

## B2B - Obedient Christian in Action

(Proverbs 27:17; Hebrews 10:19-25 & John 4:1-26)

04-Mar-2018

### Recap

[PowerPoint 1-B2B]

This is 6th part of our 9 week B2B series

The whole point of this series is to help us understand - learn the basics of our faith - so that we can share our faith with others - in whatever form that might take

In the last couple of weeks we've been introduced to the WHEEL

[Powerpoint 2-Wheel]

The idea of the wheel is to show the obedient Christian in Action

[Powerpoint 2a-Hub]

The obedient Christian - needs Christ as the HUB

[Powerpoint 2b-Power and direction]

The Hub transmits *power and direction* from the HUB (Jesus) to the RIM (that's us)

Therefore we must stay connected to the HUB (Jesus) which is what Ian Warrell taught us 2 weeks ago

It's the vertical spokes that help us stay connected to Jesus

[Powerpoint 3-vertical spokes]

So last week Ian Warrell taught us that the chief purpose of humans - is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever

And it's these vertical spokes of *God's Word and Prayer* - that enable us to stay connected to Jesus and glorify God

So we had 4 memory verses last week

But let's just remind ourselves of 2 of them

One to do with *God's Word* from - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Can anyone remember it?

[Powerpoint 4-Heading]

[Powerpoint 4a-2 Timothy 3:16-17]

<sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

And one memory verse to do with PRAYER from - Philippians 4:6-7

Can anyone remember it?

[Powerpoint 5-Heading]

[Powerpoint 5a-Philippians 4:6-7]

<sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

[Powerpoint 6-Vertical Spokes]

These vertical spokes are our means of intake - like Petrol in our car

Without petrol in our car we can't go anywhere

As Christians, without God's petrol - His Word and times of prayer - we can't go anywhere either

Once we have God's fuel we can go places

So this week - we're looking at how we go places with God's fuel

These are the horizontal spokes

[Powerpoint 7-Horizontal spokes]

Fellowship and witnessing

These are our output as Christians -

It's these spokes that also makes us Obedient Christians in Action

## Fellowship

Q. So what is fellowship?

Sitting around having cups of tea - gossiping or complaining?

No - what the Bible means by fellowship is something quite different

And if we read what the early church was like in the book of Acts - 2:42-47 says:

*<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. <sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and*

*ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

That is fellowship as the New Testament understands it, and there is clearly a world of difference between that and mere social activities.

The Greek word used for fellowship - *koinonia* comes from a root word meaning *common* or *shared*. So fellowship means common participation in something either by giving what you have to the other person or receiving what he or she has. Give and take is the essence of fellowship, and give and take must be the way of fellowship in the common life of the body of Christ.

Christian fellowship is two-dimensional, and it has to be **vertical** (Word and Prayer spokes) before it can be **horizontal**. We must know the reality of fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ before we can know the reality of fellowship with each other in our common relationship to God (1 John 1:3). The person who is not in fellowship with the Father and the Son is no Christian at all, and so cannot share with Christians the realities of their fellowship.

Q. So why fellowship?

Well - because God made us to be relational human beings - so we can have a relationship with Him and to have relationships with others

In fact the overarching command of God is love - Love God, love His Son - love each other - we can't do that unless we have fellowship with God, His Son and each other

There are benefits in having fellowship with one another

For example Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one,

because they have a good return for their labor:

<sup>10</sup> If either of them falls down,

one can help the other up.

But pity anyone who falls

and has no one to help them up.

<sup>11</sup> Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.

But how can one keep warm alone?

<sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered,

two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken

So fellowship is mutually beneficial

(pause)

Then there's our first reading, today, from Proverbs 27:17 -

One of our Memory verses' this week

[Powerpoint 8a- Prov 27:17]

As iron sharpens iron,

so one person sharpens another.

If we hang out with a fellow Christian - they can encourage us when we are discouraged - or correct us when we're going down the wrong path and vice versa - they can point out some discipline or change of thinking that might be needed - and again vice versa

Just like the saying 2 heads are better than 1 (unless you're in Tasmania)

We have a lot of wise heads in our church family - God's sent them here for a reason - so let's use their wisdom

Q. What might fellowship look like?

If you've been doing the B2B Bible studies - you would have had a look at the hand of fellowship in your growth groups this week

It's going to be on the screen now - and on display here too

[Powerpoint 9-Fellowship hand]

So what might fellowship look like?

In Philippians 2:2-4 - The apostle Paul describes how joyful he is when he sees or hears of Christians meeting up - being like-minded, one in the Holy Spirit, loving Jesus - and being humble instead of selfish or self-centred. He sees part of fellowship as looking to the other persons needs before our own

So one finger of fellowship - is ***Others-Oriented***

[Powerpoint 9a-Others]

How are we going with that? Are we selfish or selfless?

(pause)

Now - the second finger of fellowship

We've already heard how the early church devoted themselves to the Apostle's teaching (and fellowship). So clearly as part of the fellowship of the early church people were focused on teaching. Where does this teaching come from? God's Word, the Bible. So another finger of fellowship is ***Bible based or Bible focused***

[Powerpoint 9b-Bible]

Are we basing our fellowship on God's Word? When we fellowship are we still following God's commands for us? In our fellowship - are we sharing an encouraging word from God's Word? In our fellowship - are we sharing wisdom from God's word

(pause)

Then the third finger of fellowship

In Ephesians 4 - the Apostle Paul talks about Christians being in unity in Jesus - and having One Spirit.

A Christian - has the Holy Spirit dwelling in them - so as Christians meeting together - we have the Holy Spirit in common - so it stands to reason that we should listen to the Holy Spirit and be led by Him

So another finger of fellowship is ***Spirit-Led***

[Powerpoint 9c-Spirit]

Are you letting the Holy Spirit lead you into fellowship?

Then the fourth finger of fellowship

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> reading today, from Hebrews 10:19-25

Gives some really good reasons for hanging out together as Christians

Firstly because of Jesus' ultimate sacrifice on the cross - He's opened up access to God. Before Jesus - access to God was through the High Priest - once a year -

going behind a curtain in the Most Holy Place of the temple - into the presence of God. But at Jesus' death - that curtain - was split in to. Jesus IS the Great High Priest and only Priest we need

Secondly - so now we can meet together in fellowship in complete confidence that Jesus has washed away our sin - cleansed us from a guilty conscience - so we can fellowship together in confidence - sharing that same common certain hope of eternal life we all have

Thirdly - Paul gives a **purpose** for us meeting together - a) to hold onto the guaranteed promise of Heaven we have in Jesus and b) to spur one another on toward love and good deeds. That's sounds like our Vision 2030 here at St. David's - to transform our community with the love of Jesus

So another finger of fellowship is that fellowship must be **purpose-driven**

[Powerpoint 9d-Purpose]

Which brings us to the last finger (thumb) of fellowship

And it's a great promise from Jesus - from Matthew 18:20

**For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.**

As Christian's did you know that all our gatherings here at St. David's where there's at least 2 people - so that's pretty much every gathering - Jesus promises to be right there with us!

That's a great reason to be hanging out together isn't it?

So our last finger (thumb) is that our fellowship should be **Christ-Centred**

[Powerpoint 9e-Christ-Centred]

So another one of our memory verses this week is Hebrews 10:24-25

[Powerpoint 10-Hebrews 10:24-25]

<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

So are we spurring one another on toward love and good deeds - or are we keeping to ourselves?

Are we meeting together at every opportunity there is - or are we giving up meeting together, as the writer of Hebrews says, as some are in the habit of doing?

Are we encouraging one another as we wait for our Lord Jesus to come back - or are we discouraging one another, nitpicking, looking for negatives rather than positives?

(pause)

Q. So what sort of fellowship could we be having?

- Ringing people up regularly - especially those who are lonely and sick

- Visiting people in our church family (in their home, at Aged Care or in hospital) - have a chat and cup of tea with them
- Pray and read the Bible together
- We could join a Growth Group/Bible Study
- We could attend the prayer meeting on Thursday
- We could attend worship regularly - and stick around for Morning Tea  
*People sometimes say to me - you don't have to come to church to be a Christian - my answer is: "You should want to come - to say thank you to Jesus for saving you from eternal separation from God!"*
- We could help with the Working Bee each month
- Or attend the Communications corner activities - Art, Craft, Golden Years of Hollywood
- Start another activity based group - like walking
- Then there's the monthly Friendship Group
- The lunch at our place - Hevs and Revs
- Are you fellowshiping in any of these areas
- If not? Why not?
- Hebrews 10 says don't give up meeting together - because it encourages us and it encourages others
- Fellowshiping shows we are obedient Christians in action

## Witnessing

The other horizontal spoke is witnessing

[Powerpoint 11=Witnessing]

Q. What is witnessing?

[Powerpoint 12-Definition]

Openly profess one's religious faith [Dictionary]

A good witness isn't like a sales rep making sales. The emphasis is on a person rather than a product. A good witness for Jesus is like a signpost. It doesn't matter whether it is old, young, pretty, ugly; it has to point the right direction and be able to be understood. We are witnesses to Christ, we point to Him.

As we are connected to Christ - the Hub - are we giving evidence to people that we are connected to Jesus? Do people even know we are Christians?

How do you know who my wife or kids or grandkids are - because I talk about them all the time? Right?

I can't help but talk about them

That's what the early church and the apostles were like in Acts 4:20 - they couldn't help but talk about Jesus because of what Jesus had done - and how He'd transformed their lives - and given them forgiveness and certain hope of eternal life

Jesus saved our lives, forgave our sins - replaced them with forgiveness and eternal life - not talking about Him - seems illogical?

And in Acts 4:13 - the apostles were so connected to Jesus - they were bold and didn't fear any ridicule at all - JESUS was their whole life  
Is Jesus our whole life? Or just an after-thought squeezed in?

Q. So why witness?

Basically - because Jesus commanded it

[Powerpoint 13-Matthew 4:19]

In Matthew 4:19 - one of our memory verses - Jesus says this - to two fishermen - Peter and Andrew

<sup>19</sup> "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."

Peter's fishermen friends were catching fish who were alive but then landed in the boat dead

Now Jesus wants them to go out and catch dead people (people dead from God) and make them alive in Jesus

[Powerpoint 13a-Matt 28:19-20)

Jesus also commanded his followers to witness in Matthew 28:19-20 - the Great Commission - where he told them to go and make disciples, baptizing people in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and teaching people to obey everything Jesus has commanded

*There's the story of a man who was found guilty of murder*

*Sentenced to life in prison*

*After a few months - the man was transferred to work on a farm - but still remained a prisoner on the farm*

*10 years later - new evidence came to light - and the man's sentenced was cancelled and he was a free man*

*No one bothered to follow it through - so the man wasn't aware he was free - and so the man continued working on the farm for another 10 years - even though the work was hard and there was no future for him - and even though the farmer he worked for died*

*Do you think it mattered to the man - that the man had the most important news in his whole life - but no one had bothered to pass it on to him?*

We have the most important message - the Good News that we have freedom from sin in our Lord Jesus

Are we following through with this message - and making sure those who are held captive to sin - are able to be set free?

[Powerpoint 13b-Cmds]

These commands of Jesus are not optional - they are mandatory!

Q. So what does witnessing look like?

Well first - we can witness by our **example** - by letting our Christian example speak for itself - so people notice our Christianity (Matt 5:16) - and they see the fruit of the Holy Spirit shining in our lives - **love, joy, peace, forbearance,**

kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Or we can witness - through the power of the Holy Spirit - by **telling** people who Jesus is, why He came and what He has done

If you've been doing the B2B Bible studies - you would have had a look at the hand of witnessing in your growth groups this week as well

It's going to be on the screen now - and on display here too

[Powerpoint 14-Hand of Witnessing]

So let's look at the hand

The first finger is **Compassion or Concern**

As Jesus mixed with people He had compassion and concern for them.

As Matthew 9:36 says - Jesus showed compassion because the people were like lost sheep without a shepherd.

Do we have concern and compassion for those lost from God.

I have a friend here at church - who literally sheds tears for those who haven't come to know Jesus - that's compassion

[Powerpoint 14a-Concern/compassion]

The next finger is **Contact** - we can't witness to people - if we don't have any contact. If we don't know people and meet people - how can we be a witness with our actions or our words? Jesus made contact with people all the time

The second finger of witnessing is **contact**

[Powerpoint 14b-Contact]

The next finger is **cultivation**

We need to cultivate a relationship with the person first.

In our NT reading today from John 4 - Jesus cultivates a relationship with the Samaritan woman - he doesn't just start talking about Godly things

We need to cultivate a relationship - a friendship - before witnessing

[Powerpoint 14c - Cultivate relationship]

The next finger is **commitment**

As we witness to people - we are looking to win them for Jesus - so we are looking for them to make a commitment to Jesus - this may take some time. If we show commitment to keep meeting up with them - then they may commit to doing the same.

[Powerpoint 14d-Commitment]

The last finger (thumb) is conservation or completion. As we witness to someone - the aim is to keep them as followers of Jesus - to the very end - so they receive the crown of glory - and eternal life with the Father. So conservation has to do with protecting something from being destroyed - in this case we don't want the person to go to Hell - and conservation has to do with restoration - in this case we want the person restored into an everlasting relationship with Jesus

As Paul prays with confidence in Philippians 1 - for the Philippians - that the God who began a good work in them will carry it on to completion until Jesus' returns. That should be our prayer for those we witness to

[Powerpoint 14e-Conservation]

So witnessing is - Not just door knocking and street evangelism

It's **one on one** - family, friend, uni, school, work

We should be ready to give an answer - when people ask us about our faith? (2 Peter 3:15)

When people ask us things like:

Why are you different?

Why do you go to church?

Why do you believe in Jesus?

In our 3<sup>rd</sup> reading - the NT passage from John 4 - Jesus gives us a case study on how to witness

- He starts a conversation with a Samaritan woman about something simple - He's thirsty and tired from a long walk - and simply asks for a drink of water
- Jesus breaks the ice - He doesn't go straight to godly stuff
- He doesn't say - if you don't believe in me - you're going to Hell
- Neither should we begin like that either!
- No - he breaks the ice -

- He breaks social barriers -
- He talks to a woman - socially unacceptable
- He talks to a Samaritan - Jews hate Samaritans - they don't mix
- But no-one is off limits with Jesus - He's come to save ALL who are lost - race, colour, personality, health and intelligence - don't matter
- And it must be the same for us - no one should be off limits - we can talk to anyone - A Muslim, a homeless person, an addict, disabled, an alcoholic, someone with a mental health problem
- Who did Jesus hang with? Illustration
- Jesus met unbelievers where they were. He realized what many Christians today still don't seem to understand. Cultivators have to get out in the field. According to one count, the gospels record 132 contacts that Jesus made with people. Six were in the Temple, four in the synagogues and 122 were out with the people in the mainstream of life.
- That should be the same for us!
- Now once Jesus engages with the woman he moves the conversation on
- He tells her godly things - He talks about living water - the Holy Spirit and eternal life
- Then He tells her things that He knows about her
- We can't do that (we're not Jesus)- but we can tell people things about God and Jesus - that they might not know - things that are amazing

- Which can engage people, charm people, convince people - we can say how Jesus changed our lives -can't we? - our own personal testimony can be very powerful and convincing
- As the conversation moves on - the Samaritan woman accepts Jesus' testimony - believes in Him and wants to tell others about Jesus - because it's all so amazing

I pray that Jesus' case study - gives us some tips to witness

So...

Have you asked the Holy Spirit to help you to witness to someone?

Have you prayed for God to send someone for you to witness to?

Have you thought how you would answer someone's questions?

Have you prepared or rehearsed your own testimony?

Are you witnessing?

Why? Why Not?

Witnessing is an obedient Christian in action

Maybe - you need some tools to help you witness - ?

Show tracts...

Let's pray...