



### 3. Avoiding the quotable quote

#### Discussion guide – Series III

**Definition:** By ‘quotable quote’ we mean something a person says either in person or on social media that others could later quote them as having said.

#### HOOK:

- Have you ever said something that came back and ‘bit’ you 5 or 10 years later?
- Has anyone ever got into trouble over something you unwisely typed online?
- How long can the effect of unwise spoken words last? (Do you remember something your parents said when you were young *that you later used against them?*)

#### BOOK: Matthew 21:23-27 – By what authority do you do these things?

- Why might Jesus not have wanted to answer their question?
- How did he avoid replying?\*

#### John 8:1-11 – What to do with a Jewish woman caught in adultery

- Why didn’t Jesus want to answer this question?\*\*\*
- How did Jesus avoid replying?\*\*\*

#### LOOK:

- What things might you not want to give a ‘quotable quote’ on to your parents, or children, or spouse, or boss? Each person try to give one example.
- Should we always be open and honest? Why/Why not?\*\*\*\*
- Do you think there are topics we should be bold to give ‘quotable quotes’ on? Give examples – and why.
  - Consider Jesus’ bold and quotable statements in the ‘The Seven Woes’ of Matthew 23:13-36, directly confronting the hypocrisy of the religious leaders. Why was he quiet on some matters and vocal on others?
- **Read Matthew 10:33** (“If you deny me before others...”)
  - What kinds of questions do you think God expects his followers to give ‘quotable quotes’ on? What is the boundary?
  - Might there be different boundaries for different people – or even for people in different countries?
- **Activity – Part 1:** Consider things that people in the following roles would be wise to avoid making clear and quotable statements about
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A school teacher</li> <li>○ A student</li> <li>○ A court-of-law Judge</li> <li>○ A social worker</li> <li>○ An accountant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The employee of a bad boss</li> <li>○ The boss of a bad employee</li> <li>○ A doctor</li> <li>○ A policeman or woman</li> </ul>
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**Activity – Part 2:** Now consider some situations in which people in the above roles really should speak up – no matter how awkward.

**Summary comment:** Our mission is to make Christ known. We must therefore certainly never deny Christ. Yet our goal is to win people – not just arguments. While it is true that we must never lie, winning people over requires wisdom. There is a time to stay silent, a time to only ask a question, and a time to speak plainly. *We need to assess each situation, while also listening for the promptings of the Holy Spirit!*

**TOOK:**

- **Optional extra activity - avoiding the 'quotable quote':** Break into pairs and take turns asking each other their opinion on various difficult topics – to which the other person is to somehow reply in a way that engages the conversation, but without ever making a quotable statement that confirms their personal view.
- Has this discussion been useful? How so?
- What topics do you personally feel you need to speak up about more?

**Pray:**

- ...for growing wisdom for conversations.
- ...for opportunities to discuss faith with others.

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\* He replied their question with a question which he knew they wouldn't be willing to answer – on which basis he likewise refused to answer their question.

\*\* (1) There may have been hypocrisy amongst them in their accusation – as some amongst them may have been guilty of the same sin. (2) It was a trap – because Jews didn't have authority to give the death penalty - but he also couldn't deny God's moral law. (3) It's also of note that Jesus knew he would soon be on his way to the cross to pay for this woman's sin. He was having mercy on her because of love!

\*\*\* He simply refused to speak – and it was awkward.

\*\*\*\* Honest? Always. Open? It depends on who you are talking with!