

Sermon Series: Vision 2020 Recap
Sermon Title: Beholding God- Together
Scripture reading: Colossians 3:12-16
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church
January 5, 2020
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Here at the first of the year, we are reviewing, refocusing on and recapping our church vision.

Behold. Belong. Be Sent.

It's always good to pause and take stock of things and lay some good tracks for the new year.

Last week, we focused on being '*Beavers for the Bible*'; Beholding God daily as individuals by munching, chewing and feeding on God's word.

I'm so proud of so many of you who are taking up the challenge to read the whole Bible this year or to read the New Testament.

And I might add that it is never too late to get started. Start today! We still have some Bible reading plans printed out for you. Take one. I have the PDFs and will be glad to send them to you.

Well, as we focused last week on how we are to Behold God daily as individuals, this week we want to shift gears and balance things out a bit.

Today I hope to encourage us all to....

Behold God...Together.

This will be somewhat of a bridge between beholding God and belonging to the body.

Let's pray.

Robert Murray McCheyne was a Scottish preacher back in the early 1800's. He only lived to be 29 years old but his life seemed to impact so many. This year, I am following the Bible reading plan that he developed. He was a man who truly Beheld God regularly and deeply.

What I have discovered is that it wasn't just his personal devotion life that contributed to his Beholding God but it was that he Beheld God together with others.

He had 2 good friends in his short life that we could say these guys really '*one another'd one another*'.

Their names were Andrew Bonar and Alexander Somerville. They used to read the Bible together and sing together and pray together.

Listen to how he describes their brotherhood.

"I sometimes think that we three at that time were like the three disciples you read of—Peter, James, and John before the day of Pentecost. . . . Christ took these three into the chamber of Jairus' daughter, and taught them how to raise dead souls. He taught us from the very first to put no stress upon human appliances, but to keep to the gospel word. He took us to the Transfiguration hill, and showed us His person from time to time. He taught us to delight in His person, and to behold in a glass the glory of the Lord, and be changed into the same image. He took us to Gethsemane at communion times, and showed us the cup that the father gave him to drink, and which he drank, leaving no dregs behind."

I want relationships like that. I want that for each of you.

My task is simple today:

I want to encourage us to Behold God....together... with others.

Or I could say it like this:

I want us to see our need (and actually do something about it)...the need to grow in spiritual maturity through one another.

I want encourage us through really 3 one another passages.

There are 40 something passages in the New Testament that command us to do such things as:

Love one another,
pray for one another,
bear one another's burdens,
submitting to one another
endure one another.....and as we will see today...
teach and admonish one another
exhort one another...and...
stir up one another

Let's first take a look at one of the passages from last week in Colossians 3.

Colossians 3:12-16

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, **13** bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. **14** And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. **16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you [guys] richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.**

I. Teaching & Admonishing one another.

Now, we want the word to dwell in us richly and as we mentioned briefly last week, the "YOU" here in Colossians is plural not singular.

This is emphasized even more by the "*one anothers*" in this passage. It is supposed to be a team effort.

The pathway to Beholding God runs through the body of Christ.

There are a few elements in this passage that I want us to see.

- 1. Teaching one another-** it means instruction. Christians are to be in relationships and environments where they are giving and receiving instruction in the word.
- 2. Admonishing one another-** it means to warn gently. It is used for example in [Acts 20:31](#) where Paul says, "[for 3 years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.](#)"

Interestingly enough, this passage also tells us to sing with one another.

We need more singing.

This is why we need home groups and not just Bible study groups, cause we need to sing to and with each other more and homes work better at that than public areas.

This passage in Colossians is very similar to a passage in **Ephesians 5:19**, except that instead of saying, "Let the word of Christ dwell" it says, "Be filled with the Spirit" in Ephesians.

15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, **16** making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. **17** Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. **18** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, **19** addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, **20** giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **21** submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Questions to ask ourselves!

So, am I in any of these relationships?

Am I being taught the word along with others in a small group or Life Transformation Group?

Do I have any relationships that are close enough that people can admonish me?

Join a small group. Start a small group.

We are commanded to teach and admonish one another because **The pathway to Beholding God runs through the body of Christ.**

II. Exhorting one another.

We are not only to Behold God together by teaching and admonishing one another but we are to exhort one another.

Hebrews 3:12-13

12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. **13 But exhort one another** every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

This passage starts out with a warning! 'Take care' literally means, 'Beware/Warning'.

This whole passage is warning against rebelling against God, falling into unbelief, hardness of heart, slipping into sin and turning away from God.

And guess what the fix is?

Exhort one another.

Exhortation means literally to call to one's side or to call someone near. This word is used: to urge someone, to comfort, to beg, to appeal etc.

How many times do you think God has rescued you through a brother or sister, who called you to their side and said, "How you doin'?"

How many times has God sent someone to talk to you, encourage you, pray with you?

Oh, how God has blessed all of us through the body of Christ!

If you and I didn't have people in our lives that were encouraging us, urging us to walk in holiness, calling us near to them and saying, "keep the faith", where would we be? We would've slipped into even more sin.

Sometimes (as Jude says) people have literally "snatched us from the fire."

Who do you need to call near to you?

Who do you need to meet with regularly?

Exhortation is a safeguard against sin and unbelief.

Our relationship with God needs others.

Our Beholding needs Belonging.

We are to teach each other, admonish one another, exhort one another and we are to.....

III. Stir up one another.

Hebrews 10:23-25

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Perseverance is empowered by the prodding of others. Standing firm happens through sharpening.

Application:

Some of you have a barrier that needs to come down. For some the barrier is receiving and for some it is giving.

Maybe it's because of deep pain.

Maybe it's because of something you've done or something someone else has done to you...and so you won't let people close to you.

You've built a wall.

Listen, we all have had pretty messed up lives.

We are all dysfunctional. We've all been hurt.

But we are not victims who have no victory.

We are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

But you're never going to grow if you don't open up, let people love you and come near you and speak into your life.

You're only going to go so far on your own.

Real Beholding and real victory runs through the body.

Maybe it's your *pride* that keeps you on the fringe and prevents you from Beholding God together with others.

Maybe you're *selfish* and you don't want to give your time to people.

I don't want this to sound harsh but we need to stop using busyness as an excuse for not Beholding God with others or Belonging deeper to the body.

We all have 24 hours in a day and we do what we want to do.

Everyone is tired. Everyone is busy.

It takes time for everyone to go here and there.

You're *choosing* not to come to Thursday prayer.

You're *choosing* not to be in a Bible study.

You're *choosing* to come to our worship gathering once a month.

You're *choosing* not to eat lunch with the body on Sundays.

But when God saved you and I, he put us in a family.

We don't live life just unto ourselves and read our Bible on our own and love God.

We are in a body and God has designed us to know him more through one another.

We are to Behold God...Together.

So, I encourage you and exhort you to ask the Lord how you need to go deeper in your giving *and* receiving to the Body....so that you and others might Behold God more.

Teach one another.

Admonish one another.

Exhort one another.

Stir up one another.

The pathway to Beholding God runs through the body of Christ.