

January 15, 2017

“Inhaling: Taking in Spiritual Oxygen”

1 Peter 1:22 – 2:5

Intro

➤ *Claustrophobia*

- We need to *take in* something from the outside of us in order to live.

“Inhalation of air, as part of the cycle of breathing, is a vital process for all human life. ... Breathing allows oxygen (which humans and many other species need for survival) to enter the lungs, from where it can be absorbed into the bloodstream.”

–“Inhalation,” [Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inhalation)

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen. 2:7)

➤ *Elijah at Horeb*

LIVING: Revived Through the Living & Abiding Word (1:22-25)

“Born Again”

- The most important things in life are things that we are utterly incapable of producing.

“[God] caused us to be born again to a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3)

Creative Power of the Word

- We tend to think that the visible realm is what holds power and influence. But underneath all reality is the Word of God.

“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.” (Heb. 11:3)

- God’s Word awakens life. It is a defibrillator charge to the heart.

“The Law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul” (Ps. 19:7)

The Word’s Permanent Relevance

- *“flesh”* = our natural human existence
- *“all its glory”* = the perceived success, attraction, beauty, fame, and entertainment of human achievement
 - *“Live” stories*
- We so often give our attention to the ephemeral—to what expires in a moment. But what is gained from God’s Word endures for all eternity.

FEEDING: Long for Spiritual Milk in Order to Grow (2:1-2)

Healthy Craving

- *What newborns need...*
- “Spiritual (Logical) Milk.” There are *words* to want.
 - *Not “Spiritual Fatalism”*
- You will be captured by some craving. Cravings call the shots.

Discontent “...envy”

Dishonesty “...deceit and hypocrisy”

Disdain “...malice... slander”

“All that we call human history—money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery—it is the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.”

—C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 49

- *Wake up hungry? What do you go to?*

“Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way you can waste your life and lose your soul.”

—J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, 18

Healthy Receiving

“Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.” (James 1:21)

What is your practice of taking in God’s Word?

- *Spiritual Health Questionnaire*

Scripture Reading: Breadth

“At the end of the day, there is simply no replacement for finding a regular time and place, blocking out distractions, putting your nose in the text, and letting your mind and heart be led and captured and thrilled by God himself communicating to us in his objective written words.”

—David Mathis, *Habits of Grace: Enjoying Jesus Through the Spiritual Disciplines*, 45

- **PLAN**
 - *What are you going to read?*
 - *When are you going to read?*

Scripture Meditation: Depth

- **READ & RE-READ**
 - *“When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ” (Eph. 3:4)*

- **THINK**
“Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel” (2 Tim. 2:7-8)
 - *What difference does it make?*
- **MEMORIZE**

“Good theology forms our minds in a general way to think God's thoughts after him. But memorized Scripture molds our minds, with as much specificity as is humanly possible, to mimic the folds and creases in the mind of God.”
–**David Mathis**, *Habits of Grace: Enjoying Jesus Through the Spiritual Disciplines*, 68

Healthy Growing

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:22)

“Take every word as spoken to yourselves. When the word thunders against sin, think thus: ‘God means my sins;’ when it presses any duty, ‘God intends me in this.’ Many put off Scripture from themselves, as if it only concerned those who lived in the time when it was written; but if you intend to profit by the Word, bring it home to yourselves: a medicine will do no good, unless it is applied.” –**Thomas Watson**, quoted in Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 71

TASTING: Coming to & Delighting in the Goodness of God (2:3-5)

- The Word puts us in contact with God! This is an experienced reality.

“Peter is assuming that the words of Scripture are the words of the Lord, so to read or listen to Scripture is to hear the Lord speak, to take his good and nourishing words into one's heart. To drink the milk of the Word is to ‘taste’ again and again what he is like, for in hearing of the Lord's words believers experience the joy of personal fellowship with the Lord himself.” –**Wayne Grudem**, *1 Peter*, 102

Psalm 34:1-10 – the effect of the nearness of God...