

Communication Breakdown

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[0:00] Please be seated. And we're going to go to Genesis 3 at first.

! And we'll get there shortly. And thanks, Dad. Now, just make sure I've got this right.

Yeah. Let's pray, shall we? Our Lord, we thank you that we can open these precious pages of your word and help us, Lord, to understand, Lord, to be challenged and to take the challenge, to act on the challenge and put our feet into motion, Lord, that they be used for your sake.

In Jesus' name, amen. In Australia, we have a communication breakdown problem. Walk down the street, sit in the train, and everybody's connected, aren't they?

Everybody's connected, but they're actually disconnected, aren't they? From reality. It's not for my phone. Oh, I've got to have my phone on me.

[1:24] I've just got to have that screen. Your screen was down 17% last week. Oh, no. Your screen time was down. An average of one hour, 27 minutes a day.

That's disgusting, isn't it? That's how much time I spent on my screen. I mean, I'll have to repent of that. You know, how much time we spend on screens, don't we? You know, think, everybody's connected, but they're disconnected, aren't they?

Living in their own little bubble. It seems like everybody's tuned in, but all the while tuned out. Wired up with earphones.

Wired up with earphones. Wired up with earphones. Living in their own little world as they walk down the street. Or wireless gadgets, even, without the wires. And people scarcely register a flicker at you when you pass them down the street.

They scarcely register a flicker at the eyelids because their eyes are so transfixed. Oh, got to get the latest. Everybody's attention is somewhere else.

[2:33] Whether in listening to the music or the podcasts or their fingers and thumbs, madly texting and messaging, non-stop.

I know there's some spiritual ones here who don't have such problems. But I confess I've got that problem sometimes too. A lack of communication, isn't it?

A lack of communication. And it impacts the home and relationships. People scarcely talk anymore. You see them down in the cafe. They used to exchange loving glances and sweet words.

Now they're the both of them. What is going on? A communication breakdown. That's what's going on, isn't it? This communication breakdown, it's affecting all of us.

How can we truly communicate with God and with people? I think back to my 50-in-1 electronics kit as a child.

[3:43] And some of you went beyond and kept going in that direction. But not me, but there's some electronic wizards here today, various kinds. But a lot of the projects in my electronics kit was receiving and transmitting.

Sort of joining together, it was a communication. A lot of projects were receivers and transmitters. And the main communication breakdown problem with our world is our communication with God. It's broken. Snap. And it happened in Genesis 3. Thinking back to that analogy of communication devices of transmission and reception.

The communication. Broken. Sin. It seems like we've lost the signal. You know, I was up in the hills lately trying to find some, somewhere unfamiliar.

And, oh, I'm okay. I've got my phone. I've got a nav thing on my phone. And, no worries. She'll be right. But I couldn't get a signal. And then when I got a signal, I thought, 5%.

[5:02] I'm not going to make it. The battery was dying. And it wouldn't charge. Communication breakdown.

Like the bars on your phone. Oops. I'm out of range. I've lost that communication with my maker. That's what happened in Genesis 3. Adam, at first, he had such close communication, such a close relationship, a close communion with God.

In the garden, then something went terribly wrong. The devil started to sow seeds of doubt in the mind of Adam and Eve. Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made.

And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? hath God said, the serpent said.

Hath God said. He was crafting. Yea, hath God said. Don't believe it. Still saying the same, isn't he? [6:20] Adam fell for it. Adam fell, and the whole human race fell. It ends up that God shouts out, Adam, where are you?

They took that forbidden fruit. They ate and sin fell upon all men through Adam's disobedience. And then we see Genesis 3, verse 8.

They heard the voice of the Lord. They heard the communication. They heard the voice of the Lord God in the garden, walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

Oh, what precious, sweet communion it had been. Can you imagine that? In the garden, with your God. In the cool of the garden. What a wonderful thing it would have been.

What a wonderful thing it was. And it was lost. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

[7:22] Can you imagine it? Can you imagine hiding from God, standing behind a tree? Oh, God can't see me. I'm hiding behind the tree.

Adam, what a fool. As if you could hide from the presence of God. As if you can hide from God. By standing behind a tree.

That sweet communion Adam knew. That Eve knew. Once knew with their maker was broken, shattered in a million pieces. Picture Adam hiding behind a tree.

The relationship was broken. Broken. And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, where art thou? Of course God knew where he was. You can't play hide and seek with God.

You can't flee from his presence. Where can I flee from his presence? But people today, the relationship with God was broken. Sin breaks down the communication.

[8:22] I put to you there is a communication breakdown and it's present tense. So how can we reestablish communion, communication with God? Now communication lines are broken.

Hanging by a thread. As it were, they need repair. Imagine, as it were, you hear of NBN, that dirty word. You hear of these things of communication that are failing and miserable and broken and you hear of internet going down wherever it is when lines get broken in the sea or whatever.

They need repair. Communication lines are broken. I put to you like, as you hear of such learning in TAFE and whatnot, communication 101, you have a sender and a receiver.

Sender and a receiver. You have a transmission between the two, a feedback loop and that's basic communication 101. That's what the world knows as communication and you see where sometimes the message gets filtered and confused and the sender doesn't always get the message through to the receiver.

But I put to you that communication in the God terms is actually vertical and horizontal. Vertical and horizontal. That's what I'd like to put to you today.

[9:49] This thought of the communication breakdown and what we can do about it. Thinking back to this idea and I put this thought together just to picture the vertical and the horizontal.

Just to picture it in form and I thought afterwards actually to add something else to this. Firstly, we're going to look at the reception and then we're going to look at the transmission.

My electronics kit was, what was it? It was transmission and reception.

It was, you know, this sense of transmitters and receivers. Transmitters and receivers. And I put to you that in this thought, in this vein of reception and transmission, there's a sender and a receiver.

Now you see, as I try to picture it here, the reception is our, especially our reception from God, is what I'm talking about this morning.

[11:03] How do we receive from God? We receive, of course, hath God said, God, the devil wants to take away this communication method. The word of

God is the ultimate communication method.

To cast doubt in God's word. So you don't trust it, you don't believe it, you don't open it, you don't hear it. The word, prayer. And I put to you, prayer is kind of two-way communication.

We talk to the Lord and he talks to us. He gives us impressions, he gives us that sense of truth and conviction and right and wrong.

But of course, essentially measured by the word. word. That's the vertical, right? The vertical. And then we've got the horizontal, our communication with human beings that we are messengers, I put to you.

Transmitters of the witness of the word of God. We have got such an important job. Or every single saint, every single Christian has that mission to be a transmitter.

[12:06] And not only that, I was thinking of witnessing, but also fellowship too. I was thinking that before I came here. That horizontal thing, the fellowship strengthens us, doesn't it?

That communication, we need that too. Because I know some people, and nowadays, look, you don't have to come to church, let's face it. You don't have to come to church, you can tune into much better preachers than me on the internet and YouTube and you can take your pick. There's multiple channels, you can listen 24-7, you can get podcasts and you can be full-time listening to good, solid preaching. There's some of it out there. There's good stuff out there and far better communicators than me.

So, but you can't fellowship with your TV set. You can't. You just can't.

You can't fellowship with your podcast or your YouTube. YouTube. It's about getting together.

That's the communication that we need as well. So, let me just look at these things with you now.

[13:12] Look at this communication problem that we have, I put to you. And it's not so much about all these things but it's about getting it down to the essentials of the Christian life.

We've got a communication problem, a problem with the reception of the message, a reception.

We've a problem as a culture receiving from God in general.

Now, through the word of God we see many times the phrase, the word of the Lord came unto me.

Check it out in your concordance. You know, you get those, your electronic concordance, you can put the actual phrase in, the word of the Lord came unto me.

It's very often repeated through the various prophets of the Old Testament, for example. people.

The word of the Lord came. And we see that for Jonah.

And Jonah had a communication problem, didn't he? It says in Jonah 1 verse 1, now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amater. The word of the Lord came unto Jonah, chapter 1 verse 1.

[14:23] And he went all around the ridges until eventually Jonah 3 verse 1 and the word of the Lord came unto Jonah a second time. Jonah had a reception problem, didn't he?

He received the word of the Lord, but he said no. It's like he got well and truly sidetracked. You know, if Jonah had a nav man, it would have said, do a U-turn when possible.

That's the message I was getting, I was up in the hills and it was like this really windy road and it said do a U-turn when possible. Oh no. Well Jonah had that problem.

He was going the wrong way. God said go this way, Jonah went that way. And so he got well and truly sidetracked. But thankfully God called Jonah a second time.

Isn't that good news? You might think, oh I've blown it, I know I'm messed up badly. Finally, the word of the Lord came the second time.

[15:25] God gives you a second and a third and more. Doesn't he? God delivers to us the word of the Lord and we are called to pass it on. Many times the preacher cries out, hear the word of the Lord.

That's another common phrase if you check your concordance. Hear the word of the Lord. You know, Ezekiel said, you know, oh dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

We can either receive it or reject it. So let's not make the mistake of Jonah that God's going to grab us and redirect us. Let's follow him the first time.

Let's obey him the first time. The Bereans received the word. They were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with gladness, sorry, with all readiness of mind and

searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so.

So the Bereans received the word. Now it seems like the word has been abandoned today, doesn't it? People scarcely search after it. Now I had some occasion to be in Coorong just recently, just late last week.

[16:39] I was in Coorong and I was searching and searching and I thought there's so much rubbish here. I just, I couldn't believe it. I've got to be honest with you. I mean, it's like every heretical teacher, it seemed like their work was front and centre.

And, you know, study Bibles with all their teachings in them and all kinds of material materials, all very glossy and attractive.

And I thought, how sad that really is. I could scarcely find anything that I could recommend, to be honest. And people today, I put to you that the word of God has been abandoned.

It's like people scarcely search after it. In 1 Samuel 3 verse 1, as in Samuel's day, in 1 Samuel 3 verse 1 it says the word of the Lord was precious.

In those days. In other words, it was valued. It was valued because it was rare. It was rarely there. There was rarely the word of God available. That's 1 Samuel 3 verse 1.

[17:44] The word of God was so precious because it was rare. And young Samuel at the time, he had a communication breakdown too. People know the story of Samuel. The Lord called him.

The Lord called him. The Lord called him. And finally he realised it wasn't Eli saying Samuel. It was God. There was a communication problem.

In 1 Samuel 3 verse 10. And the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, Samuel.

Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak for thy servant hearer.

You know, finally he received. There was a communication breakdown but finally he received.

Sometimes God's got to get our attention over and over again before we really receive it.

I know, you know, my folks were saved later in life. It took a long time for God to get their attention, for them to be saved. And it can happen for many of us.

[18:43] Thank God some are saved later in life. What a blessing that is. But sometimes it's like if only we'd heard the first time. If only we'd acted sooner.

It seems like nowadays we're living in a time where it's like the days of Amos. Or as Amos prophesied of days to come. Where he says, Behold, the Lord God says that I will send a famine in the land.

Not a famine of bread, nor thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wander from sea to sea, from north to east. They shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord and shall not find it.

A time when the word of God is rare. It's scarce. There's a famine of the word. And I put to you today in this world that we live in, in our nation, in this land.

There's a problem with the reception. It's a communication breakdown. There's a problem with the reception because the word of God is missing in our culture. People might get it out when they go to court.

[19:55] If they say the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Sort of like something you dust off and using sort of those isolated occasions where there's some token or they're swearing in some official of some kind.

We are a God forsaking people. Australia is a God forsaking people by and large. When we look back to the word of God, when people were saved in the book of Acts, one thing was very noteworthy.

As we saw for the Bereans, they received the word. They received the word very much with a readiness of mind. And we see that there was something there about the word of God.

There was a prayerfulness. There was a reverence. There was a seeking after God. For example, in Acts 2.41, at Pentecost, they gladly received his word and were baptised.

They gladly received the word. We've got to get this word. We've got to receive it. They gladly, joyfully received the word of God. And they acted on it.

[21:01] They trusted Christ and they were baptised. And then we see, sorry, of Samaria. Likewise too. They received the word of God. So receiving the word is critical.

How can we better receive from God? That vertical. Receiving the word. Receiving the word from God. Another part of reception I put to you is prayer.

It's prayer. Prayer is our way to receive from God as well as his word. And it's easy to miss this. Someone's put these little pointers as to how to pray or what to include in prayer.

And you may not see all the words here but praise. Praise God. Praise you, Lord. Thanksgiving. Thank you, Lord. Intercession.

Where you think of others. You pray for others. Petition. Where you ask for something. You make a petition.

[22:09] You ask of God. And confession. You deal with sin. Prayer. Prayer. It's one of those ways of receiving from God. And I urge you today to consider that.

Consider how can you refresh that time of prayer? How can I improve that receptivity to God? How can I receive God's signal? Now that's, you know, some can be leaning on impressions of prayer more than the word.

That can be a danger too. What our impressions are going to line up with the word of God. We're not just let off in some direction of, that could be misleading.

But we measure that leading. We measure that impression, that conviction. Is it a biblical conviction? Does it line up? How can we receive God's signal?

How can we improve that reception? I'll put to you, receive the word. Receive the word and listen prayerfully. Listen prayerfully. When you take time with the word.

[23:18] And look, there's different methods and schemes. There's plans, reading plans. And it helps me to have that discipline.

And I can share those reading plans with you. Sometimes you don't, may not stick rigidly. You know, you don't condemn yourself. But you try God helping you.

Develop the discipline of Bible reading. Try to find a time. If you're a morning person, get it in the morning. If you're a night person, at night. When you can make that time, check that time out.

Make that appointment, that assignment, that meeting with God and his word. It could be just, you know, as it's been said, is it three chapters a day you can read through the whole Bible in a year.

And there's different ways, there's different methods. There's one that's a 120-day Bible reading system. So you read through the Bible three times every year. You know, there's some you can read through twice a year.

[24:18] It just takes time, doesn't it? Dedicate that time. How much time? You know, an hour of screen time. That's disgusting, isn't it?

How much Bible time? How much Bible time? We can all be challenged, can't we? Three chapters? Surely that wouldn't take much time. Maybe more. More time. More chapters. You know, have you read your Bible through? It's a good thing to do.

Read it through and through and through. And let God minister to you. It's how we have that vertical communication with God, isn't it?

Just take some quiet time. And it could be just, it could be some short readings that really speak to you as you dig down deep. And get some Bible helps.

[25:20] Some concordances, some Bible dictionaries, some commentary. So that you can take that time. Make that time. Make that commitment. Yes, I can read some of my Bible every day.

I'm going to try to make that commitment. Listen prayerfully. Take notes. You know, it's a good thing. I know when you're listening to a sermon or tuning into a message that you might hear on some media form, take notes.

It helps you to commit it to your mind. Being mindful. Listen with an open Bible. When you come to church, have an open Bible. You know, and you can get, I know there was one sister telling me she'd moved and she'd lost her Bible.

And I said, get a Bible app. That's a good, that's a good reason to have screen time. That must be all that screen time. You know, the Bible app. You know, that's what we should do, isn't it?

You can get Bible apps where you can tune in. You can hear it on audio. You can have what they call the MP3s. You can listen to the Bible while you're driving along.

[26:30] Whatever it be. And, or a Bible, a written Bible on your phone. And those moments when you could take time, those moments. And I love how I was encouraged as a younger man to have some Bible memory cards.

A wonderful thing to do. Get those Bible texts that you can use to witness to people. And write them on a little card. And have them in your pocket.

Just so, oh, I can read that. In that moment. And I can refresh my mind such that I don't have to look at it anymore. I know it. It's in here. It's in my heart.

Commit the Bible to your memory. And submit to God. Have that attitude of humility. When you open this book, God is speaking to you.

You know, you don't have to go to some wacko who says, I've got a word of the Lord for you. I've got the word of the Lord for you. You have the word of the Lord. It's in your hands. It's between these covers.

[27:33] That's God's word for you. Guaranteed. And there's no question of that. So, reception of the word. So, live it out. Be a doer of the word, furthermore.

And learn to pray, to pray. And so, we've covered, in effect, the reception. The vertical, right? We have a communication problem to overcome reception from God.

Receive his word. Receive his word. And act on it. And pray. And secondly, I put to you, we've got a problem with the transmission.

It's a transmission. You know, there's a lot of static. There's a lot of noise. Transmission is a problem. Notice here, in Ezekiel, God tells the prophet, I've sent thee a watchman.

Therefore, thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. It's twofold. Receive and deliver. Receive and deliver. Hear and warn.

[28:44] What about our communication with people? Do we hear and warn? Do we receive and deliver? The word has to be implanted and imparted.

Implanted and imparted. We need to be faithful to the message we've been given. And I put to you, friends, today, I urge you, as a loving challenge, be a transmitter of the message.

You know, we've got a vital message to share. Now, Romans 10, what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.

That is the word of faith which we preach. The word of God is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart. It goes on, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Isn't that wonderful? The promise of God? It's not complicated. You know, some people will religiosize and mysticize and make it too technical and onerous and make it a burden of works, of doing, a system of theology.

[30:19] But God says this, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

It's simple, really, isn't it? And for with the heart man believeth, not just saying, oh, blab, blab, blab, yeah, Jesus is my Lord.

Jesus is my Lord. No, Jesus is my Lord. I believe it in my heart. With the heart man believeth.

Not just parroting some words as some preacher might have you utter as some kind of ceremony where you just repeat words mindlessly.

Believe in your heart. Number one, confess with your mouth. Number two, the Lord Jesus, master of my life.

[31:18] Master of my life. And believe he's dying on the cross. He's rising from the dead. As your living saviour and master. That's where it begins.

And then it goes on for the scripture saith, he soever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. We're all the same.

Doesn't matter. You can be a son of Abraham or you can be Ishmael. Yeah. We're all the same. All have sinned.

Come short. Doesn't matter what your race, your culture, your country, your language. Whatever your affiliation. We're all the same.

There's no difference. It's like someone says we've all got one blood. It's all red, isn't it? We're all of one blood. We're all of the human race.

[32:14] We're all of that race. And it says there's no difference. For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. Doesn't matter where you come from. He is rich towards all.

That call upon him. What a wonderful scripture. And for whosoever. That means absolutely anybody who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Simply that. Call on his name. This is the message. It's in our heart. It's on our lips. It says, verse 14. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?

And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher? Someone has to tell them.

Someone has to tell them. And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things.

[33:14] There's some beautiful feet here this morning. Amen. There's beautiful feet amongst my sisters and brethren. The feet of them that bring the good news.

The good news. Beautiful feet. Glad tidings of good things. And then it goes on. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah said, Lord, who hath believed our report?

So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. It's a communication, isn't it?

Get it in the ear, the word of God. Hearing the word of God. Then faith. Faith follows on from the hearing.

But before the hearing comes the speaking. The transmission. The transmission. And people today, God isn't going to send some angel to tell your neighbour how to get saved.

[34:19] God isn't going to send some angel to your workmate down at the shop to tell them how to get saved. He's sending you. You, you, you, you, you.

God has given to us a message. We must be those transmitters. We've been commissioned with getting the message across. When you're on the bus.

God's put you there. Next to that person. You know, I know there's some crazy people, they always say, they just don't shut up about Jesus.

It's like, that's what we need to be like, isn't it? Isn't it? How much time have we got? God has given us a message. There's a communication breakdown.

Who's going to tell your family? I fear for my family, some of them. How can we get the message across?

[35:24] Now, some will dilute the message, make it palatable, water it down such that there's nothing to it anymore. Compromise the message. Here's our little diagram again. The vertical perception.

The word, prayer, the horizontal witness, fellowship, transmission. A preacher said this, Every heart with Christ is a missionary.

Isn't that true? Every heart without Christ is a mission field. Think of that.

Think of that with every human soul in your life. They're either one or the other. A missionary or a mission field. We have to be transmitters.

We have to be. Angels won't be. It's human vessels such as you and me. That God has called to be such. And Galatians 2.2, it says, I communicated unto them that gospel.

[36:28] We've got to be communicators of the gospel. We have to be communicators of the gospel. As Wesley put it, You have one business on earth to save souls.

That's a good slogan, isn't it? A good motto. So, one business on earth to save souls. Of course, God does the saving. But we're the messengers of that salvation message. And we must communicate the truth.

Now, of course, we know there's communication. We must avoid. Corrupt communication. Filthy communication. Avoid those. Put a long barge pole between you and filthy communication.

what I've just heard or you might think is God putting someone on my heart is there someone in my life well I'd love to tell them about Jesus I'd love to tell them the gospel I'd love to just say a word not not a condemnation or a put down but just point them to Christ like someone did for you is there someone in your heart someone on your mind today who's going to tell them if you don't that's the question isn't it and that's not to condemn there's people in my life I need to say more I need to do more let's pray Lord we thank you that you are gracious so gracious Lord and Lord we know in this world where there's so many things that will get in the way we need to receive your word help us Lord to find ways to receive it in whatever fashion and form in preaching or audio or or text or or in book form to open the pages of your word to take it in prayerfully and to act on it Lord and Lord to be prayerful so our hearts are not just out of tune with you but we take those times to to think of you and to talk with you and Lord to talk with others too that we can be messengers of this vital message Lord help us Lord help us Lord we know there's people that we we know people that we love and care about we know that they're not saved or appear not to be saved how we want to tell them help us Lord to have the gumption give us the Holy Ghost unction
[45:56] Lord help us to have the boldness to open our lips and say something while we can in Jesus name amen