

414 Communication, communication, communication

I fear this could be a dangerous article about some principles that are bearing in upon me:

God loves → God communicates → God uses any and every means to communicate.^[412,413]

AI has offered us a list of communication ways and means that I think we could accept?

- Scripture (*foundational*)
- the Holy Spirit
- prayer (*two-way*)
- providence (*circumstances*)
- other people (*community*)
- creation and conscience
- direct revelation (*rare but possible*)

But last time, I added the Bible's own: 'at the end of these days [God] has spoken through [a person]'.^{Heb 1:1}

OK, so this time it has occurred to me that the Bible can be as *infallible* as it likes, but if I don't actually read it, it will *fail* to communicate. [Principle: I must read (mark, learn and inwardly digest) my Bible.]

But what about people who don't even own a Bible? How can God communicate to them? Maybe God's 'means' for those people is us? And that ties in with the idea that God speaks through a person. We are a person, right? So we can... we should... we must... communicate God's love in any and every situation – unconditionally.

Terrible damage has been done to God's communication channel by church-based abuse scandals, but I fear that every single sin that Paul Beverley commits, including sins of omission, can potentially damage God's love-communication.

That's why I must listen, listen, listen to God every day and put it into practice, practice, practice.

But here comes the crunch: that is exactly what Jesus did... and he was tortured and murdered!

Now, this will sound like a digression, but I read a while back about the incredible things that people had to go through in the early centuries when they wanted to be baptised, but I'm beginning to understand why: the importance of *personal commitment*.

By being baptised, we commit ourselves, as a person, to a Person – for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death do us... finally and fully unite!

Sorry, but I've begun to realise what a huge responsibility I carry, and I shudder at my years of being a well-meaning Pharisee who knew – because he studied his Bible – what was RIGHT. God forgive me, make me humble, and help me in my efforts to love all those whom God brings across my path.

Paul Bev. 4.2.26