

I'm not smart enough to understand the "Why?" of this social media phenomenon but I do find myself wondering about the current propensity to explain life with simple yet catchy phrases that will (hopefully) be shared many times on social media (think #'s). Many preachers have begun tweeting the carefully crafted major points of their sermons into the social media universe as a way of scattering seeds of Truth in the spiritually barren landscape of culture. Whereas people used to read an entire book by a respected author and mull over all that was written, the current trend is to prune an entire book down to two or three pithy quotes and cast them out into the cultural swamp. Every time I see someone posting a quote from the writings of Augustine or Bonhoeffer or Hurnard or Sproul or Lewis or Keller or Piper, I wonder if they have actually read the entire treatise from which comes the quote or if they are mostly amping up their public résumé by linking with such well known authors.

Googling "popular Christian life mottos" will bring forth a list of catchy, pithy sayings that attempt to define? explain? expound? interpret? clarify? the meaning of life. Here are some of the most popular life slogans according to Google:

- Disappointment — His appointment.
- It doesn't take much effort to do what everyone else is doing.
- A dead fish can float downstream; it takes a live one to swim upstream.
- If Satan can't make you bad, he'll make you busy.
- Seek to connect instead of seeking to correct.
- Better days are coming. Have faith.
- Do your best so that you can't blame yourself for anything.
- The secret of joy is Christ in me; not me in different circumstances.

Granted, there is a kernel of truth in at least some of these life slogans...but these tiny morsels of wisdom are lacking depth and perspective and the long view of living life in the shadow of the cross of Jesus. A catchy slogan can get us through a rough day - maybe even a rough season of life - but we all need something deeper and much more intimate than a slogan, a pithy catchphrase, to sustain us on the journey of life. We crave a relationship; a deep, abiding, trustworthy, and defining relationship which can serve as our anchor/hope/peace when all the pithy sayings of humanity have lost their mojo. God offers us such a relationship in Jesus Christ.

Without doubt the most powerful "life slogans" are found in the Bible. But just as those who like to quote well-known authors without truly reading the works of said authors are missing the bigger picture, so too are those who like to claim and quote Scripture without reading and studying the entire witness of Scripture. That being said, here are some great "life slogans" straight out of the Bible:

- Seek first the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 6:33)
- Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. (Matthew 22:37)
- Trust in the Lord with all your heart. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
- Love people; consider other people more important than yourself. (Philippians 2:3-4)
- God will transform suffering into joy. (John 16:20)
- Abundant life is found in Jesus, not circumstances or possessions. (John 10:10)
- Do not give up doing what is righteous. (Galatians 6:9)
- God said it, I believe it, that settles it. (Isaiah 40:8)

Let me close with the following quote from the 10/28/1949 journal entry of Jim Elliot: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." Grace & peace, love you. PK