

H2O

22 - Living the Simple Gospel: Philippians
Church on the Park | Pentecost Sunday, 4 June 2017

Text: “What I’m getting at, friends, is that you should simply keep on doing what you’ve done from the beginning. When I was living among you, you lived in responsive obedience. Now that I’m separated from you, keep it up. Better yet, redouble your efforts. Be energetic in your life of salvation, reverent and sensitive before God. That energy is God’s energy, an energy deep within you, God himself willing and working at what will give him the most pleasure. Do everything readily and cheerfully—no bickering, no second-guessing allowed! Go out into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this squalid and polluted society. Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God. Carry the light-giving Message into the night so I’ll have good cause to be proud of you on the day that Christ returns. You’ll be living proof that I didn’t go to all this work for nothing” (Philippians 2:12-16. MSG).

Theme: Walking with God is as simple as hearing and obeying.

Intro: In our passage, Paul is alluding to Israel in the wilderness. They were filled with bickering and complaining, and consequently, never became the light God had designed them to be. While taking a prayer walk last week, the Lord reminded me of a message he gave me during our last annual leave. It was this: living the Gospel is as simple as hearing and obeying. And that’s what H2O stands for: ‘H’ stands for “hear with ‘both ears’”, and ‘O’ stands for “obey”.

H - Hear (2x)

O - Obey

1) Live a life of hearing and obeying God (Exo. 17:1-7).

- The Good News is as **simple** and **pure** as **water**. We can divide into two basic **elements**: 1) Hear and Obey.
- Naturally, as we know, water is made up of two elements: 1) **Hydrogen** (two parts) and 2) **Oxygen** (one part).
 - I’m replacing the ‘H’ with hear and the ‘O’ with obey.
- Look at **Moses** at **Massah** (test) and **Meribah** (quarrel).
 - The people were **grumbling** and complaining.
 - It may seem simple to hear and obey God, but your **sinful nature** wants to **fight** and test God.
 - But, if you **simply hear** God and **obey**, you’ll find there will be a flow of **living water** coming from your life.
 - God **spoke** and Moses **did**. As a result, **water flowed** from the **rock**, the **hard place**.
 - The Lord still does the same today. He makes water flow from the **tough place**, when you hear and obey.
- **Hearing** and **obeying** God is the **key** to being **refreshed** and **renewed**.
 - It’s the only **way** to **enter** into **Christ’s rest**.
- **Psalms 95:6-11** deals with this event at **Meribah** and **Massah**
 - The ability to truly **hear** has to do with your **heart (hear & hear-t)**
 - God speaks his Word to you, but if your heart is not **soft**, you will not **respond**, and therefore will not enter into God’s **rest**.

2) Hear God with your heart; hear God to hear his heart (Eze. 33:30-33).

- There's **two kinds** of **hearing**: **physical** hearing and **authentic** hearing.
 - Let your hearing go **deeper** than the **surface**.
- The people of Ezekiel's day heard **Ezekiel** only with their physical ears (Eze. 33:30-33).
 - To them, hearing Ezekiel became a form of **entertainment**.
 - They didn't have true hearing because they did not obey.
- In order to **really hear** God, you need to **hear God's heart**.
- The issue that Moses and the prophets faced is that **Israel wasn't really hearing**.
 - This is what Jesus is addressing in the **Sermon on the Mount**.
- In the Sermon on the Mount, **Jesus** says, "**I say**" 14 times.
 - If you study Matthew you find that often he repeats the theme of **fourteen**, which is the number of David's name in Hebrew. Here Jesus is speaking with **authority** and he's taking back David's promised throne. He's speaking as a king with authority. (Matt. 5:18, 5:20, 5:22, 5:26, 5:28, 5:32, 5:34, 5:39, 5:44, 6:2, 6:5, 6:16, 6:25, 6:29).
 - Six times in the Sermon on the Mount we find Jesus saying, "**You have heard...but I say to you.**" (Matt. 5:22, 5:28, 5:32, 5:34, 5:39, 5:44).
 - If you look at this statement **casually**, you may think that there is something wrong with the law, God's commands to Moses. But then you need to remember how Jesus started all these statements: "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17).
 - *What is he saying?* You **never** really **heard** what God was saying in the beginning. All you heard was laws interpreted by men. These **laws reveal God's heart**. You did not hear the **command within the command**. You saw the **outward** part of the **wheel**, but not the **inward** part. You did not see the **wheel within the wheel**—you did not hear the **motivation** of God's heart. And you did not see that you were not to camp at Mt Sinai, but to move forward.
- Jesus contrasts **four kinds of hearing** in the **Parable of the Sower**: Matthew 13:3-23. Let's look at **Matthew 13:18-23**.
 - 1) **Hollow Hearing** - hearing but **not understanding** (on the path)
 - 2) **Superficial Hearing** - hearing with **excitement**, but not **obeying** (shallow/rocky soil)
 - 3) **Distracted Hearing** - hearing with lots of **noise** (thorny soil)
 - 4) **Authentic Hearing** - hearing, **understanding** and **obeying** (healthy good soil)
 - This is the only **fruitful hearing**
- You may say, "Hey Glen, this is **Sunday School stuff**." But here is my response: "No! If you don't get this right, the rest of your **walk** won't be **right**."
- The biggest thing I'm concerned about at the moment is that you don't have **distracted hearing**.
- Before I get into that, I'd like to say that the **soil** of your heart is **not predestined** by God.
 - The soil of your heart is determined by **allowing God to plough** the fallow ground of your heart.
 - In other words, actively inviting **God** to be like an **ox** and **farmer**, and plough the soil of your **heart** to make it **soft** and **healthy**.

3) Fear will block you from truly hearing God. Do not be afraid and you will drink from living waters (Matt. 13:22).

- The **thorny ground**: "the **worry** of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word" (Matt. 13:22).
 - Mark elaborates: "**worries** of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the world" (Mark 4:19).

- In the thorny soil, there's **competition** for your heart. The **Word** needs to be **all in all**. Otherwise it won't be fruitful.
- Exodus 20:1 & 18-21
 - This shows that the people were **fearful** of **God**.
 - This wasn't a **healthy** fear of God. This was a **dangerous** fear. They were **afraid** of God.
- This **unhealthy fear** keeps you from **intimacy** with God.
 - You **hear**, but you don't **really hear**.
 - You hear the **words**, but **not** God's **heart**.
 - This is the place I think the Australian church has been at for a long time, but there is a remnant breaking out of this wrong perception of God.
 - Lack of **intimacy** with God will mean lack of **fruit**.
 - It all comes down to a lack of **faith** in who God is and **trusting** what he says.
- **Numbers 14:22** - It is a lack of listening to God that kept the Israelites out the the Promised Land, unable to enter God's rest.
- **Fear** was the main **obstacle** keeping Israel from God's **fullness**. Deuteronomy 1:6-8, 19-21, 26-32

Conclusion: H - Hear God. Not just physically, but with your heart. Hear with faith. And, O - Obey. All real hearing is obedient to God. Through hearing and obeying you will drink God's living water and be a spring of living water for others.

MISC Personal Notes

During our last annual leave, the Lord spoke to me this word. I've alluded to it over the year, but haven't delivered it yet. When I was taking my prayer walk, the Holy Spirit spoke to me, to share it.

It's a simple message, but it is the key to being refreshed and renewed.

The Audacity & Authority of Jesus

"You have heard it said, but I say to you..."

Natural hearing and spiritual hearing.

"He who has ears, let him hear."

In Jesus' eyes hearing and obeying are one. Those who hear, are those who obey.

The main issue of the Old Testament is that the people did not hear God. They heard with their natural ears, but not with their heart.

Remember what God said to Moses in Deuteronomy: "You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Break camp..." (Deut. 1; **1:43, 45; Num. 14:22)

And why didn't they hear? They didn't hear because of fear and unbelief. They wanted someone else to speak to God. They did not draw near. They did not hear because of their sin, and they filtered all of God's commands through the dark, opaque glass of sin.

They heard in the flesh rather than the Spirit. They sent Moses up, but they did not want to draw near.

There's two kinds of fear relating to God: 1) Being fearful of God, and 2) The fear of God. Being afraid of God is the wrong kind of fear, and it will keep you from hearing God or understanding any true preaching. When you are afraid of God, you see God's word as a personal attack to retreat from. And I think Australians, see God in this way, as a punishing God. There is an attack happening, but its on your sinful nature—it must die. But it's an attack to liberate you. But you see the liberator as the enemy. You should see the liberator as your friend and helper.

Deut. 5:25-27; Deu. 6:4 - Hearing & listening is a big theme in Deuteronomy.

The main thing you need to know is that Jesus has authority to command, and that authority he received from his Father. It's also inherent in him from eternity.

Not hearing out of discouragement. Israel in captivity. (Exo. 6:9)

Not hearing out of fear. Israel.

Not hearing out of distraction and distance. Elijah.

To combine the elements of hearing and obeying, you need faith. Faith glues these two together.

The simple faith of the men and women of God in Genesis. It wasn't about preaching, but rather about hearing and doing.

Hearing is the key to faith. Hearing is receiving the seed of life and that seed produces the life of faith in you. Faith really is not your own work. If properly understood, it's God's work. It's God's faithfulness which you receive. It's God's life within. Faith is an attribute of God that you participate in.

"If only you would listen..."

Next sermon: "Arise & eat"; H20 part I & II