

**July 2, 2017**

**Communication is hard!**

*Read Philippians 4: 6*

Over the course of this last week it became abundantly clear to me just how difficult communication can be. I mean we had the Hong Kongers here, VBS was in full swing, and my family and I were about to get a puppy, not to mention that my brother-in-law and sister-in-law were expecting their son to be born and were not disappointed. This week was very busy for me and my wife, with many phone calls and lots of planning sessions and all kinds of conversations with many people. The longer it went, the more I found myself having to slow down to make sure that I was saying what I meant and that everyone listening understood me.

Communication is a relatively simple thing that we humans should be really good at; I mean really how long have we been talking to one another as a race? So why are there so many miscommunications? Why do we have so many hurt feelings over misunderstandings? Just think about it in your own lives. How many times has your wife mistook what you said for something else? When was the last time your husband got the wrong idea from a casual comment? This miscommunication thing happens at even the most intimate levels, where people know each other in a deeper way than the world will ever know them, so is it any wonder that there are courts full of people suing one another and hospitals full of people bruised and broken over misunderstandings.

Now, enter the Christian church. We've been on both sides of the miscommunications of the world. On the side of the misunderstood, our message gets heard as a message of an angry God who is followed by a bunch of

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hate-filled bigots. On the other side, our people hurt by the way the world reacts to us without even trying to get to know us on a personal level. We have hated and been hated. This sad state of affairs, makes it extraordinarily difficult to speak to people for fear of misunderstanding or being misunderstood. Perhaps we think that it is better not to rock the boat and just do our thing quietly. In any case, it can be difficult for Christians to talk about the weather let alone proclaim the message they've been given. Then we read in Matthew 10 that Jesus wants his followers to tell everybody what he said from the rooftops, and a whole other level of stress and frustration jumps in to our lives.

So what do we do when communication breaks down? We read our verse from Philippians and hear that when communications have broken or may break down we can go back to the author and perfecter of communication. We can go to God with all of our anxieties, and He who used the Word to bring everything into existence will bring us peace.

Some of you are thinking, "But pastor, I don't even know where to begin communicating with God in those times. What then, huh?" Well, God is good at communication that he doesn't need you to know what you need to say to him. The Holy Spirit will cover that part, so don't let talking to God be another stressor on your already stressed communication skills. Instead turn to God, give him what you've got on your heart and he will communicate to and through you to bring his peace to others.

Pastor *Carl P. Johnson*

