

# Talk It Over

RHYTHM  
(Week 1)  
BREATHING

## SMALL TALK

1. When did you ever have to think about your own breathing? (like: In a panic? Hyperventilating? Too long underwater? In smoke? etc...)

## VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Genesis 2:7 and John 20:21–22.** Compare and contrast. What did you learn?
3. **READ Ephesians 2:1-2.** Why did Jim refer to this as bad breath?
4. **READ 2 Timothy 3:16–17.** Why did Jim refer to this as good breath?

## GETTING PERSONAL

5. Do you have an established rhythm for “BREATHING” in God’s “inspired” (breathed in) Word?
6. Does your rhythm have the “inspiring” result you are wanting? If not, why do you suppose that is?

## PRACTICE!

7. Any ideas how you might experience more life breathed into your “Devote Daily” practice?

June 27, 2021

## Rhythm

Reclaiming God's design for spiritual vitality.

### (Week 1) Breathing

God as creator has placed rhythms and patterns into all of life. You have already noticed this about creation, and your own physical life. It seems like rhythm is everywhere, all the time, night and day. Night & day... even that's a rhythm. As it turns out, what we learn from observing our physical rhythms is quite instructive for understanding our spiritual rhythms as well, and that's what this series is all about. **Rhythm: Recovering God's design for spiritual vitality.** We will be learning about 5 Rhythms that keep us Spiritually revitalized.

1-Breathing

2-Thirsting

3-Walking

4-Working

5-Resting

*Matthew 11:28–30 (The Message) “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. <sup>29</sup> Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. **Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.** I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. <sup>30</sup> Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.”*

#### I **Breath comes from GOD**

*Genesis 2:7 (CSB) Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the **breath** of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.*

Life comes from God. Physical life comes from God. Spiritual life comes from God. Breath is life. Life and breath is miraculous and mysterious.

#### II **You're breathing WHAT!?**

Breathing is as it should be if the air you breathe is good. Air quality in the Verde Valley changed dramatically over the week-end. All it took was a fire in the area and a change of wind. Anyone smell the air when you walked out the door yesterday morning? Did you see it? Did you taste it?

While living in California years ago, and before smog emissions tests were vigorously applied, we made jokes about how UCLA was a more of question rather than a university. And the question was, “You see L.A”?

Usually we think of bad breath and good breath as what someone breathes out of their mouth. But what we forget is that what we breathe in can be good or bad breath. This is true physically. This is also true spiritually.

### **BAD BREATH (Spiritually)**

*Ephesians 2:1–2 (CSB) And you were dead in your trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to **the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient.***

We live in a clash of kingdoms between a rebel ruler of the power *of the air*, “*the spirit now working in the disobedient!*” We are talking about Satan and his demons here. The dark kingdom and its influence **surrounds us like unseen air** surrounds us. Watch out, we can take in this dark kingdom’s influence, the deceptions, can be breathed in which causes wrongful thinking and wrongful behavior. In this world we are often breathing in spiritual darkness and deception. We do this without knowing it. Isn’t that the very definition of deception. We are deceived and we don’t know it. **This dark kingdom is as close as the air we breathe.**

### **GOOD BREATH (Spiritually) Good News.**

Jesus, our King, came to set us free from “*the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient*”. He did so by breathing good breath upon us, his Spirit.

*John 20:21–22 (CSB) Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you.”<sup>22</sup> After saying this, he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.*

Jesus said the truth will set you free (John 8). The Apostle Paul tells us this about how the truth has been given to us and how it works.

*2 Timothy 3:16–17 (CSB) All Scripture is inspired [“breathed out” ESV] by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

Reclaim God’s breath, his “inspired”, breathed out, living Word. Make God’s Word part of the rhythm of your breathing! These are more than words. These are living words. **God’s Word breathes life into our Souls—breathing life into our minds, wills, and emotions.**

### III. God’s BREATH brings LIFE

Ezekiel 37:1–14 (CSB)

*Ezekiel 37:1–14 (CSB) The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by his Spirit and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones.<sup>2</sup> He led me all around them. There were a great many of them on the surface of the valley, and they were very dry.*

A gruesome scene. Nobody was buried. This description reminds me of some of the holocaust photos I’ve seen.

*<sup>3</sup> Then he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I replied, “Lord God, only you know.”<sup>4</sup> He said to me, “Prophecy concerning these bones and say to them: Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!*

**This vision was given while Israel was in exile. It is a vivid picture of Israel’s spiritual life.** Though physically alive, they were spiritually

dead. They felt like God was dead. They felt like their nation was dead. They were but dead dry bones. But this vision brought a message of hope.

*<sup>5</sup>This is what the Lord God says to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you will live. <sup>6</sup>I will put tendons on you, make flesh grow on you, and cover you with skin. I will put breath in you so that you come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.” <sup>7</sup>So I prophesied as I had been commanded. While I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. <sup>8</sup>As I looked, tendons appeared on them, flesh grew, and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.*

I've done a lot of funerals. I've been around dead bodies in caskets. I've heard things like: *"Oh, doesn't he / she look nice."* Nice? No! He looks dead! Don't kid yourself. You don't look alive when you're dead. There is no movement! This is what some churches look like sometimes. There appears to be a well dressed body with makeup, but there is no movement! No breath of God. Not a pretty sight to God. People can be fooled. "Oh, don't they look nice." But Jesus says, "Uh.... No! *They are like white washed tombs, full of dead men's bones.*"

**But there is Good News: God can breathe life into a dead body!**

*<sup>9</sup>He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man. Say to it: This is what the Lord God says: Breath, come from the four winds and breathe into these slain so that they may live!" <sup>10</sup>So I prophesied as he commanded me; the breath entered them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, a vast army. <sup>11</sup>Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Look how they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished; we are cut off.' <sup>12</sup>Therefore, prophecy and say to them, 'This is what the Lord God says: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them, my people, and lead you into the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup>You will know that I am the Lord, my people, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. <sup>14</sup>I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land.*

*Then you will know that I am the Lord. I have spoken, and I will do it. This is the declaration of the Lord.’ ”*

**This vision brought hope. God can even raise the dead!**

**Action Steps:** How has your breathing rhythm been? Do you have a strategy to take in God’s “breathed out”, “inspired”, living Word? What is your strategy? What does that rhythm look like? Where do you do this? When do you do this? Have you made Devoting Daily your life practice? Is it the rhythm of your life?

**Tip: Do First Things First.** Do the most important thing first each day. What is the first thing you do each day? Get face to face with God, and take in God’s breath, his “inspired”, breathed out, living Word. Let him breathe it into your spiritual nostrils, and revive your SOUL (mind, will, and emotions), and give you life!

**START SMALL BUT START** (5 or 10 minutes). Do this everyday and let it grow on you. Set a time & place appointment. Don’t break the appointment.

The truth is, small habits can reinforce the identity you want to build. If you show up at the gym five days in a row—even if it’s just for two minutes—you are casting votes for your new identity. As the votes accumulate, so does the evidence of your new identity.

--James Clear, author of *Atomic Habits*

**“Dear God, breathe into us, change the direction of the wind. Blow the smoke away, breathe your breath into us. Change us. Move us!”**

Amen?

[Next week’s rhythm is “Thirsting.” See you then.]