

Air - Food - Water

Hymns from "Favorite Hymns of Grace."

Greeting and Opening Prayer

Hymns of Worship

Amazing Grace p. 06

My Faith Looks Up to Thee p. 07

Sweet Hour of Prayer p. 08

Devotional Summary: "Air - Food - Water"

[God] humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 8:3

And [Jesus] spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Luke 18:1

Pray without ceasing. 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Spiritual truth can often be illustrated very well by physical realities that we are all familiar with. Look for example at our texts again. In the Old Testament, God gave the children of Israel the graphic experience of hunger to illustrate to them their total dependence on His Word. God allowed them to experience being very, very hungry out in a wasteland where there was no way they could get food unless there was a miracle. And God provided that miracle - manna that fell from the sky - food that nobody had ever eaten before - enough to feed the whole nation - every day! And what was the lesson? Man needs to know and obey God's word in order to live as illustrated by how dependent our bodies are on us obtaining and actually eating the right foods. Pretty good lesson, I'd say.

In the New Testament, everyone knows that Jesus, the Son of God, often shared His teaching in the form of stories about natural, everyday things. One example is our text from Luke 18. Not only are we told that He taught them with this parable, but we are told exactly what the reason is for Him telling the story. You may remember this story that we call "The Parable of the Unjust Judge." A little widow lady was having legal trouble with someone doing her wrong and she kept nagging (if I can use the word) at the crooked judge until he gave her relief from her tormenter. I can hear the chuckles rippling through the crowd now as Jesus told this story, because they all probably knew a little lady who could get overbearing real quick with harping on something with unnatural, unceasing persistence. Well, Christ's point was that if they could visualize that unjust judge giving in to her request, how much more certain is God's answer to our prayers, even though we feel He is taking too long to respond. The lesson is, do not give up praying to God. He WILL act on your request - in His way, in His time - but He WILL ACT! As Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit some years after Christ's

ministry on earth - "Pray without ceasing!"

So, we have two things here that we find are important in God's eyes for us to understand:

- 1) God's Word is life sustaining.
- 2) Persistent prayer is essential to our relationship with God.

How many here have eaten lately? OK, all of us in one form or the other take in nutrition for our body on a regular basis. It is really a foolish question is it not? We all are very familiar with eating food. But, where is that last meal now? What is it doing? How did that happen?

We eat and go on about our business, getting hungry again in fairly short order. But we rarely stop and think about what exactly goes on with the food we have eaten. We just take for granted the whole process of digestion. Think about it. We eat a bowl of cereal or a piece of toast and, "Viola!," we are strengthened, our physical life is sustained. What a wonder takes place in our bodies every time we put a morsel in our mouth! Food is important to sustain life, is it not?

And how much more important is water? You can live a lot longer without food than you can water. You must get liquids - your body is something like 65% fluids. Nothing works in our whole system if there is no water to facilitate the process! Water is important to sustain life, is it not?

But, there is one ingredient we have not mentioned yet that may be the most important! How important is AIR?

Have you breathed anytime in the recent past? Did you intentionally take in oxygen into your lungs and exchange that gas with a bad gas called carbon dioxide in a proportion that keeps your body functioning and alive? How do you know you did it properly? Did you think about it at all? Not a lot of thought goes into breathing, but it is the most important function of our interaction with our environment is it not? We just naturally breathe and God has designed our systems to do wondrous things that we are hardly conscious of. We can live a lot longer without food and water than we can without air! You must live in an environment that provides enough of the gas that we call oxygen for you to live for more than a few minutes.

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. John 15:7

This verse ties it all together for us. You must live in Christ. In your heart and in your mind you must keep the lines of communication open and active. You must have a "RELATIONSHIP" with Him that is ongoing and real, just like you must be in a place where the air has enough oxygen for you to breathe. "**Abide in Me**" Jesus said. This is the breathing of God's fresh air - living in communion with Christ - all the time in fellowship with Him.

AND... "**My words abide in you!**" You must keep God's words before you on a regular basis. This is eating of His thoughts and His ways and His guidance and His will that come out of your walk with Him in the light of His written Word. In the simplest terms, reading and heeding the Bible is eating spiritual food to a child of God.

AND...**"ASK WHAT YOU DESIRE!"** Drink of the water of Life freely! Prayer is the water of life for the Christian. We can go to God with all our cares, for He cares for us.

As we ***abide*** in Christ, and as we embrace ***His Word*** in our heart and in our mind, and as we adjust our lifestyle to one of persistent, faithful ***prayer*** - it is here, it is on this ground that we experience the unhindered flow of His miraculous life within us.

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

Air - Food - Water. Our physical being cannot live without them.

Communion with Christ - Reading His Word - Faithful prayer. Our spiritual being cannot live without them!

Closing Hymn

Blest Be the Tie that Binds p. 09

Prayer Requests and Corporate Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Recessional

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