



Archdeaconry Study Day Being Disciples Learning in Today's Church

'Speak as you find and tell it like it is'

18 October 2003

Sam Cappleman

Agenda



- What
 - Education and learning are strongly linked to culture and environment
- So What
 - What might be the implications and insights be for the church and ourselves as we communicate, teach and learn
- What Now
 - Do we need to change and expand the way we communicate the gospel?

However...

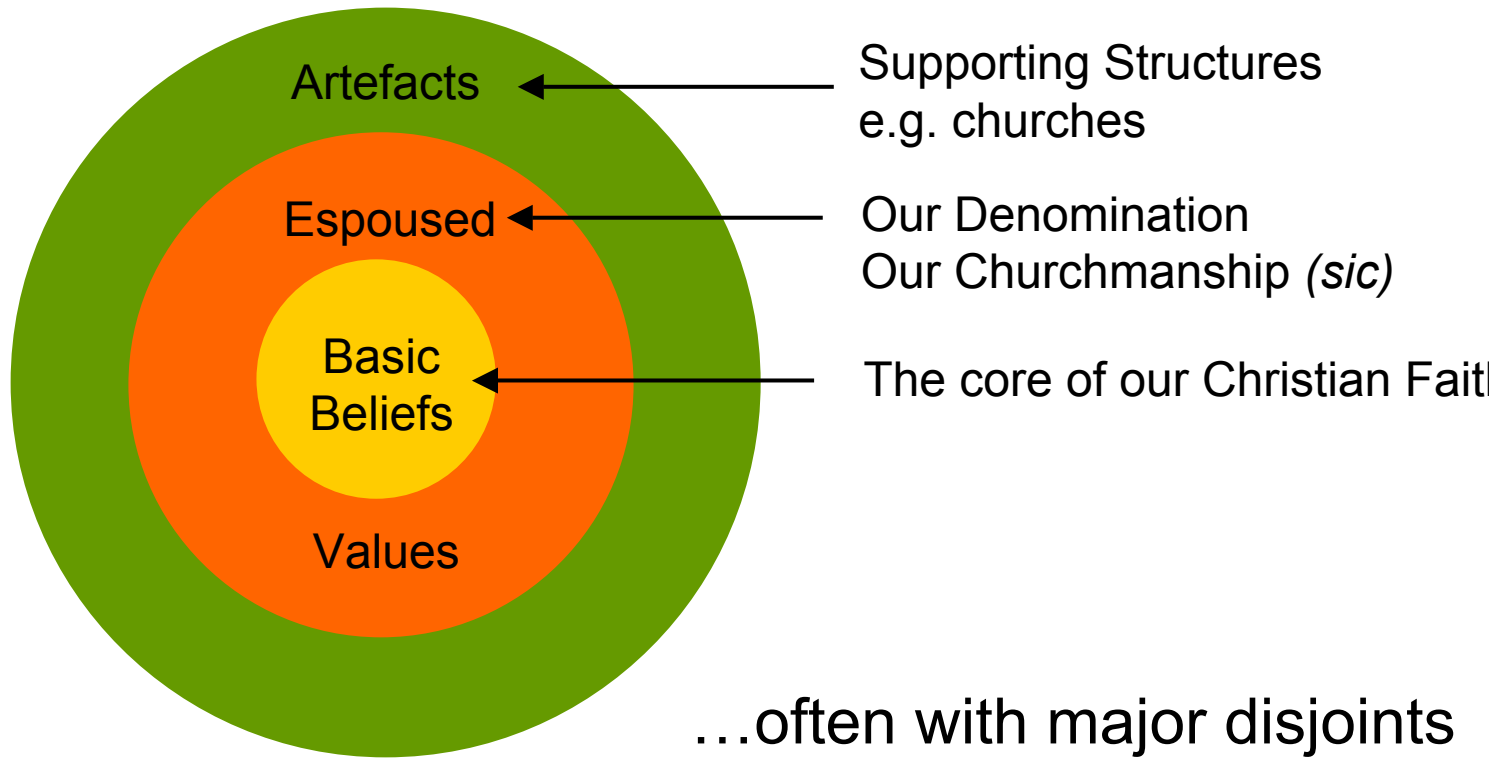


- We live in an uncertain (pluriform) world and in an uncertain world people look for leadership and answers in many places. This drives a quest to find spirituality and the ultimate life force where answers are found in many places through both absolutes and mystery. Paradoxically knowledge of the bible is poor and declining.
- Communicating the Gospel is about us working in collaboration with the Holy Trinity, not (just) about smart techniques or new fangled methodologies mixed together with the existing practice
- We have a responsibility to those we lead to continue learning
- As communicators we need to decide whether we want to 'prove we are right' or get people thinking and awaken sleeping wisdom within those who would listen and help them along their spiritual journey

So just what is culture?



Culture is complex...

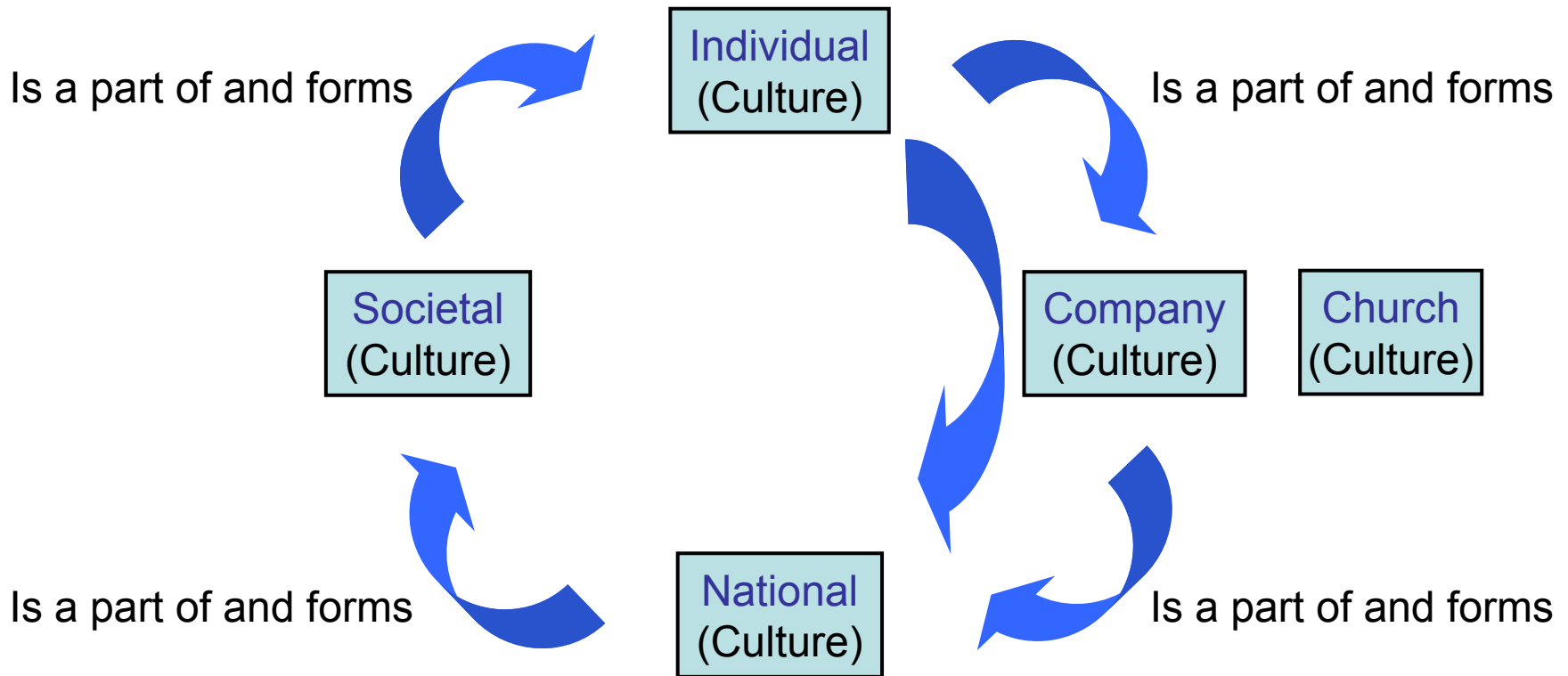


...often with major disjoints
across different generations

So just what is culture?



...and culture is pluriform and multifaceted



...and changing with
ever increasing speed

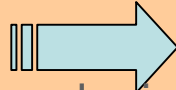
Culture and Society



3 Discernable Traits

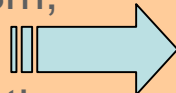
Examples

Self oriented and atomic, questions received wisdom and big stories
Migrates from truth to values
Values drama and experience over logic



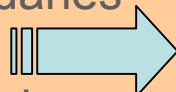
Legalistic 'my rights' culture
Disbelief in the 'big story' of the Bible
Euthanasia, abortion, homosexuality...
No right and wrong, superficial and sensual

Fosters individualism, pragmatism, pluralism, multiculturalism and consumerism in communities of time and space not geography
Merges humans and technology



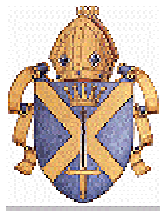
Short termism 'the quick fix'
Fragmentation of institutions e.g. Church
Eating habits, hypermarkets and e-trading
Consume services/events not just goods
The Matrix, call centres, 'fly by wire'

Collapses hierarchies and boundaries of knowledge, taste and opinion in the interest of individual & local
Values image above word and logic



Male/female, body/soul, God/human
Time/space via internet e.g. chats & blogs
Mass personalisation nor mass customisation
Rap music, Twin Peaks, X-Files, The Simpsons

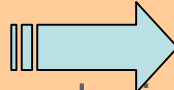
Culture and Society



3 Discernable Traits

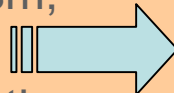
Implications for learning

Self oriented and atomic, questions
received wisdom and big stories
Migrates from truth to values
Values drama and experience over logic



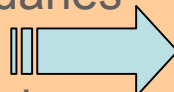
Personalised learning and curricula
Small, self paced, learning nuggets
Mentoring and support structures
Simulations, games, short stories and dram

Fosters individualism, pragmatism,
pluralism, multiculturalism and
consumerism in communities of time
and space not geography
Merges humans and technology



Task based broad content 'on demand'
Choice/mix of means/methods, old/new
Collaboration, groups and community
Gurus not teachers
Motivational triggers and stimulation critical

Collapses hierarchies and boundaries
of knowledge, taste and opinion
in the interest of individual & local
Values image above word and logic



Interactive, relevant, timely and accessible
Culturally sensitive, non linear content
Focused not generic content
Blend of word and image

Learning is more than a course!

Social Philosophy would tell

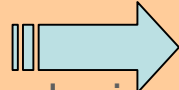
US...



3 Discernable Traits

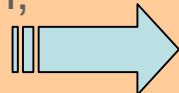
Postmodernist Terminology

Self oriented and atomic, questions
received wisdom and big stories
Migrates from truth to values
Values drama and experience over logic



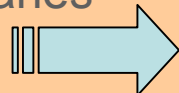
The end of meta-narratives
End of objectivity of knowledge
Descent into fragmentation
Existentialism -> Nihilism

Fosters individualism, pragmatism,
pluralism, multiculturalism and
consumerism in communities of time
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Self Understanding
'Cherished Pluralism'
Pragmatism
Rejection of foundationalism
(knowledge build on 'first principles')

Collapses hierarchies and boundaries
of knowledge, taste and opinion
in the interest of individual & local
Values image above word and logic



Egocentricity and Radical Relativism
'That may be true for you...'
Deconstructionism
(words have no inherent meaning)

Culture and Society



Modern

The real is logical

Unity

Wholes

Stability

Patterns

Power over

Equality

Centre

Identity

Mind

Rational

Answers

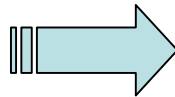
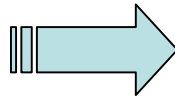
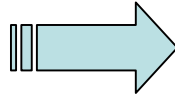
What is seen

Faith is illogical

Master Story

Truth

God the Father



Postmodern

Life is more than logic

Multiplicity

Fragments

Change

Ruptures

Power with

Uniqueness

Margins

Difference

Body

Emotional

Questions

What is unseen

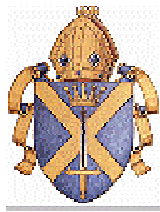
Faith goes beyond knowledge

Stories

Truths

God the Holy Spirit

Culture and Society



And its not all bad news...

Postmodernist Terminology

Our relationship with God incarnate through Jesus is a personal story beyond objective logic and knowledge alone, 'we come to Christ as a child'



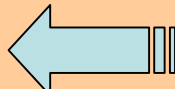
The end of meta-narratives
End of objectivity of knowledge
Descent into fragmentation
Existentialism -> Nihilism

We are called to reflect Christ in whatever geographic, extended or virtual community we are a part of and where our actions speak louder than empty words



'Cherished Pluralism'
Pragmatism
Deconstructionism
(words have no inherent meaning)
Truth is what works for you

Our relationship with God incarnate through Jesus is a spiritual and personal relationship where we 'work out our own salvation'



Egocentricity and Radical Relativism
'That may be true for you...'
Rejection of foundationalism
(knowledge build on 'first principles')

Therefore accept Post-modern culture but don't embrace it uncritically

See: Nomo Pomo – A Postmodern Rant

www.christianitytoday.com/leaders/newsletter/2003/cln30130.html

Theological Interlude



What they might have thought...

Justyn Martyr

Jesus is the logos of God

Tertullian

The rule of faith (tradition) is required to prevent false inter

Augustine

De Civitate Dei is alive and well

Anselm

Can't do theology without the context of philosophy and culture

Thomas Aquinas

Don't accept new philosophy without putting it in Christian Context

Luther

Theology takes place through God revealing Himself on the cross

Calvin

Hermeneutics/context important but scripture the ultimate authority

Schliermacher

Theology must be grounded in feeling and experience

Kirkegaard

Faith is about individual ethical actions

Bultmann

Faith is response to Kergyma, which is written in mytholog

Barth

Can't base theology on human reason alone, God is 'wholly other'

Tillich

Theology is not final, it moves towards God, what the world offers














Pannenberg

Link theology to history to understand our relationship with God

Theological Interlude



What they might have thought...

- Justyn Martyr  Jesus is the logos of God
- Tertullian  The rule of faith (tradition) is required to prevent false inter
- Augustine  De Civitate Dei is alive and well
- Anselm  Can't do theology without the context of philosophy and culture
- Thomas Aquinas  Don't accept new philosophy without putting it in Christian Context
- Luther  Theology takes place through God revealing Himself on the cross
- Calvin  Hermeneutics/context important but scripture the ultimate authority
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- Barth  Can't base theology on human reason alone, God is 'wholly other'
- Tillich  Theology is not final, it moves towards God, what the world offers
- Pannenberg  Link theology to history to understand our relationship with God

Our range of communication...



3 Discernable Traits

Self oriented and atomic, questions
received wisdom and big stories
Migrates from truth to values
Values drama and experience over logic

From stories to sound bites

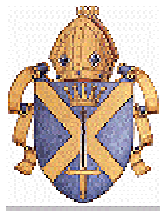
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Merges humans and technology

From tracts to technology

Collapses hierarchies and boundaries
of knowledge, taste and opinion
in the interest of individual & local
Values image above word and logic

From verbs to visualisation

From Stories to Sound Bites



Why Stories?

- Provide structure (curriculum path) to make sense of facts and help us learn
- Provide a plot to link together context and content – Mind Mapping
- Great at capturing and explaining paradox – Do you *always* tell the truth
- Inherent power through personal experience and relationships
- Often reflect our own reality and therefore ‘plausibility structures’
- We often use stories but call them illustrations, Jesus called them parables

From Stories to Sound Bites



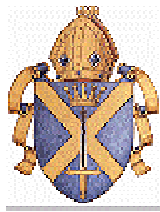
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Good Stories (like good sermons) have...

A beginning	A captivating start
A middle	The Central truth
An end	The crucial close

From Stories to Sound Bites



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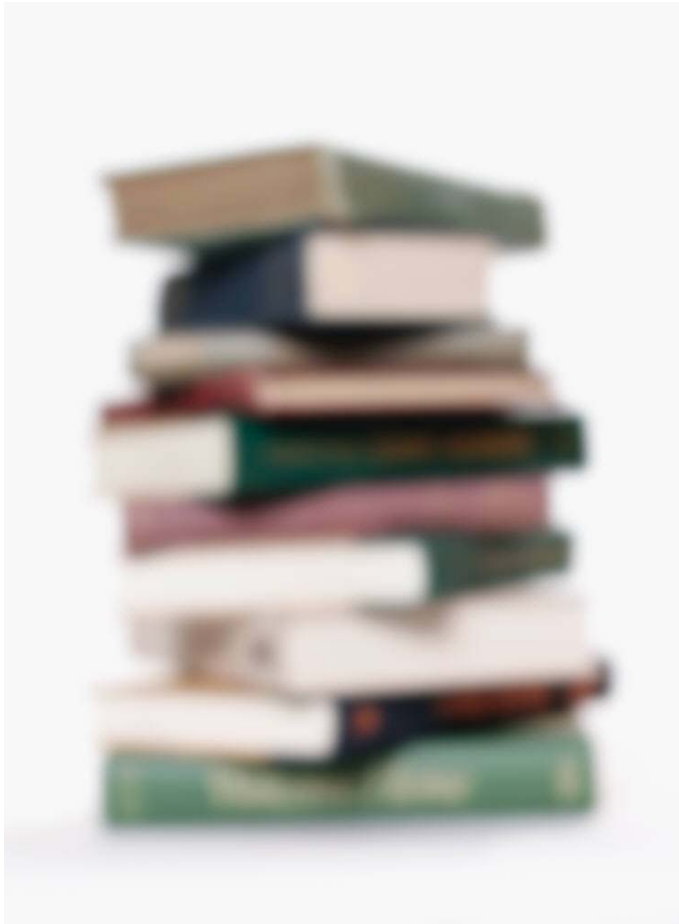
Good Stories (like good sermons) have...

A beginning	A captivating start
A middle	The Central truth
An end	The crucial close

NOT...

A beginning	A rambling start
A muddle end	Something unclear but supposed to link the beginning and the end
And a tail off	‘...er, I think that’s all I planned to say...’

From Stories to Sound Bites

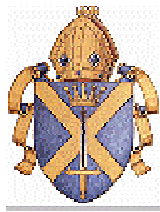


Tall stories tend not to work...



...short ones do

From Stories to Sound Bites

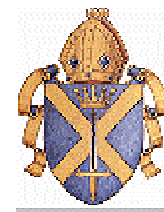


6 Good stories to know

1. Who I am Stories – important when talking to new audience
2. Why I am here Stories – also important when talking to new audience
3. The Vision Story – how do we motivate people to change
4. Teaching Stories – e.g. parables, when did you last write a new one?
5. Value in action Stories – how do we engender and make real our values
6. I know what you are thinking Stories – useful if with sceptical audience

Good for communicating to those outside the church

From Stories to Sound Bites



7 High Value forms of Storytelling

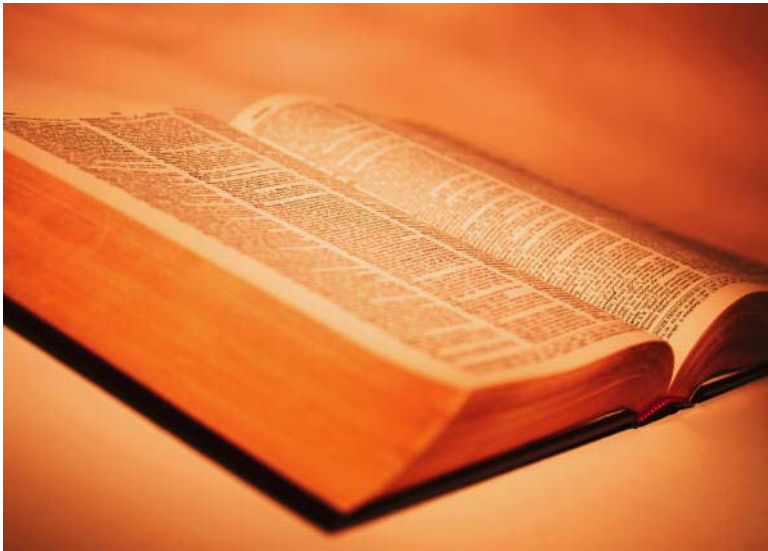
Objective	Need a story that...	Story need to...	Actions required..	Use/inspire phrases like...	Result if successful...
Communicate complex idea	Identifiable person, is true	Told in minimalist fashion	Frame story Give guide rails	Just think.. Imagine if...	Idea understood Action stimulated
Get people working together	Is moving, has listeners stories	Told with the context (why)	Have open agenda and plan	That reminds me	Collaborative working
Share info and knowledge	Include problem and solution	Reflect multiple perspectives	Check story is true	We'd better watch for that	Understand how and why
Tame the grapevine	Reveal humour or incongruity	Be amusing or satirical & caring	Tell the truth Check gossip	I'd never thought of it like that	Gossip neutralised
Communicate who you are	Reveals strength or vulnerability	Told in context	Ensure audience listens (has time)	How interesting I didn't know that	Known as person
Transmit values	Exemplifies relevant values	Consistent with actions	Context relevant	We should do that all the time	How and why things are done
Lead people into the future	Clear, positive outcome of future	Evocative with little detail	Take account of past and present	When do we start Let's do it	Know where we are heading

Good for communicating to those inside the church

From Stories to Sound Bites

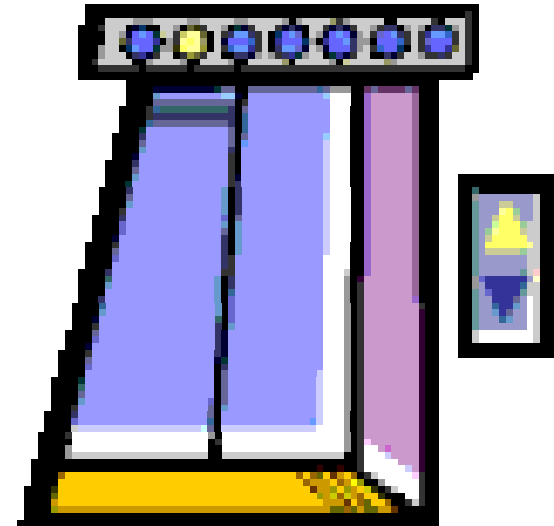


Stories can be very long or extremely short



The Saga

versus



The elevator pitch

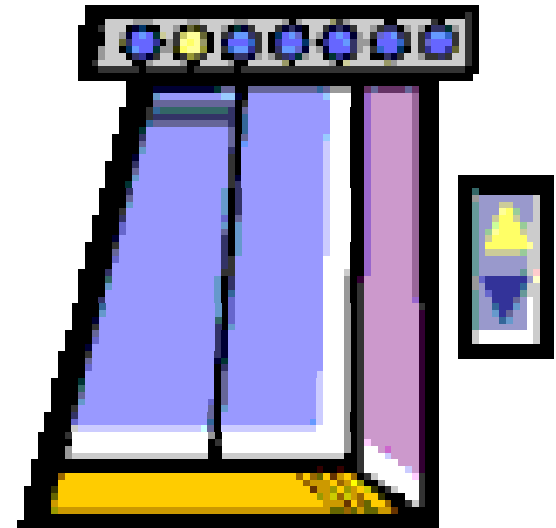
From Stories to Sound Bites



Tell us a story (or parable)...

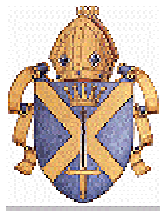
30 seconds to explain why the Christian faith should be important to a non believer

- can use story
- can use personal story
- or use facts / logic
- all should have
 - beginning
 - middle
 - end



The elevator pitch

From Stories to Sound Bites



Tell us a story (parable)...

OR

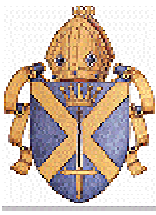
30 seconds to explain the story of what brought you here today (not transport!)

- it should have
 - beginning
 - middle
 - end



The elevator pitch

From Stories to Sound Bites



Notes, Humour, Laughter and the Golden Silence

From Stories to Sound Bites



Sound bites – have a nibble yourself...



‘God is...’

‘With Jesus...’

‘Without Jesus...’

‘The rich majesty and ritual
of the church...’

‘The Bible...’

From Tracts to Technology



There are many different learning styles which we need to reflect in our teaching and learning



From Tracts to Technology



Learning Style	Characteristic	AKA*
Activist	Likes to get engaged quickly	Concrete perceiver
Theorist	Like to know how it fits	Abstract perceiver
Observer	Wants to think and reflect	Reflective processor
Pragmatist	Wants it to be applicable <i>now</i>	Active processor

*Bernice McCarthy, David Kolb, Gordon Lawrence

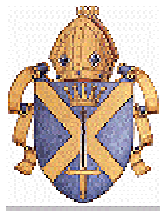
From Tracts to Technology



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Our predominant learning style is probably our predominant teaching style

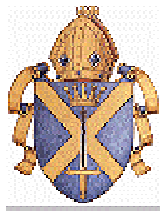
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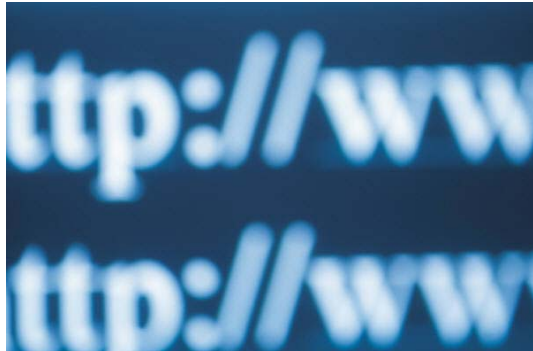
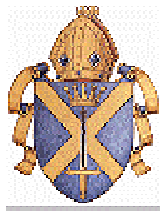
What's
your
favourite
gospel?

From Tracts to Technology



Learning Style	Characteristic	Favourite Gospel
Activist	Likes to get engaged quickly	Mark
Theorist	Like to know how it fits	Matthew
Observer	Wants to think and reflect	John
Pragmatist	Wants it to be applicable <i>now</i>	Luke

From Tracts to Technology



Web sites

www.thisischurch.com

www.sundayschoollessons.com

www.textweek.com

www.synodresourcecenter.org/wma/worship/worshiLinks2.html



Blogs and Wiki

www.martinrothonline.com

www.jesusjournal.com

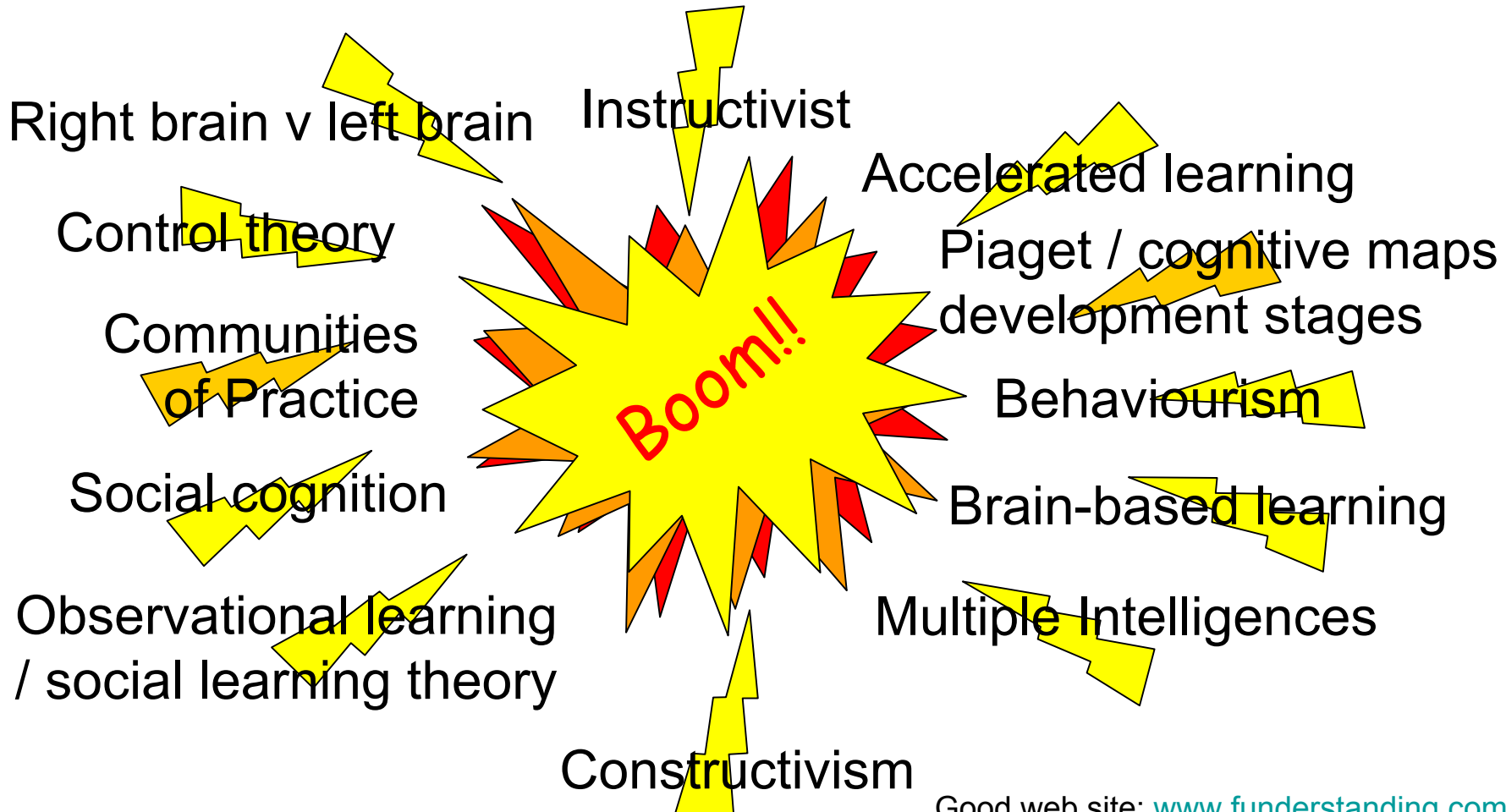
www.blogs4god.com

www.theconnexion.net/cgi-bin/wiki.pl

From Verbs to Visualization



An explosion of (more 'visual') learning theories...

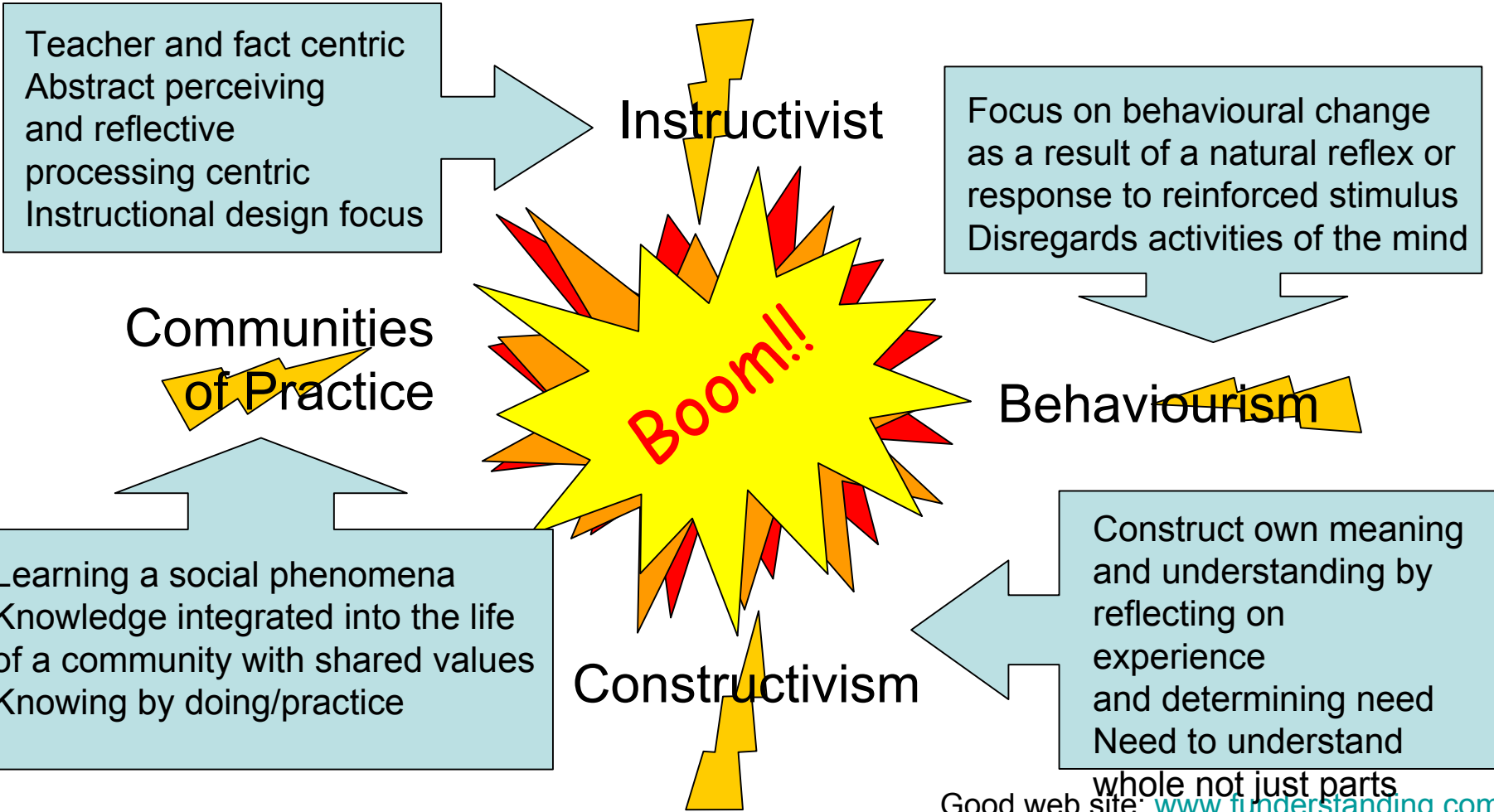


Good web site: www.funderstanding.com

From Verbs to Visualization



An explosion of (more 'visual') learning theories...



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From Verbs to Visualization

An exploration of (more 'visual') learning theories.

Instructivist
e.g. Sermons, communicating Gospel 'truths', books

Behaviourism
e.g. Sermons, 'talks' exhorting change

Communities of Practice

We need a blend of all

Behaviourism

Constructivism
e.g. Alpha, House Churches, Blogs

Constructivism
e.g. Home/bible study groups, video/image Wikis

From Verbs to Visualization



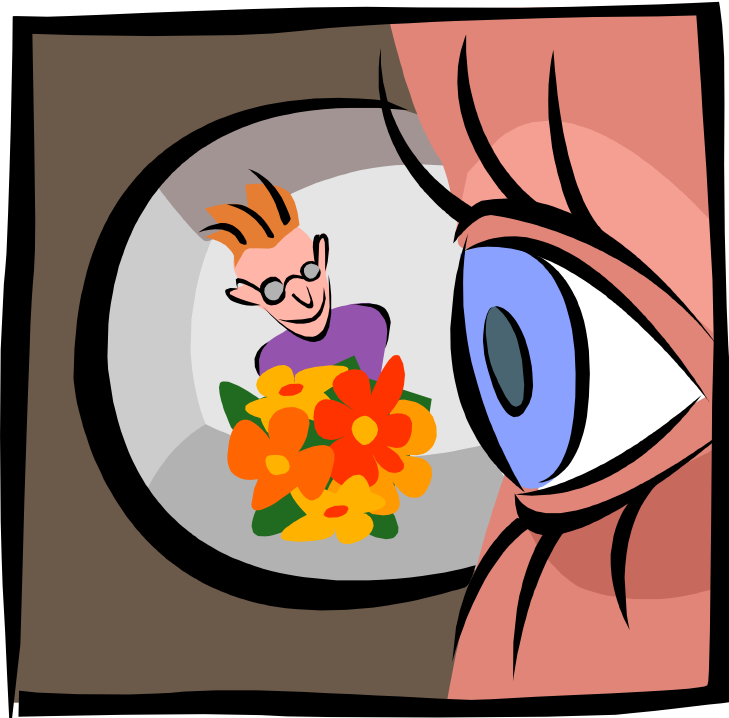
Another 30 seconds...

What sermons/talks do you remember and why?

- your own?
- from last week?
- from last month?
- anytime?



From Verbs to Visualization

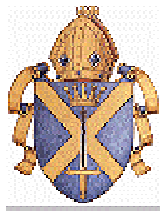


Newspaper advertisements
Street cards, welcome packs

Visual aids – like Disney,
not just for kids

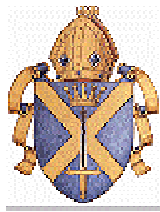
- Joshua tree – can be big
- Pearl necklace – can be small
- Shrek
- Painting
- Psalm 23
- A polo and psalm 90
- Bible in 50 words

The Bible in 50 Words



God made, Adam bit,
Noah arked, Abraham split,
Jacob fooled, Joseph ruled,
Bush talked, Moses balked,
 Pharaoh plagued, People walked,
Sea divided, Tablets guided,
Promises landed,
Saul freaked, David peeked,
 Prophets warned, Jesus born,
God walked, Love talked,
Anger crucified, Hope died,
Love rose, Spirit flamed,
Word spread, God remained.

From Verbs to Visualization



Visualisation is not just about Powerpoint presentations and technology...

Match the visualisation to the setting and context

Maximise the impact of the Church's own visuality

The Sacraments

- The Eucharist
- Baptism
- Weddings
- Funerals

The Seasons

- Advent
- Christmas
- Easter
- Lent



Lessons for learning...



If we had to make 3 additions to the ways we communicate

- To the people inside the church
- To the people outside the church

What would we do?



An Awesome responsibility





Questions?



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