

These slides were a part of a
three message series on the
subject of

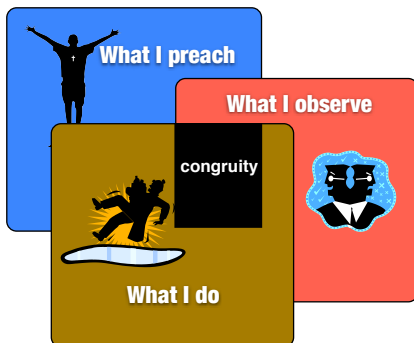
Spiritual Dissonance

for Gracepoint
by Jim Abrahamson.

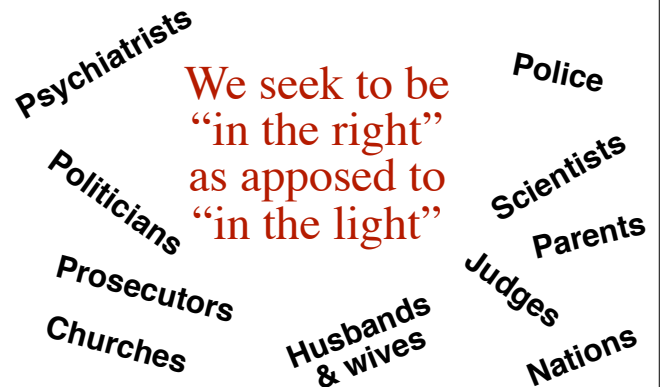
Dissonance #1

Why we experience it
and how it helps us.

Dissonance comes from
the lack of congruity between
what I preach, observe, and do.



We cover dissonance by claiming that
mistakes were made but not by us.



Dissonance involves
intellectual conflicts as we read the
Scriptures

Psalms 78:69

“the earth which is founded forever”

II Peter 3:10

“the earth and its works will be burned up”

Dissonance involves social conflicts.

1 Corinthians 3

“1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”

Dissonance involves moral conflicts.

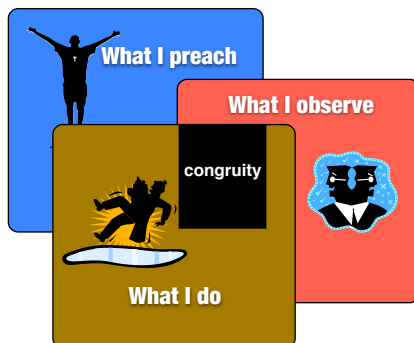
Romans 7

“¹⁹ For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish. ²⁰ But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. ²¹ I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. ²² For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, ²³ but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?”

Observation #1

Dissonance
(cognitive, social & moral)
marks us as truly human, bearing the image of God.

Dissonance
can only be possible if:

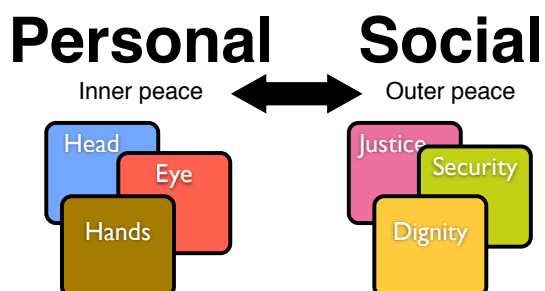


Observation #2

Social Dissonance
(Injustice, war & disrespect)
comes from Personal Spiritual Dissonance.

James 4:1

“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war on your members?”



The path to a loving community starts at the Cross.



Observation #3

Dissonance

(cognitive, social & moral)

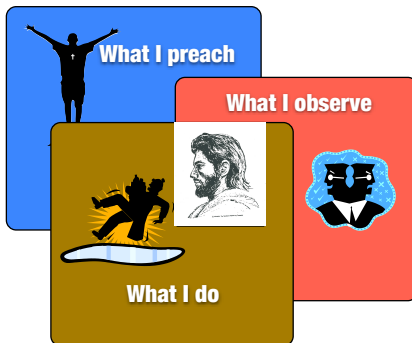
draws us to the Gospel

- transferring our hope from self to Christ.

The fact that we have an appetite for the Kingdom is our first step toward the King.



Dissonance
is what leads us to



1.
the Cross
of Christ

and

2.
the hope
of glory.

Dissonance

1. Embrace it as revelation.
2. Help others learn from it.
3. Let it lead you to Christ.
4. Celebrate because

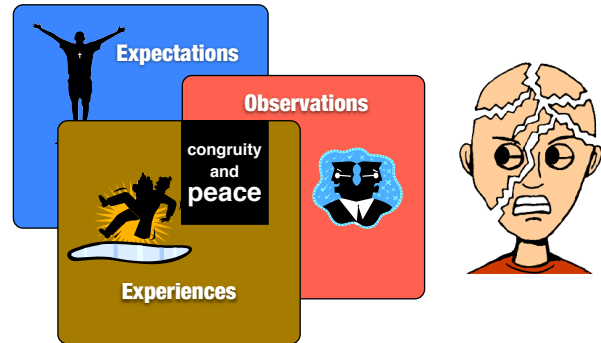
*God grades
on the Cross
not on the curve.*



Dissonance #2

Why we experience it
and how it hurts us.

Spiritual \$TRESS
comes from unresolved dissonance.



Observation #1

**We equate
mistakes
with stupidity
and shame**

Adam & Eve's Dissonance

"she took from its
fruit and ate"
Gen.3:6

"I heard the sound of You
in the garden, and I was
afraid because I was
naked; so I hid myself."
Gen.3:10

"The woman whom You
gave to be with me, she
gave me from the tree and
I ate."
Gen.3:12

1.
sin

I made
mistakes

2.
shame

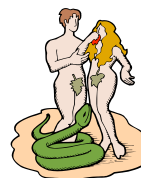
I am a stupid
person

3.
strategy
to relieve the shame

Mistakes were
made but not by
me



Genesis 3:6



"When the woman saw that the tree
was good for food, and that it was a
delight to the eyes, and that the tree
was desirable to make one wise, she
took from its fruit and ate;"

1. Magnify the dissonance.
2. Misplace her perception and hope.
3. Get her to commit to the wrong strategy of action.

The stress of dissonance

Guilt



Shame

Conviction
of a particular sin

Sin centered

Rejection
of self

Self centered

Observation #2

**We often try
to relieve our
dissonance in
unhealthy ways.**

Depression

**is the exhaustion of our soul
as it pursues misplaced
strategies to relieve
the dissonance of
life in a fallen
world.**



The father of lies
wants us to find
hope in anything
and everything but
Jesus.



**The greatest lies we tell
are the ones we tell to
ourselves.**

Satan's sneaky pack of lies

- ✓ **Focus on the Law** - Who sinned - me (shame) or you (blame)?
- ✓ **Unrealistic expectations** for God, others, and ourselves.
- ✓ **A toxic church culture** that is narcissistic, pragmatic, and punitive.



Bad strategies for resolving Dissonance

- 1. Cooking the books**
- 2. Compounding stupidity**
- 3. Grading on the curve**
- 4. Putting on the face**
- 5. Lowering the bar**

Observation #3

Dissonance is best resolved with the truth of the Gospel not the defensive lies we tell ourselves.

Two types of stress from dissonance

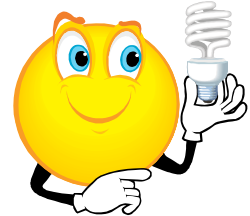
Toxic Stress

Shame



Incentive to grow

Pressure



Dissonance

can lead us into temptation.

Shame and Blame

Dissonance

can encourage us to grow.

Secure and Changing

God's truth about peace

- ✓ **Focus on the Gospel** - Transferred hope.
- ✓ **Realistic expectations** for ourselves, and others.
- ✓ **A healthy church culture** that is honest, realistic, gracious, and speaks the truth in love.



Dissonance

#3

How to make it work for you.

Three hidden blessings of dissonance



A sign
of dignity

A doorway
to Christ



An incentive
to grow

Leaders must encourage

1. **HOPE** -
They must see what **should** be.
Communicate a clear, compelling vision or hope.
2. **FAITH** -
They must see what **can** be.
Motivate with expectant faith in God and others.
3. **LOVE** -
They must accept what **is**.
Graciously accept the reality of disappointments.
4. **FEAR** -
They must see what others fear **might** be.
Help others manage their fears.

Followers must engage

1. **HOPE** -
They must **show up** for community, growth, & ministry.
Its not about me. Its about **Jesus** and **us**.
2. **FAITH** -
They must expect God to work **in** and **through** them.
Without risk there is little faith.
3. **LOVE** -
They must respond to what **is**.
Graciously accept the reality of disappointments.
4. **FEAR** -
They must expect and attack their fears as **Satanic**.

We all must live with Dissonance

1. Most human beings and institutions are going to do everything in their power to **reduce dissonance in ways that are favorable to them**, that allow them to justify their mistakes and maintain business as usual.
2. The ultimate correction for the tunnel vision that afflicts all of us mortals is more **light**.
3. Become **aware** that we are in a state of dissonance.
4. Confidence and conviction must not exclude **humility** and **teachability**.

Appreciate
the human dignity
embedded in dissonance.

Through moral stress
we see the image of God
in us.

**Appreciate
the Gospel
embedded in dissonance.**

Shame is God's tool before
conversion and Satan's after.

**Appreciate
the invitation to grow
embedded in dissonance.**

Without pressure
we don't change.

**The first challenge is
to come clean
and see dissonance as a blessing.**

Romans 7

“²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will set me
free from the body of this death? ²⁵ Thanks be
to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So
then, on the one hand I myself with my mind
am serving the law of God, but on the other,
with my flesh the law of sin.”

We all must live with Dissonance

1. Most human beings and institutions are going to do everything in their power to **reduce dissonance in ways that are favorable to them**, that allow them to justify their mistakes and maintain business as usual.
2. The ultimate correction for the tunnel vision that afflicts all of us mortals is more **light**.
3. Become **aware** that we are in a state of dissonance.
4. Confidence and conviction must not exclude **humility** and **teachability**.

**The second challenge is
to come to Christ.**

Romans 8

“¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, **God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin**, He condemned sin in the flesh,”

Two paths to peace

**1.
Obey the Law**

**This is what
humans try to do
apart from the
Gospel.**

*We resolve the dissonance
by managing the Law*

1. Lowering the bar -
redefining sin
2. Extending the time -
purgatory
3. “Cooking the books” -

**2.
Fulfill the Law**

**This is what God
has done in Christ
through the
Gospel.**

*We resolve the dissonance
by faith in Christ*

1. Confessing our sin -
Affirming the Law
2. Hoping in Christ -
Believing the Gospel
3. Longing for heaven -

The third challenge is to walk in the Spirit.

Romans 8

“4 in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

The fourth challenge is to keep hope alive.

Romans 8

“9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. 10 And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.”

Responding to Dissonance

1. Institutions can be designed to **reward admissions of mistakes** as part of the organizational culture.
2. Put **space** between what we feel and how we respond.
3. Become **aware** that we are in a state of dissonance.
4. We must give up the **need to be right** in the eyes of everyone.
5. We don't help others by **lecturing** them about their "stupidity." They need respect and support.
6. Give people **room to repent** of their mistakes with dignity not shame.

Gospel strategies for resolving Dissonance

1. **Coming clean**
2. **Affirming the Law**
3. **Receiving the Gospel**
4. **Living under grace**
5. **Changing over time**
6. **Hoping in glory**

**God grades
on the Cross
not on the curve.**

**We were called to
be witnesses,
not lawyers or
judges**