

BBTC Core Value

Our mission statement: To share Christ in all its forms, as we mature in Him. To mature in the Lord is the first verb, which is why we are talking about Vibrant Spirituality. In order to serve, we can only give of what we have, and we want to focus on the input side.

The word “vibrant” speaks about zest, about life, about zeal, fire, and passion. Vibrant spirituality is not just locked up in the heavens, but this is a spirituality that will be translated onto earth, whether is it in our everyday life, in our relationships, in our values, or in our attitudes.

*A video is shown about the many noises that we experience in our daily life.

As we know from Scripture, the world will get darker, but the people who know God will get increasingly radiant and brighter. There will be a greater measure of uncertainties as we are living in the times of birth pangs. It is the worst of times, yet the best of times too.

As people in the world, we are distracted by all these noises which are screaming for our attention. A question to ask ourselves, “What frequency are we tuned to?” It is said in the Bible, “My sheep hears my voice and I know them and they hear me” (Luke 10:27). We are all His sheep, and He is our great Shepherd. And that is what Jesus said, He wants all of us to hear His voice.

I used to struggle with this, when people told me that the Lord told them this, or the Lord told them that etc. I felt stressed, because the Lord didn’t seem to be telling me. This was mainly due to the fact that I had a preconceived mindset about the way that the Lord spoke.

Hebrews 1:1-2: As stated in the verse, the revelation of God is complete through Jesus Christ. This message is to encourage each one of us to know, to recognise how the Lord speaks to you, and to be familiar with Him. We have learnt that comparison is a snare of the devil. The Lord speaks differently to everyone.

Once, I was taking a stroll thru a playground with my wife. Many children were running and shouting, with the mums chatting. There was this mum who exclaimed, “Hold it, and wait! I hear my daughter crying!” The other mums were astonished that she was able to pick up the cries of her daughter (who had fallen off the swing) amidst everything. The mother’s ear had a frequency that was tuned in to the frequency of the daughter’s voice.

- 1) Know that the Holy Spirit dwells in us and we must intentionally posture to connect with Him.

We must intentionally connect with the frequency of the HS. Our postures matter in this connection. Since the Pentecost, God has given us the Holy Spirit, and He resides in all of us. As such we must be increasingly familiar to how He speaks to us.

The Holy Spirit is not a lake that is confined to any boundaries. He is more like a river, as described in John 7 and John 3. Similar to a river, the Holy Spirit would have seasons of high tide, seasons of high and furious torrents, and seasons of slow, meandering streams. Therefore, we need to be familiar with how the Holy Spirit moves in us, as the river of God.

Proverbs 4:20-23: The words “Give attention” mean to set your mind. When you are in church, give attention to God in worship, to hear the Word of God. “Incline our ears”: don’t let your ears be distracted. “Don’t let it depart from your eyes”: to focus on the Word of God. “Keep them in the midst of your heart”: your heart, attitude and posture matter.

In this aspect of hearing God, don’t be like Martha in the story of Martha and Mary. Guard against distractions and diversions. There are mainly 3 ways in which the devil distracts:

- a) Anger: The anger in our hearts diverts our focus in hearing God.
- b) Busyness: There is a time to be busy, and there is a time to focus on God.
- c) Deceptions: The devil uses deceptions to distract us.

2) Know that God loves us and uses many channels to speak to us.

Know that God loves you, and that our God is a personal God. He desires to have a personal relationship with each and every one of us here.

a) Through the Scriptures

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. God has spoken thru His Son, who is the Word (Hebrews 1). God speaks to us on a daily basis through our routine. I will pray the Word of God, that I am deeply loved etc, declaring all His promises to me.

For those who are new, I may sound arrogant. There is, however, a difference between arrogance and biblical convictions. You must grow in your walk with God and have biblical convictions. The main difference between arrogance and biblical convictions is the premise of your confidence. If the premise of your confidence is in yourself, it is arrogance. But if the premise of your confidence is in the Word of God and your relationship with Him, it is a conviction. Thus, we must be people of convictions; otherwise we will be tossed to and fro in these challenging times.

As we journey in Christ, there will definitely be times when fear or doubt will creep in. The manner of which we can react to such life situations can be found in the Word of God. We need to stand upon the Word of God, praying and seeking revelations from Him as we live our lives. When we delight in the Word of God, we will bear fruit in season. The fruit that I bore in season when I was in my teens was different from the fruit that I bore in my twenties and so forth.

He also promises us that whatever I do will prosper. I didn’t start off my Christian life with all these convictions and beliefs. Many of it came through my 40 odd-years of my Christian journey, and there were many lessons where I had to pay the price. There were also beliefs that I had to unlearn and relearn by going back to the Scriptures and laying hold of the Holy Spirit.

b) Through People in our lives

The purpose of communication between people is to effect change in values, attitudes for a desired behaviour.

Husbands, take heed when your wives speak to you. Many a times God speak to us through our spouses. If we continuously turn a deaf ear, mindsets and attitudes will become increasingly resistant to change as we get older. Communication is about change. Sometimes, we react only because we listen to the human voice. However, what I am suggesting here is God speaks through people. Therefore, listen. Listen to the Voice of God in the anger of your colleague, in

the roughness of your cell member, in the uncouthness of their ways. God still speaks through people. Don't come to a state where we become dull of hearing.

Colossians 3:16: We want to live out this biblical principle in our cell group, in our clusters and tribe meetings.

Hebrews 10:24-25: The church must be a different place such that in our CGs, in our clusters, we don't behave like the people in the world. We are called to love one another, and love covers over a multitude of sins. The Christian community should be a community of forgiveness, love, and encouragement. We can't say we love God, and hate one another.

c) Through Dreams, Visions, and Spiritual Gifts

Numbers 12:6: During one altar call, a leader was praying for this person who had severe migraine for days. As the leader closed his eyes and prayed for him, the leader saw a coffin. The coffin speaks of the fear of death, or death itself. After releasing this word of the person, he admitted that he had feared the death of his child. The leader ministered to this person, casted out the spirit of fear, and the migraine was gone. The source of this migraine was the spirit of fear. This is what we do at the altar call. We have leaders and intercessors that will pray and ask God for words of knowledge, and the words of wisdom.

d) Through Circumstances and Happenings in our lives

Nothing in our lives happened by chance. The Lord speaks through when we do a business deal, when He gives a gut feel. There was this leader who works in a bank and was talking to this Christian customer who was buying a property. All the paperwork was settled, and all that's left was to sign the document. Somehow, this leader had this feeling to hold back. He couldn't explain why, but because he was a believer, he prayed and held back. A few months later, news was released that a major road was going to be built running across the said property. Had he bought it then, he would have suffered a substantial loss.

Listen to the gut feel. It is always the voice of the Holy Spirit, speaking out for our good.

Romans 8:28: 2 months ago, Youth Leader Amos who had a cluster retreat at the Changi bungalow. Moments before the retreat started, the leaders felt led to gather for prayer. In the process of praying, they changed the location of their meeting. Without any sign of lightning or thunderstorm, an old huge tree fell and crashed on the area where they were supposed to be meeting. It would have caused serious injury to the youths had they had not listen to the voice. Listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit that comes in the form of prompting or nudging.

At CBTL, the testimony of this lady who had mouth cancer was shared over the pulpit. Her journey, her agony for almost a year, and how the Lord turned it all for good was testified. When she was going through this period, she often wondered if she could sing again. Yet she was able to sing at CBTL.

Genesis 50:20: If you are going through a failed relationship, a hurt, a disappointment. He can turn every seeming failure, every pain, and every evil for good. The condition is that we are to continue to connect with him and look to him. Hang on to His promises and persevere. We do not know how long this will take, but don't give up. Whenever there is hope, there is always faith. The prayer that Paul prayed in Romans 15:13, May the God of hope fill you, may the God of peace fill you with hope as we trust and persevere in Him.

e) Every possibility as long as our hearts are postured to hear God.

If God can use a donkey to speak to a prophet, a rooster to speak to the Apostle Peter, an angel, a burning bush to Moses, He can use a cleaner, a pork seller, He can use anybody. Don't react to that physical voice; instead posture your hearts to listen to the voice of God in that human voice.

3) Through the many vehicles and channels, we receive and hear God speaking primarily in our inner being.

Hebrews 8:10: This is the new covenant after Pentecost. The word "laws" refers to every word of God, be it instructions, commandments, statutes, guidance etc. And He put these laws in our minds, where we think. Moreover, He will write in on our hearts, and that's where we feel. As such, He shall be our God, and we shall be His people. This is because He wants to lead every of us to hear him. This is also known as the "inner witness", Romans 8:16, the "gentle whisper", in 1 Kings 19, when God spoke in a still, small voice. In Heb 10:16, He will incline our hearts, our feelings, and He will write it in our minds.

The combination of our mind, soul, emotions and our will, how He speaks to us and guides us. We are a tri-part being: we are all spirit-beings, which have a personality (soul) that lives in a physical body. We are a unique creation. As spirit-beings, we can connect with God who is a spirit-being, we are aware of demons and angels. Yet, we are also physical beings, subjected to physical, natural laws.

Therefore, when we violate any physical or spiritual laws, the devil may take us out before our due time.

a) Know that there are 3 sources of thoughts.

Man, the devil and God. We want to eliminate the devil by coming under the blood of Christ. The Blood of Christ is our seal for the open doors in our life. Keep the devil outside the house of our lives. So whatever that is left, is the Lord and us.

b) When we draw near to God, we eliminate the evil one by:

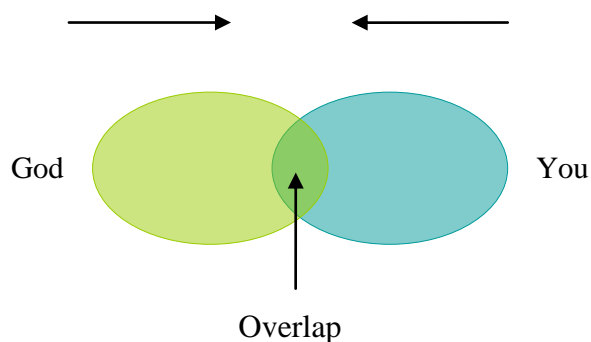
i) Coming under the Blood.

Hebrews 10:19

ii) Resist the evil one.

Don't give the devil any footholds in our lives. In our anger, submit your emotions to the Lord and do not sin.

c) What is left then is between the Lord and us.



Imagine 2 overlapping circles, as shown above. The arrow points you towards God, which symbolises you drawing close to God. Also, God will always draw near to us. Therefore, the area of overlap is where God's will is your will. It is also where your will, is God's will.

The encouragement for all of us is to increase this area of overlap. Over the years I have learnt that this area of overlap is dynamic. When I fail to connect to God, this area of overlap shrinks, and the 2 circles becomes apart. I must continuously draw near to God, and He will continuously draw near to me. I can never presume that there will always be this area of overlap all the time. Similarly, in regards to other issues and matters, I must draw near to Him again. This is a life of total dependency on God.

d) Learn to hear and receive the Word of God, which comes in the form of:

For some of us, it comes in the form of Word Download. There are some who receive visions or pictures. Some recall a certain memory or an experience. The Lord comes to give knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Often, it comes as a thought, as a feeling.

4) Hearing God and doing His Word will bring wisdom for life and increasing revelation.

This was an inspiration from Ps Darren after hearing him expound on the Parable of the Sower and the Seed. Hearing God + Doing and Obeying God will bring increasing wisdom for life, and increasing revelation.

Matthew 7:24-25: We live in a fallen world, and the world will get darker. But the true church that is ready for the Lord's coming is gloriously bright and without a blemish. This is the Lord's promise, that every year will get better as the world gets darker.

Luke 8:18: Be careful in how you hear God. For whom that has the revelation from God, more will be given. This is my desire for everyone in BBTC, that we will have more revelations. But whoever that does not have, that is whoever that does not hear and do the Word of God, even the little that he seems to have will be taken away.

When we do not obey the Word of the Lord by just being mere hearers of the Word, we become deceived. (James 1).

Bottom Line:

1 Sam 3: Where the Word of the Lord was rare, and there was no widespread revelation. Spiritually, Israel was in the pits. Eli had heard the voice of the Lord, but he no longer heard Him.

You might have been a believer for quite a while, my encouragement, for you and myself, is to not be like Eli where we no longer hear God, and are living on yesteryears. God is the god of today, and He speaks.

God spoke to Samuel, but Samuel did not recognise the voice of God. Today's message is to encourage you to find out how God speaks to your personally. Every one of us matter to God.

Hear how God speaks to us thru the scriptures, people, and circumstances. Hear how God speaks to you through various forms and means. Don't react in the natural. Instead posture yourself to hear what God is saying behind that particular situation, or that human voice.

End.

Questions for discussion

1) Why do we need to hear God?

2) How does God speak to us? What are some of the ways that help us to discern?

3) It is not enough to be mere hearers of the Word. How can we apply the Word we hear from God?

4) A disciple is someone who continues to grow in the knowledge of God. What are some areas that you may want to commit to hear from the Lord?