

Students at St Helen's



The
Essential Mix

Track 1:
Knowing God

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Talk 1: *Knowing God*

John 1:1-18, Hebrews 1:1-2:4

What different ideas about God do people have?

Can we know who is right? If so, how? If not, why not?

The unknowable

John 1:1-18 (p. 1068)

"No one has ever seen God..." (v18a)

Trying to know the unknowable

Institution

"The wisdom of age suggests that..."
"The generally accepted understanding is..."



Reason

"The most logical understanding..."
"Given these things are true, it must be the case that..."



Experience

"Based on my experience..."
"For me ..."



When the unknowable introduced Himself...

*“No one has ever seen God;
the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known...” (v18)*

Personal

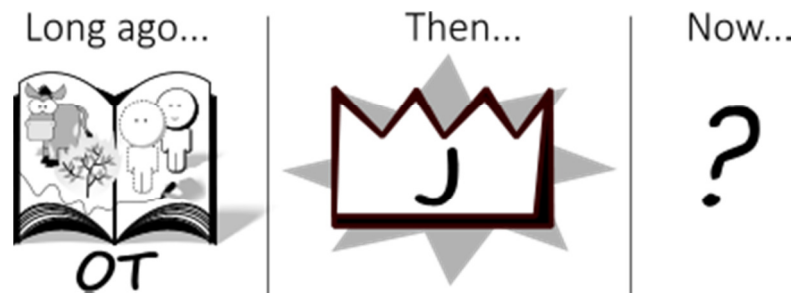
Relational

Read Hebrews 1:1-4. According to those verses...

- How can we know God?
- How does that compare to John 1?
- How do you feel about that?

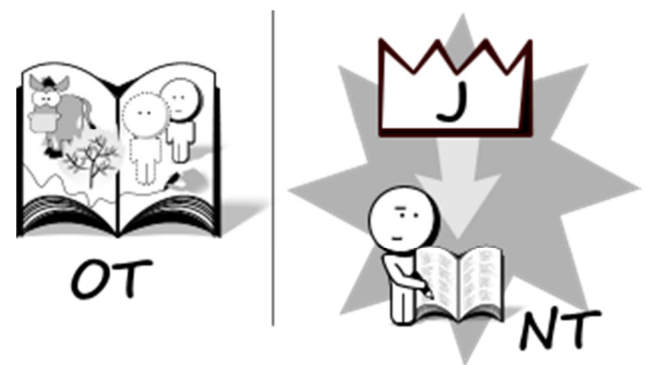
What about now that He's gone?

Hebrews 1:1-2:4 (p. 1203-4)



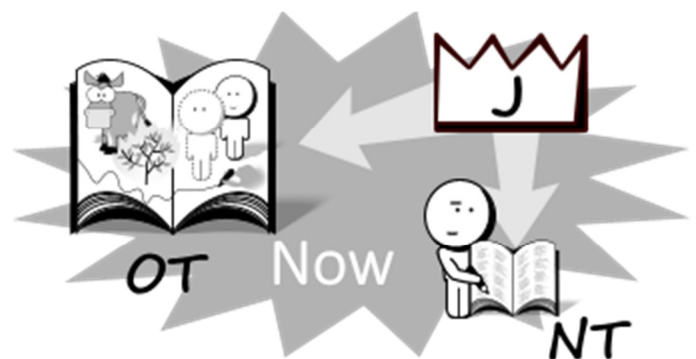
"...it was attested to us by those who heard..." (2:3b)

God's "blue tick" for the apostles



⇒ The New Testament is God introducing Himself to us in Jesus

"Long ago at many times and in many ways, God spoke..." (1:1, cf. 1:5-14)



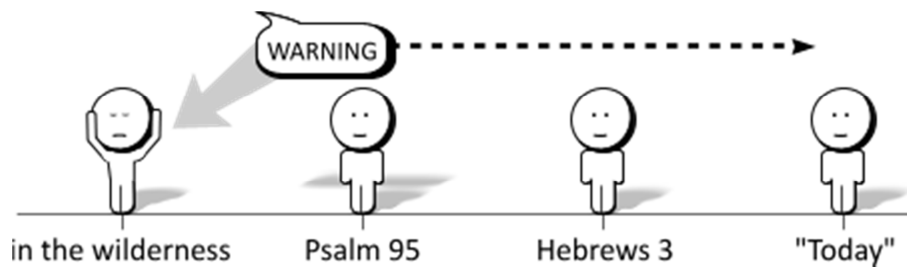
⇒ The whole Bible is God introducing Himself to us, in Jesus

Keep a finger in Hebrews, and turn to Psalm 95:6-11 (p. 599).

- What is the big message to those hearing the Psalm?

Turn back to Hebrews 3:7-13 (p. 1205).

- What is being said to the readers of this letter?



⇒ The whole Bible is God *still* speaking to us, in Jesus

Getting the Bible right



A few other related Bible passages:

- *On Jesus as “God introducing Himself”*: 1 John 1:1-4; John 14:7-10; Col 1:15-17
- *On the Old Testament being about Jesus*: John 5:39-40; Luke 24:25-27; Rom 1:1-6
- *On the Bible as the word of God*: 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matt 19:3-5
- *On the whole Bible applying to us*: Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:6,11; 2 Tim 3:16-17, 4:1-4

Talk 2: *Hearing God's voice today*

John 16:12-15, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Recap: The Bible is a personal, relational God speaking today

Hebrews 1:1-2:4 (p. 1203-4)

Look up the following verses in their context. For each verse:

- Who is being spoken to?
- Would you apply this instruction to yourself directly? Why / why not?

Mark 11:2-3 (p 1021)

2 Tim 4:13 and 4:21 (p. 1199)

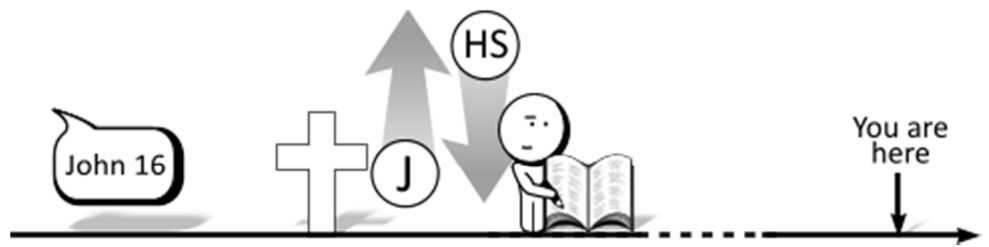
John 4:16 (p. 1072)

John 11:7 (p .1082)

John 13:21 (p. 1085)

Jesus' goodbye promise: another Helper

John 16:12-15 (p. 1088)



What He's come to do

Who He's interested in

How He's guided

cf. 14:25-26

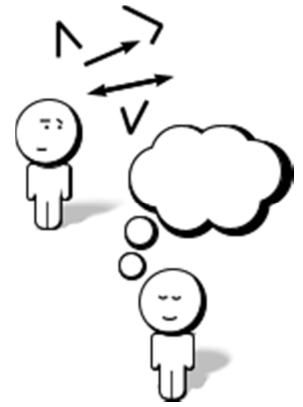
cf. 2 Peter 1:16-21

How exciting is it to consider that the Spirit guided into "all truth"?

How do we feel about this coming *through the Bible*?

Can't we have something more impressive?

1 Corinthians 2:1-16 (p. 1147)



"...Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom..." (1:22)

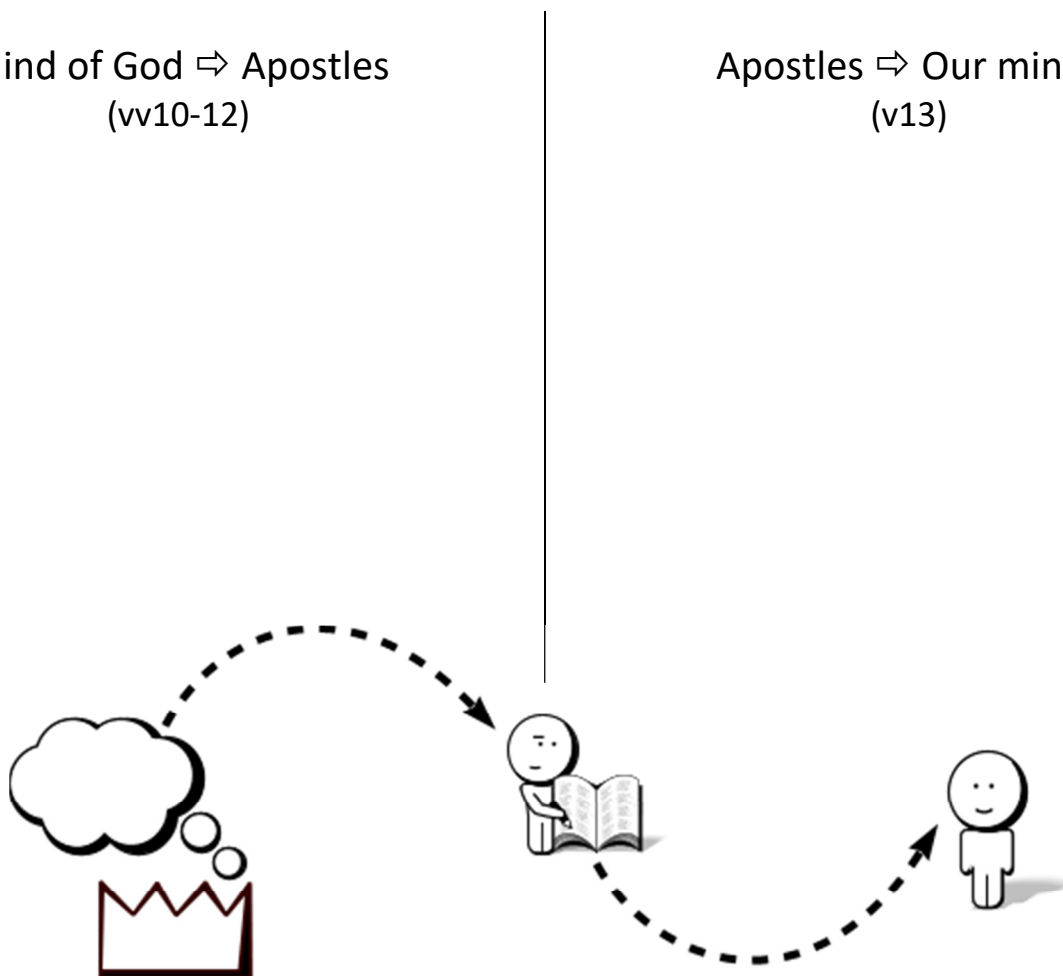
Don't you realise what you've got?

The secret, hidden wisdom of God.... (vv7-9 cf. v14)

...revealed by the Spirit (vv10-13)

Mind of God ⇨ Apostles
(vv10-12)

Apostles ⇨ Our minds
(v13)



Hearing the *very mind of God*

Enjoying the kind of relationship God has chosen to have with us

Pick one or two of the following phrases.

- “I’m a Christian, but I don’t have the Spirit yet...”
- “I have a word from the Lord...”
- “See where the Spirit leads...”

Have you used this phrase before, or heard someone else say it?

What does it assume about how the Spirit works?

How does that compare to what we’ve just seen in 1 Corinthians 2?

The Joy of True Spiritual Experience

"I'm a Christian, but I don't have the Spirit..."
& the universal Christian experience

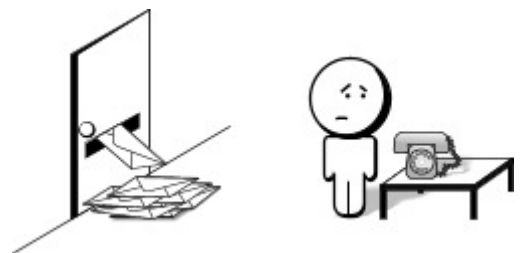
1 Corinthians 3:1 ... 16 (p. 1147-8)



"filled with the Spirit" and the worry of 'leaky Christians'

"Can..." vs "Promises to..."

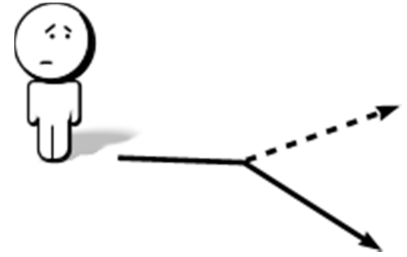
"I have a word from the Lord..."
& God's normal way of communicating



The baffling idea of "Word vs Spirit"

cf. 1 Thess 5:19-20

"See where the Spirit leads..."
& the way God guides



"Lay your fleece" (cf. Judges 6:36-40, "as you have said...")

"See if the door opens / closes..." (ct. Col 4:3)

Not judgmental, but discerning

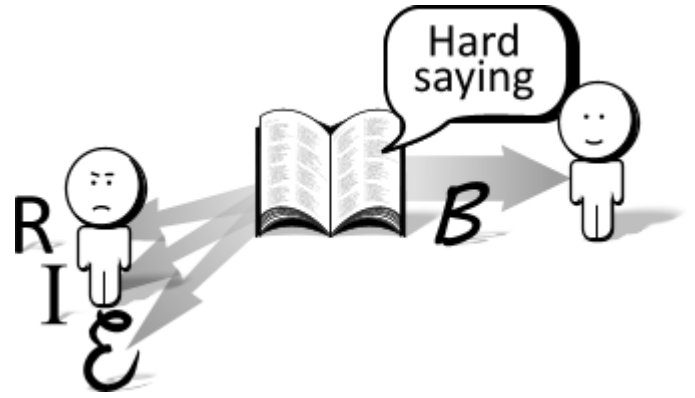
A few other related Bible passages:

- *On all Christians having the Spirit:* 1 Cor 12:3; John 14:23; Romans 8:9; Gal 3:2-3
- *On Christians keeping the Spirit:* John 14:16; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Eph 1:13-14, 4:30
- *On the inseparability of the Spirit and the Word:* Eph 6:17; also compare Eph 5:18-21 with Col 3:16-17

Talk 3: *Continuing to hear God's voice*

John 6:60-71 (p. 1076)

Two ways to respond to God's voice



4,989 disciples who chose Option A

The few who chose Option B

As they approached death, what were the apostles urging people to do?

2 Timothy 1:13-14 (p. 1197)

2 Peter 1:12-15, 3:1-2 (p. 1224-6)

1 John 1:1-4 (p. 1227); Revelation 22:18-19 (p. 1252) (This is a bit harder!)

How should we deal with other sources of authority?

What does each passage say about Institution / Reason / Experience? Is it positive or negative?

How does each voice compare to God's revelation in Jesus / the Bible?

Institution



Proverbs 1:8-9 (p. 634)
(cf. Proverbs 12:15; 2 Timothy 3:14)

Mark 7:5-8 (p. 1016)
(cf. Colossians 2:8; Galatians 1:8)

Reason



2 Timothy 2:7 (p. 1198)
(cf. Acts 17:2, 17; 1 Peter 3:15)

1 Corinthians 1:20-21 (p. 1146-7)
(cf. 1 Corinthians 2:14; Proverbs 3:5-6; Mark 12:18-24)

Experience



Psalms 19:1-6 (p. 547)
(cf. Romans 5:5, 8:16; 2 Corinthians 12:12)

Deuteronomy 13:1-3 (p. 189)
(cf. Colossians 2:18-19; 2 Peter 3:1-4; Jeremiah 17:9, 23:16-17)

Bible



Psalms 19:7-13 (p. 547)
(cf. Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

The baby, the bathwater, and listening rightly

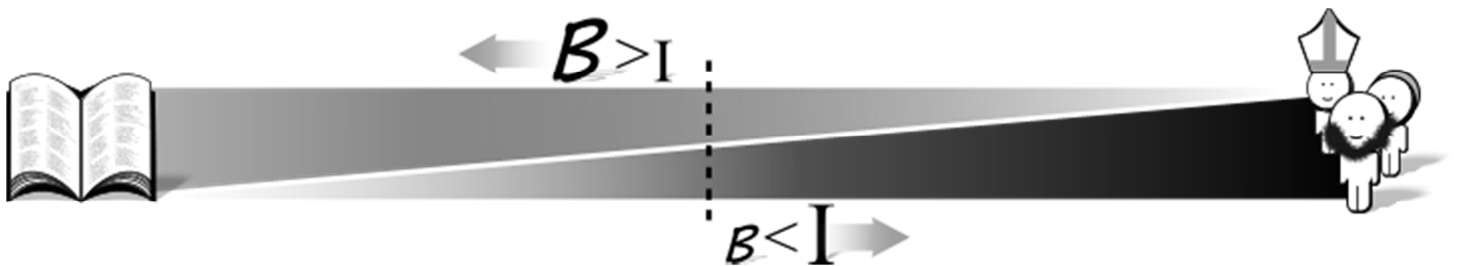
What would each voice say about...

... sleeping with your boyfriend/girlfriend?

... smoking?



Using "BRIE" as a tool for dealing with differences...



How you treat the Bible = how you treat God

Letting God challenge us

Letting God guide the questions we ask

A few other related Bible passages:

- *On the Bible bringing new life:* John 17:20; 2 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 1:23-25
- *On the Bible growing Christians:* Col 1:28; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3ff

Talk 4: *Delighting in God's voice*

Psalm 19 (p. 547)

The “words” of _____

Words (vv1-4b)

*“There is no speech, nor are there words,
Their voice is not heard.
Their line has gone out through all the earth,
And their utterances to the end of the world...”*
(vv3-4b, NASB)



Nothing hidden (vv4c-6)

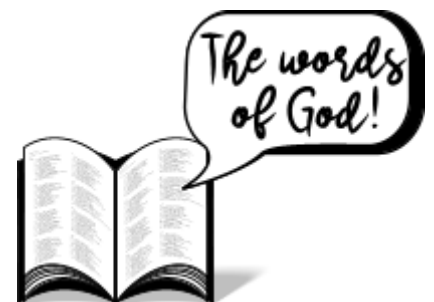
The words of _____

Words (vv7-10)

“the LORD” (cf. “God”, v1)

Perfect (v7) superseded

Reviving the soul (v7), rejoicing the heart (v8)



Sure (v7), right (v8), true (v9)

Making wise (v7), enlightening the eyes (v8)

Pure (v8), clean, righteous altogether (v9)

Enduring forever (v9)

Which of those ideas do you find most precious / exciting?
How does that make you want to respond?

More desired than gold (v10)

Sweeter than honey (v10)

Nothing hidden (vv11-13)

The words of _____ (v14)



Questions