5:10**

It's hard to tell what's in the hearts of people. Someone mentioned that a pastor felt congratulated for giving a sermon which was somebody else's words. It's hard to tell if they are taking those congratulations to heart. He may be pleased instead that someone was actually taking note of what he said.

Taking someone else's words and passing them on are something which the human race is guilty of. It seems to be part of us as human beings. No one is truly unique unless they are cut off from the people. The whole grace movement seems filled with people passing on messages about a different way to teach each others message.

But those who have got repentance in their heart and life as part of their message seem to be the ones who are hearing a unique thing from God on a regular basis. Because they have drawn close to him in obedience. These are just some things, like observations I've noticed.

Maybe ask God what he thinks you should do.

**Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/4/8 10:43**

I don't think plagiarism is the real issue here. Yes, in a sense it is plagiarism, but this isn't academia. The issue that I am seeing is that the pastor will say "I wrote it down like this..." or "I title this sermon..." or something that says he put the study and diligence and searching out of the Scriptures and counsel of God, yet those quotes, titles, outlines, and many times entire sermons I can find on the internet, usually from one website.

So the battle in me is this: God CAN tell a preacher to use a message from another and deliver it to his congregation. Look at the book of 2 Peter and the book of Jude, the content is VERY similar, and that was divinely instructed by the Spirit. (Not to mention, but I believe the Spirit put those verses about false prophets twice in scripture because of the seriousness of the issue, affirming those things beyond doubt). However, will the Lord do that every Sunday morning and Sunday evening and during any revival services, etc?

I have been praying, and thank you, David for the exhortation to continue to do so. I am also trying to follow the admonition in proverbs, while I am praying, to gain wisdom from many counselors.

**Re: Preaching another's Sermon - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2014/4/8 18:08**

While I would never embrace plagiarism (even in regard to repeating someone else's sermon), I think that there is a problem in Christianity in which so many people repeat the language used by others.

If you watch Christian television or listen to Christian radio, you will often hear the same rhetoric being used by various personalities. It is like they are using the language that is popular -- not with the world but among Christians. My wife calls this "Christianese."

I mentioned this to a friend once who rebutted that sermons are often "inspired" and, thus, "spiritual" rhetoric would naturally become "common" by which it is inspired by God to multiple recipients. I, in turn, rebutted that the same could be said of unspiritual or sinful rhetoric that is inspired by the whims of this dark world (or even spiritual wickedness in high places).

I knew one charismatic preacher who would talk about "swimming in the river" (referring to "God's blessings"). Within weeks, I knew people who repeated this in their daily conversations. This and other rhetoric became common language used by quite a few people.

Like doctrinal adherence required for membership and activity in many churches with sectarian doctrines, people have a tendency to resemble the things that they yield themselves to. This is why it is vital that we yield ourselves to Christ -- first and foremost. Our language will be biblical and our love for Christ will be apparent.

Now, I have heard of preachers who acknowledge preaching messages written or recited by others. They don't credit the source either (even claiming that God was the inspiration of the original message). I do think that there is some danger in this practice. A quick citation (even rhetorically) would be more forthcoming and honest.

I also think that this raises an even bigger issue. What happens if you are a pastor or teacher "scheduled" to speak and feel no unction or inspiration about what to speak about? Should such an individual simply sit down? Should they ask if anyone else among the teachers of the church have something to share? Perhaps they should simply read the Word of God during such periods of time. In fact, it could be very beneficial if pastors without a message would simply read (publicly) the Word.

I will say this: I have often "received" more (in terms of knowledge, passion, and hunger for Christ) after listening to 30-50 year old messages here on SermonIndex from men like Leonard Ravenhill than I have heard coming from pulpits in many congregations in America. In fact, this might be a great option too. If a speaker has nothing to say during a scheduled meeting, why not share the words of some other minister who has gone before us?

I don't think that it is being too "legalistic" to want a speaker to speak under the pretense that the words that he is sharing is his own "revelation," "inspiration" or "understanding" from God. At the same time, I don't think that anyone should spend too much time focusing on such things. Like what I suspect is true with most people, I often read the Word and pray during any message that I hear and try to sift through the words spoken and find some wisdom from the Lord.

**Re: , on: 2014/4/8 18:13**

If we could retain Biblical terminology, perhaps we can avoid:

- I Tim. 1:6 - "fruitless discussion"
- I Tim. 6:4 - "morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words"
- II Tim. 2:14 - "wrangling about words"
- II Tim. 2:23 - "foolish and ignorant speculation"
- Titus 3:9 - "foolish controversies"

But, it is a bit hard to do this when terminology is changing "like the wind" with the constant changing of Bible versions.

Result: Big time CONFUSION in the Church!