

Defined by Language - Part 1

By Anthony Higginson: spoken to the Dream Centre Church 30th January 2011

On attending a meeting of ministers this week, there was a speaker who was communicating about understanding the power of culture. Now culture has very little to do with colour as many people think it does, but culture however is very powerful to understand, especially as it has so many implications to it. Culture **determines the atmospheric environment of a place, the values and beliefs of a people group; it determines economies, language and key distinct behaviour.** Afterwards, I was speaking to a good friend of mine and he was telling me that his church were going down this road of discovering culture and its importance. As we were having lunch I asked him to describe for me the culture of his seemingly growing church, to which he replied: "Well, on a Sunday, we have to move the chairs back as people are beginning to respond when they hear the preaching." I said that was good, carry on. He said, "Well, we have to move the chairs back because people are responding to the preaching." And he kept on repeating the same line to me. What I quickly ascertained is that he was caught up in enjoying a recent experience, but **he did not have any language to adequately describe what he felt, what he was seeing, what they were touching as a house and ministry, nor did he understand what was taking place. If you do not understand these things how can you build, or how can you explain to others so that they too will help you build?**

If I was to speak words such as....

1. Redemption, Purpose, **Synoptic gospel** - meaning Matthew, Mark, Luke.
2. Sanctification, Destiny, **Apologetics** - meaning the defence and rational justification of Christian theology.
3. Justification, Legacy, **Hermeneutics** - meaning the science and interpretation of scripture.
4. Propitiation, Transition, **Homiletics** - meaning the art of preaching.
5. Christology, Post-modern, **Incarinate deity** - meaning possessing a human and God-form as a man.

Let's say these words were spoken to you in French, unless you speak French you wouldn't have a clue what was being spoken or what they mean. Now, if you heard me speak these words to you in English, did you or could you say, even though you heard them in English, you understand them any better? You heard better yes, but did you **understand** them any better? What this shows us is that what you hear you don't always necessarily understand, which is a point worth making.

You may have thought that Church, Christian language as something unimportant for you to know, thinking knowledge to be of more importance. Today, I really want to ask you to consider placing greater awareness, attention, consciousness and a greater emphasis to the language you hear being spoken in the Dream Centre, for this language is empowering you with the ability in becoming a true son and daughter of the living God.

P1) Language is not only a form of communication but it is a code used so as understanding can come.

Matthew 13:13 *This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand."* **(They did not possess the code in which to understand what Jesus was speaking)**

Acts 2:1-4 *When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were*

filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the spirit enabled them to. (Many different languages are now being spoken)

Acts 2:6 *When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues”*

This is like Mancunians (people from Manchester) listening to Zambians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Zimbabwean and Malawian and we as Mancunians, understanding what they are saying as this was the power being displayed, but how? God’s universal translation device was given to them all.

Peter, when seeing the Holy Ghost poured out, saw just how language brought people into understanding and from this language he was able to teach people to lay a hold of that which they were seeing, hearing, receiving, so they in turn could then go and proclaim the truth of Christ.

Acts 2:12 *Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?” They saw, they heard but they did not understand.*

Acts 2:14 *Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice (using his God given language) and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.”*

Language is a system for the expression of thoughts, feelings, etc., by the use of spoken sounds or conventional symbols. Now we know there are many expressions of language, such as body language, unspoken language, actions and behaviour, which in themselves are all languages.

Whenever God speaks, either His thoughts or feelings, His intent and plans, His purpose, His expressed will, His fore-ordained plan, His pleasing and perfect will and good pleasure to you and to us the corporate church, He speaks so as to guide, guard and govern you in His ultimate will for you and our life. Understanding this, how important do you now think a God language is and what do you think your understanding of this language should be?

Illustrate the media: Though we are told that media is a powerful outlet for communicating language, thoughts and intentions, we also know that media likes to place it’s own spin on things. It is this spin that lies, misleads, over-exaggerates, undermines, belittles and destroys people and lives.

When God speaks **He never lies**, for Him to do this is impossible, as this would make Him equal with Satan and contradictive also. Jesus said of Satan, that there is no truth in him as Jesus proclaimed Himself as being the way, the truth and the life.

The walls in church, though useful for hanging pieces of literature on them, must only be used for advertising and informing us of events and certain information which provides facts and knowledge, but it must never be used for communicating direction and the Now word of God to us as a corporate house, but why?

Walls don’t speak; they just display what is hung on them. When you hang things on the wall we

assume everyone understands and no-one interprets differently. Therefore, understanding this, we must communicate things audibly to enlighten, teach, and bring clarity and greater understanding in key areas.

God never falsely boasts about us nor does He mislead us. He never over or under-exaggerates, undermines or belittles us when He speaks, but He does ask you to read the small print so that you fully understand the clauses in this written contract.

P2 Language must be consistent.

All the way through the bible the challenge by God to his prophets, priest, kings, apostles was to declare, teach and make plain, consistently the word and intentions of God, so that that which the people were hearing, seeing and touching, they could receive and further enter into.

Self-interpretation has got in the way, both then and now, so much so that people use their own interpretations and opinions so as to form and develop carnal behaviours and patterns of their own choosing.

Romans 12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is —his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Hebrews 8:5 *They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.*

1. **God was saying**, Moses I want what you build to speak for me when I am silent.
2. I want what you build for me to be in line with what heaven is doing and speaking.
3. I want what you build to teach, instruct and warn people.
4. I want to show my people from the start that I am a God who is consistent, as I am the God who is the same yesterday, today and forever more.

1Corinthians 7:17 *Nevertheless, each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. (Which are consistent patterns)*

In all the churches the patterns, rules and behaviour were intended to be consistent. Where have we gone wrong? People do not understand the power of language and its implications.

P3 There is danger for the one who does not understand key specific language.

Matthew 13:15-19 *For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path."*

P4 Language defines who you are and what you have become or are becoming.

"The Church We See" (Dream Centre brochure given to those who visit) could easily be interpreted as the church we are becoming. To see it suggests that one day we will somehow reach it, but in essence it is

not only something you will reach, but more so it is something you are becoming. It suggests culture, transition - process, language, DNA.

Tune in next week when Pastor Tony will speak about how, through one common language being spoken and understood, there is nothing that cannot be achieved.