

Bethany School

Towards a Christian Curriculum

Topic theme - Communication

Why teach COMMUNICATION?

This topic is the eighth of nine topic themes in the Bethany School Curriculum: Beginnings, Work, Water, Dry Land, Living Things - Plants and Animals, People, The Earth in Space, **Communication** and Nations.

In previous topics we have seen that God alone is eternal and all things **originate** in him. God's **activities** involve making, sustaining, redeeming and renewing creation and by acting this way, God reveals his character to **the created realms**. The whole of creation declares God's nature and attributes but people are especially the object of his desire, his longing, to **communicate** with his creation. The methods God uses to communicate, the principles of godly communication, hindrances to true communication and the development of human communication form the context for this topic.

Context

- God existed and communicated within the Godhead before creation.
- God's creation was good and through this he communicated his glory and splendour.
- God made the earth as a home for people. This especially communicated his love, providence, protection, and his desire for relationship and his care for the sub-human kingdom.
- All communication was good!
- Satan deceived Adam and Eve. Sin brought shame, further deceit, judgement, penalties and the break in direct communication between God and people.
- God is merciful and he continues to communicate with rebellious mankind
- Babel - God confuses the languages - communication is hindered - another merciful act of God.
- God's covenant with Abraham. The promise of a close relationship and continued communication through the patriarchs, judges, prophets, priests and kings.
- Christ - the mediator of the new covenant. Heb 9 v 15 The types and shadows of the old covenant are made clear in the Word made flesh - in Jesus. God resumes direct communication with his people - Emmanuel - God with us.. On the cross Jesus conquers sin, the veil of the temple is torn and, by God's grace, through faith in Christ, the broken relationship can be restored.
- The Bible - God's complete revelation. God communicating all that is required for faith and daily living.
- The Holy Spirit indwelling the believer, interpreting scripture, inspiring prayer and giving direct access to God. Maintaining a close, individual relationship with God through daily communication.
- The church. Membership of the universal and local church for communication through, worship, preaching, teaching, edification.
- The Great Commission. As ambassadors for Christ the requirement to communicate the gospel. 2 Cor 5 v 20
- Our Christian testimony. As salt and light communicating by godly living our changed natures.

- Heaven. For the first time, the impossibility of corrupt communication. Rev 21 v 27

God's great desire is to communicate with us; the Creator with his creation, the pure with the defiled, the holy with the sinful. The extremes bring out the wonder, joy and awesome nature of his mercy and grace.

***God who at various times and in different ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, ...
Hebrews 1 v 1***

Types of Communication

God to God - "...come let us...." Gen 1 v 26

God to People - creation, conscience, Scripture, Christ and the Cross, the Holy Spirit. (including communication with the created spirit world)

People to People - Oral, text, tactile, visual, sound, movement - preaching, speeches, conversation, song, music, poetry, literature, books, newspapers, magazines, journals, diaries, drama, gesture, body language, dance, mime, ceremony, graphics, art, advertising, braille, sign language,

People to Animals - domestication, pets, training,

People to Machines - electronic media, t.v., radio, computer, fax, E-mail, telephone, satellites, CD Rom

Animals to Animals - using senses bird song, courtship rituals, scenting, gesture / movement (tail wagging etc)

Communication involves: the exchange of **TRUTH** and **LIES**.

To communicate biblically, in whatever form, must involve:

- **TRUTH** and only truth! - Ephesians 4 v 15speaking the truth in love.... Is what I am going to communicate true or not? In whatever context or circumstance!
- **LOVE** - What is my attitude as I am communicating? What quality am I demonstrating? - Colossians 4 v 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt
- **NECESSITY** - Scripture is full of examples of sinful ways of communication. Tale-bearing, flatterer, false witness, deceit, malice, busybodies blasphemy, filthiness, jesting, etc. Ephesians 4 v 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. We need to ask ourselves, is what am about to communicate really necessary?
- **WISDOM** - The tongue and, by association, other forms of communication, in James 3 is described as wild, powerful, free (v3-4) destructive (v5) untamable, unruly, poisonous (v8) and as such, no man can tame it!
Biblical wisdom call us to:
 - be swift to hear and slow to speak (James 1 v 19);
 - guard and restrain our speech (James 1 v 26, Psalm 141, 39 v 1);
 - pray, get knowledge and seek wisdom in order to make our words, thoughts and actions acceptable to God. (Psalm 19 v 14, Proverbs 17 v 27-28)

Biblical Communication

Often we reduce much of our communication to RULES, CORRECTION and DISCIPLINE. The Bible says that the condition of the hearer requires different types of communication appropriate to the moment (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

Encouragement, correction, rebuke, entreaty, instruction, warning, teaching and prayer are all forms of communication explained in scripture.

Encouragement – Children need communication designed to inspire and fill with hope and courage.

Correction – Sometimes a child needs to be brought into conformity with a standard. Correction remedies something wrong, gives insight and shows what may be done.

Rebuke – A rebuke censures behaviour. Sometimes a child must experience a sense of alarm, shock and dismay at what he has done or said.

Entreaty – This is a special kind of communication that is earnest and intense and used in cases of great import. Proverbs 23:26, “My son, give me your heart”

Instruction – Children have large gaps in their understanding of life. They need information about how life works and biblical principles to follow Psalm 119:104.

Warning – A warning is a merciful communication, which puts children on guard about a probable danger. A warning faithfully alerts us to danger while there is still time to escape unharmed.

Teaching – Teaching is a process, which causes someone to know something. By actively imparting knowledge we teach children to understand himself, others, life, the world and God’s revelation.

Prayer – Prayer is communication with God but as we pray and as our children pray we give and gain penetrating insights into our life and our faith in God.

Honour, Obedience and Authority

The most important truth to communicate!

The most important lesson to learn!

The God-given way for children! (... including the corresponding God-given way for parents)

Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right, “Honour your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with a promise: “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

Ephesians 6:1-3

Children responding appropriately to legitimate authority, correctly exercised, should be in willing submission and their obedience should be ...

...without challenge

...without excuse

...without delay