



Walking **With Jesus** Ministries

PREACH, TEACH - OR 'TREACH'?

MAN



JESUS



The pictures say it all. How far the church has moved from the methods used by Jesus!

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PREACH, TEACH OR 'TREACH'?

The 'Sunday Sermon' is a tradition that has been at the centre of Christian worship services since the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church and has remained with us throughout virtually all forms of the church that have evolved since.

We are so used to presenting 'the sermon' as preachers, or listening (or perhaps sleeping!) through it as a congregation, that we accept the sermon as being the right and proper way to do things. But is it? Is it even Biblical? Or is it just tradition?

To be honest, I have 'slept' or 'day-dreamed' my way through more than my fair share of sermons over the years! Sleeping with one's eyes open is an art! Letting ones thoughts wander, while giving the appearance of attention, is even easier to do!

When asked, even 1 hour after the conclusion of a sermon, for an outline of what was said, I guarantee that 90% of people would not be able to answer accurately.

Why is it then, that our preaching, into which millions, probably billions, of hours has been invested, both in preparation and listening, has been so ineffective in bringing the world into the church and developing believers into maturity in Christ?

What did Jesus do? For He was the communicator - par excellence! Did He preach in the same way we do? Of course, we don't know exactly, but we can get some idea from the Gospels.

We all start with the 'Sermon on the Mount'. Surely the best - perhaps only -

detailed, real example we have of Jesus preaching. Or is it?

5 Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth..... (Matthew 5:1-12)

First thing we notice is, in spite of the crowds, Jesus didn't stand on a podium, didn't shout out in a loud voice to the people, but sat down and let his disciples come to Him, where He 'taught' them, on a more personal basis.

In the Synagogues, when teaching, the Rabbis would sit on a chair which gave them authority when sharing with the people. Hence today we have a university 'Chair of'. Teaching traditionally involved interaction as we can see in the following when, even as a boy, Jesus was able to question the teachers in the Temple.....

46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. (Luke 2:46-7)

This was natural in those days. But imagine a 12 year old interrupting today's preacher in full flight, with an awkward question!

In the Synagogue Saturday worship service the Scriptures were read sitting down, but prayers and a (very short!) sermon were given standing up. When Jesus first pleased and then offended the people of Nazareth by proclaiming He fulfilled the Scriptures.....

16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. 17 The scroll of

the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." 20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, 21 and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." 22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. 23 Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'" 24 "I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. 25 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. 27 And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian." 28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. 30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. (Luke 4:16-30)

..... He was standing up.

This discussion has nothing to do with 'religious' standing or sitting, but the reality of the interaction and response between all those attending. Including attempted stoning! Can you imagine Jesus preaching this 5 minute sermon in church today? The congregation would say, "That is nice - a very short sermon today", then go home and enjoy Sunday lunch!

Neither did Paul preach in the way we do today. Of course, at least once, one of his listeners went to sleep during an all-night session! A precursor of today - without the resurrection! LOL!

However, seriously, Paul reasoned, he interacted with his listeners.

2 As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, (Acts 17:2)

4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. (Acts 17:4)

19 They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. (Acts 18:19)

8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. (Acts 19:8)

I simply pray that we will put aside fixed mind sets and be prepared to consider things in a different way.

Being brutally honest, many of us males of the species, love the perceived prestige of sermonising! Of course, there are limits to what we can say, or congregants may 'vote with their feet', but giving instruction and advice to others on how to live life gives a sense of power and status, one of an honoured position in society. It is really easy to see why we have kept this concept of one way communication alive and active, due to its human appeal, even after the Reformation revelation and right through to today. Human vanity is powerful!

Congregants too, must also take responsibility! For it is easier to go along and sit through a good or bad sermon, without having to make the effort to think and interrelate with the preacher, before going home for Sunday lunch, our spiritual obligation fulfilled for another week!

BIBLICAL MENTIONS OF TEACHING AND PREACHING

Did you know that there is only 1 man described as a 'preacher' in the Bible (NIV)? And that was Noah. (2 Peter 2:5). Let's face it, he wasn't listened to

either! For only his family ended up on the Ark!

On the other hand, the description 'teacher' however, is used 68 times, including 49 in the Gospels and a further 4 in the Epistles.

Similarly, preaching is not considered to be a 'ministry gift', while teaching is.

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

MEANING OF PREACHING AND TEACHING

Unfortunately our concept of the meaning of 'preach' is dictated by experience. But is it Biblically correct?

There are a number of Greek words that have been (sometimes incorrectly) translated as preach. Without going into detail, the primary meaning of these Greek words is to 'proclaim', generally, to proclaim a known truth. Interestingly, a large part of the difference between 'proclaiming' and 'teaching' is the element of time.

Preaching or proclaiming, without interaction, as we saw in our look at Jewish Synagogue worship services, took only a few minutes. Quite dissimilar to our practice. Longer presentations were regarded as 'teaching', and involved interaction.

As far as we are aware, Jesus never preached a sermon, in the way we understand a sermon to be. He both briefly proclaimed the Gospel (no

interaction) and, at the same time, taught the truths in greater detail (involving interaction).

Nearly always, Jesus 'preached and taught'. You could say He 'TREACHED'! (ie. preached/taught)

23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching (ie. PROCLAIMING) the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. (Matthew 4:23)

After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. (Matthew 11:1)

This combination of preaching and teaching was also to be the duty of elders.

17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching (PROCLAIMING A KNOWN TRUTH) and teaching. (1 Timothy 5:17)

A CALL TO ACTION

Too much of our preaching and teaching is presented from an academic perspective. While knowledge is good to have, it is sad, empty, and useless, without action, without life change.

Jesus was a simple presenter of the message of the Gospel. He used relevant, practical parables to make His points. The kingdom parables used everyday examples to illustrate precious kingdom truths. Just one of many examples is.....

33 He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough." (Matthew 13:33)

Jesus did not discuss the finer (or any!) points of the correctness or otherwise of a pre-trib or post-trib rapture! He hated the ways of the Pharisees who got into such senseless discussions of detailed theology that serve no purpose other than to confuse. Hypocrisy abounded then, as it does now. Manmade theology is a curse of the kingdom.

7 You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 8 "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men." (Matthew 15:7-9)

Jesus fed the people, healed them of their sicknesses, challenged them to live righteous lives, and to obey the Father's will. His ministry was practical, down to earth, requiring action, not one of mere philosophical acceptance.

SUMMING UP

While a case can be made for preaching (proclaiming) the Gospel truths to unbelievers, the ineffectiveness of our current method of 'preaching a non-interactive 20-60 minute sermon' to a passive audience of believers, Sunday after Sunday, is neither effective nor scriptural.

But what options are there?

I will share some indicators from Scripture of where our 'speaking' should be coming from.

1. HUMILITY

Other than Jesus, the closest man to God in the Bible was Moses. Moses was the Old Testament picture of Jesus. Ironically, he was not good at public speaking! Aaron often spoke on His behalf, at least initially in his dealings with Pharaoh. Others were jealous and thought they could do a better job! But not

the Lord!

3 (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.) 4 At once the LORD said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out to the Tent of Meeting, all three of you." So the three of them came out. 5 Then the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the Tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When both of them stepped forward, 6 he said, "Listen to my words: "When a prophet of the LORD is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams. 7 But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. 8 With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" 9 The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he left them. (Numbers 12:3-9)

All godly speaking must come from a position of humility.

2. HOLY SPIRIT INSPIRED

Put plainly and simply, if we are not inspired by the Holy Spirit, we should not speak!

13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. (1 Corinthians 2:13)

I know a pastor who spent 40 hours a week preparing his Sunday sermon. A workaholic! Yet his finest sermon came the day he lost his notes! His people commented that this was his best sermon ever! He then understood his mistake.

3. KINGDOM AND PRIESTS

Who are the priests? Not just the guy or girl up the front! We ALL are! The preacher, teacher, or treacher, is not set apart, is not elevated, is not the listeners' God substitute. Each and every believer is a 'priest' and needs to be encouraged to seek God's wisdom and guidance for themselves. This requires a huge mind set change on the speakers and listeners alike.

9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." (Revelation 5:9-10)

4. SAINTS TO DO THE WORK

All ministry is to be orientated towards training and motivating the body, the people, to do God's work. Ministry is a function, not a position, lest the ministers become proud and the people abrogate their personal spiritual responsibility to relate to God themselves and to minister to others.

*11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, **12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up** (Ephesians 4:11)*

5. ACTION REQUIRED

There is a saying, 'Actions speak louder than words'. Words require actions to be effective. We can't enter the kingdom merely by hearing about it.

17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." (Matthew 4:17)

While a call to action is good, 'active action', people involvement, is better. For we learn, and are convicted, more, when we use all our senses, not just that of hearing. Even Jesus had to participate to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit!

21 When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21-2)

SUMMARY

My friend, I realise this may sound idealistic, but it is not intended to be that way. Unfortunately, our religious ways, where everything is programmed in advance, so often puts pressure upon speakers to 'perform'. Realistically, the Holy Spirit does not come and give us revelation and inspiration, regularly as clockwork, for every 10am Sunday Service! So maybe, it is us who need to change our fixed ways of doing things, to move more in accordance with the Holy Spirit - so taking the huge pressure of expectation off ourselves to perform on cue. We will next look at ways and means of doing this.

But first, I am led to share this last Scripture with you, as we come to a close in this section. I don't wish to compare speakers (me included) to the Pharisees, for they were simply religious, which brought them into conflict with the 'unreligious' Jesus, but that is what the Holy Spirit prompts me to do.

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: 2 "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. 4 They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. 5 "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; 6 they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; 7 they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.' 8 "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. 9 And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ. 11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. (Matthew 23:1-11)

As this Scripture concludes, **humility is real key. Humility of thought, humility of action, humility of position.** Such is the way of the Lord.

CHANGE OF WAYS

Unfortunately our religious ways, where everything is programmed in advance, so often put pressure upon speakers to 'perform'. Realistically, the Holy Spirit does not come and give us revelation and inspiration, as clockwork, for every 10am Sunday Service! So maybe, it is us who needs to change our fixed ways of doing things, to move more in accordance with the Holy Spirit - so taking the huge pressure of expectation off ourselves to perform on cue. But how can we do this? Our system is so programmed towards performance. Performance to present - and performance to listen.

TESTIMONY

As a 'travelling ministry' I have had the privilege to speak to many different types and sizes of congregations and groups of people in a huge variety of situations. From churches both big and small, to conferences big and small, to Bible Schools and Seminaries, to groups in fields, even at a Nunnery. When I travel and speak I am generally blessed with the presence of the Holy Spirit being with me and upon the people. I thank the Lord for that. For it is of Him and not of me.

During my travels I have learned valuable lessons, some of which I would like to share with you.

1. MEETING SIZE AND EFFECTIVENESS ARE NOT THE SAME: In fact, size and effectiveness are usually diametrically opposed. I am human - believe it or not! It feels good to speak to audiences of 100's or 1,000's of people! But how effective is it? Against human understanding, experience has taught me that small meetings are more effective for the participants than large ones. Why is this? Because I, all people present and the Holy Spirit, can interrelate in a more intimate way. It is in this way that lives are changed - both theirs and mine. We

move from speaker and audience in a large group to intimate sharing and life changing experience.

Yes, the Holy Spirit can and does come and change lives in a large group situation. But for most, it will be an experience that is soon shelved, without ongoing effect. For the personal element is missing.

2. LET THE HOLY SPIRIT HAVE HIS WAY: When I speak I have a hope and desire that the Holy Spirit will turn up. He generally does. Sometimes He turns up in a big way. That is easy. For then He is a far better minister than me! He literally takes over. I just have to stand and watch, full of wonder at His amazing ways. Precious experiences.

Most times though, He turns up and, as ministers, we have the power to accept or reject Him. My desire is to accept! But sometimes, the one in control of the meeting can decide to remain in control! The Holy Spirit is grieved and simply goes. This is particularly frequent between the end of worship and preaching. We must be so careful to walk in the anointing and not in our plans for the service 'we' have organised!

3. 'DO NOT' OVER-PREPARE YOUR PRESENTATION: This is pretty radical! Reality is, the more of us, the less room for Him! It is completely the opposite of what we understand from a human perspective. Leave some room for the Holy Spirit to have His say.

4. 'DO' OVER-PREPARE YOUR LIFE: When I first travelled, I had all my messages fully prepared so that I wouldn't appear (altogether) stupid. I soon learned that the Holy Spirit had other - much more effective - ideas and methods! Now I understand it is much more important for me to be in the right place with Him and then He will give me the words He wants said in a situation. "Christ in you" is both the hope of glory and the vessel that can be best used for His glory!

5. 'DO NOT' 'OVER-THEOLOGIZE': Even to a Theological College! Christianity is about relationship, with God and with others, not nonsensical nuances of theology that both divide and puff up. I will never forget a meeting in Nigeria (and there have been other instances too) where a Doctor of Theology who taught in a Seminary came up to me and said, "I have studied and taught theology all my life, but it is only today that I have come to a true understanding of what Christianity is all about." From a simple Kiwi who has never been to Bible College! Jesus used testimony and practical examples drawn from life (parables) to illustrate His points.

6. INVOLVEMENT, INVOLVEMENT, INVOLVEMENT: This is hard! It is much easier to give a lecture than to be questioned and perhaps found wanting! Let people share. May be more inspired than me - or you! Look to inter-relationship. For disciples are made by walking together, learning from each other, not from being told what to do from 'on high'. (Raised pulpits, titles special dress, etc., are a particular 'no no') Be prepared to let the people know the real you. As a travelling ministry it is easy to cover up your deficiencies if you want to. But God wants - and uses - you, warts and all.

7. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION: Hearing is but one of our senses. We touch, taste, smell and see too. Involving more than sense makes sense! It is much more effective than merely listening. Every speaking time therefore should involve action - both by the speaker and the spoken to. There are many examples of ways of involvement in the letters from others that appear below. (Involvement, you see!)

FROM YOU -TO ME - TO YOU (SUGGESTIONS FOR OBTAINING CONGREGATIONAL INCLUSION)

Dear David,

My name is Albert Chan, a Singaporean businessman living & working in Thailand. I served God whenever there is an opportunity for more than 10 years and it was real joy to be able to serve such a great might God like ours.

Over these years of serving, I do teaching, conduct cell group, preaching and giving where I could as God directs like the Prison Ministry Foundation in Thailand, helping Hmong refugees who fled from Vietnam and Laos.

I wanted to share about preaching, which I felt that all preacher or those who are being entrusted to share at the pulpit especially that is:

1. Most of the time they forget that it is God given time and they should give their very best in using this time because once it is wasted it cannot be replaced therefore time discipline & content is very important.

2. Majority are so used to preaching that they took it for granted and used their past experience or old sermons, story, slides, etc...which is so dry and plain without the Holy Spirit flowing in them.

3. Many preached well but the congregation don't get the entire picture of how to apply. Yes preacher what you say is absolutely true but how? How to do, what are the steps to follow that I too can.....

4. Sadly, a big majority preached a good sermon but fall short of catching in. They cast a good net with the words of God, directed by the Holy Spirit but just failed short to draw it in by asking for those to raise their hands or stand up in accepting Christ as our Savior, redeemer, and Lord. Sowed well but didn't get the sweet harvest in for Jesus.

Back to your request for options, we can use technology to our advantage without disrupting the sermon or others around us like setting a email, sms, facebook, skype etc having a channel for questions or request for the congregation to send in discreetly about question they have pertaining to the sermon. Have a short Q&A or discuss this during cell group, home care group meet the pastor section.

Setup a online pastor session for those that cannot attend church e.g.. Hospitalized,

overseas, help up by children at home, whereby they can communicate with the church via media technology.

High tea sermon session with easy, relax informal gathering to sit and talk about God that friends, relative, loved ones can be invited.

2 cents worth hope it could be useful to your sharing. God bless you for your good work, faith and servant hood Pastor David.

.....

In our church yesterday we were looking at 'desert experiences' The minister asked first what 'desert' conjured up for people. Anyone who wanted to, had their say. Also, later, people were invited to share any desert experience in their life. This doesn't happen every week but it does happen sometimes. Sheila

.....

Hi David

My church hold conventional services Sunday mornings but in the evening they hold a different type of service. We sit at tables and drink coffee and some cake, much like in a coffeehouse ministry. I was saved in a coffeehouse ministry come to think of it.

Well anyway we have a little sermon but it is broken up into parts so we can discuss posed questions in groups. These are prearranged questions designed to reinforce the message. At the end the pastor asks another question to the whole group and answers are said aloud for all to hear. I find it nicely interactive.

Apart from that I'd like to see more personal testimonies from the people and how God is working in our lives now. That could include confessing sin in some cases. All this has to be done without coercion for it to work. People are invited to s share if they feel they'd like to.

Anyway thanks for your ministry. It has been a blessing to me

Greetings in the Lord

David (that is my name)

As we have seen in our study, 'preaching' (proclamation) has been over emphasised in the church.

If we want to be literal, the Gospel is to be proclaimed (preached) to unbelievers (an evangelists tool) while believers need to be taught (discipled) in the ways of the Lord.

All too often, as the saying goes, we 'preach to the converted'. The commonly understood meaning of this saying is that this is ineffective, both inside, and outside, the church situation.

In essence, walking with Jesus is all about relationship - a personal relationship with Jesus, plus a sharing of life experiences and mutual support, with other believers.

We have a huge need to be taught the ways of the Lord. The ways of the Lord are not the theology of 'pre or post trib rapture', whatever that may be (for it is all pure speculation anyway!), but godly life principles such as Jesus taught.....

in the Beatitudes.....

The Beatitudes

*Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them, saying:
3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*4 Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

*5 Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.*

*6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

*7 Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

*8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

*9 Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.*

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
(Matthew 5:1-12)*

in illustrations using everyday examples.....

Salt and Light

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

(Matthew 5:13-16)

in instruction of godly daily living.....

Murder

21 "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. 23 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. 25 "Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. 26 I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny. (Matthew 5:21-6)

through parables.....

3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

10 The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

11 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. 12 Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 13 This

is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. (Matthew 13:3-13)

through teaching on prayer.....

Prayer

5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Mathew 6:5-6)

through building faith.....

The Faith of the Centurion

5 When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 6 "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering." 7 Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him." 8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. 11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that very hour. (Matthew 8:5-13)

through releasing spiritual gifts, as enunciated by Paul.....

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.

(1 Corinthians 14:1)

all of which culminates in, and is reflected through, godly love.....

Love

And now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. 11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. 12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. 13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

(1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13)

These principles are learned, not through great oratory, but through living example, and a shared impartation of experience from the mature to the immature. By its very nature, it is best done in smaller group settings which allow for interaction between the participants.

11 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. 12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the

teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:11-14)

Jesus was not known as an orator, but as a teacher. Paul too, as he himself said, was not an orator either.

By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am "timid" when face to face with you, but "bold" when away! (2 Corinthians 10:1)

A revolution is coming to the church! The old ways will change, indeed are changing, as kingdom living comes to the fore. Impersonal, large audience, preaching is gradually being replaced by intimate, relational teaching and experience sharing amongst those hungering for a deeper, all embracing, personal, kingdom, relationship with the Lord.

WHAT FORMS OF COMMUNICATION ARE YOU EMBRACING TODAY?