

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 1.4.2026

PART 1 - THE INDWELLING WORD

I. INTRODUCTION

- We just got through the busy holiday season with full calendars, schedules and homes and now we're trying to get our houses back to normal after the chaos of the holidays.
- Many of you opened your homes to family and friends over the holidays, and that required preparation.
- You hide the clutter, you tidy up the house, and make the house presentable. You usually keep guests in the living room and common areas.
- But there is a massive difference between a guest in your home and a resident.
- A guest waits for an invitation; a resident has a key.
- A guest stays in the living room; a resident sees all the messy spaces and has full access.
- A guest is welcomed temporarily; a resident lives there.

- Today, as we begin this short, two-part series, 'Inhale/Exhale,' we ask ourselves: Is the word of God a guest in your life or a resident?
- Is the Word merely visiting you on Sundays or is the Word a resident with keys and access to every room of your life.

- This brief verse from Colossians gives us a beautiful picture of the Word of God as the very air we breathe in the lungs of our spiritual life.
- For the Christian, the Word of Christ is our spiritual 'inhale,' which sustains and grows us in our walk with the Lord.

Colossians 3:16

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

II. RECEIVE THE WORD OF CHRIST

- The chapter follows a familiar pattern in Paul's letters, the truths of the gospel first and then the commands for believers.
- He outlines the glorious realities of the gospel and our new identity as the people of God and then follows with actions and behavior that should characterize the person who is in union with Christ.
- Colossians 3:1-3 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set

your minds on things that are above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

- He speaks first of our identity and status in Christ.
- The basis for the commands that follow, lies in the believers' union with Christ.
- In light of union with Christ, Paul goes to the deeds of the flesh that should be put to death in the life of the believer.
- Then, the virtues and practices that should now characterize the Christian life.
- It is in the context of this, that Paul writes, "Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly..."

THE WORD REVEALS CHRIST

- Notice first, the identity of what is supposed to dwell in us.
- Paul calls it, "the word of Christ."
- He uses the phrase in his letter to the Romans. Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- He is referring to the gospel, the message of Jesus's life, death, resurrection, and reign.
- But generally, it is all the words of Christ. Since all the Scripture points to Christ, it is shorthand for the whole counsel of God.
- Every time you open the Bible and read His word, you are hearing the Word of Christ.
- Do you see God's Word this way, as if you are hearing the Words of Christ?

- Additionally, how will you grow in Christ apart from knowing the words of Christ?
- God grows his people the more they gaze at Christ.
- 2 Cor 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.
- We often glance at the Word but gaze at the world.
- Paul invites us to gaze at Christ until his image is all we see.

- Paul wrote to the church at Colossae because they were dealing with false teaching that claimed you needed secret knowledge and a rigorous legalism to really know God and be close to God.
- But Paul says what every believer needs is the Word of Christ.
- If you approach Scripture as words from your Savior, who gave himself up for you to redeem you and reconcile you to the Father, Bible reading becomes a delight.
- Psalm 119:111 Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart.

III. GIVE FULL ACCESS TO THE WORD OF CHRIST

- "Let the word of Christ dwell in you..."
- The Greek word means, "to inhabit, live in, take up residence, to be at home."
- The Word of God is not supposed to be a casual or infrequent guest in your heart.
- To let the Word of God dwell in you means you need to give God's word the keys to every room in your heart.
- God's Word must take up residence in your heart.
- It's allowing the word to shape everything about you.

- We need the continual inhale of God's Word into our heart.

- We need to inhale God's word as the very atmosphere we breathe for our spiritual life.
 - We need to saturate our minds and hearts with Scripture.
 - Does the word of God feel at home in your mind and heart? Or is it like a guest that is encountered once a week?
- How do we get the Word to take up residence in our heart?
 - Regular Scripture reading as a daily priority.
 - Study and meditation
 - Internalizing Scripture through memorization
 - Bringing the Word of God to bear upon everyday decisions.
 - A determination to walk in accordance with God's Word.
- What does it look like when the Word dwells in you?
 - It informs your daily decisions
 - It shapes your emotions
 - It confronts your sin
 - It comforts your sorrows
 - It sustains you in the midst of trials
 - It directs your conversations
 - It guides your relationships
 - It fuels your worship
 - It strengthens your identity in Christ
 - And it flows out to others.
 - That's the Word as resident not the occasional guest.
- The Greek word for "you" is plural, not singular.
 - Paul isn't just saying "*let the word dwell in you individually,*" he is saying, "*let the word of Christ dwell in you as a community.*"
 - A church where every believer is inhaling the Word of Christ, where the Word takes up residence in every heart, is a dynamic, life-giving church.
 - We can see that by the commands, "teaching and admonishing one other..."
 - How can I encourage others with Scripture this week?
 - How can I bring Scripture into my conversions?
 - Who can I encourage today by texting them a verse?

IV. SATURATE YOUR LIFE WITH THE WORD OF CHRIST

- The adverb "richly" implies abundance. The word of God must dwell in us abundantly.
 - We cannot survive on a crumb or morsel of God's Word when we are summoned to feast upon its inexhaustible riches.
- You may not have spare hours every day to devote to reading and studying God's word.
 - But "richly" doesn't mean that is what you need.
 - "Richly" means regularly, relationally, and receptively.
 - It means taking a verse or a short passage and chewing on it all day long.
 - It means memorizing God's promises.
 - It means, throughout the day, revisiting a verse or passage, thinking about it, meditating upon it, praying through it, and asking the Holy Spirit to work it into your life.
 - It means cultivating a daily dependence on God's Word, inhaling it as the very breath you need to sustain your spiritual life.

- Our challenge is that we live in an age of “snack-sized” information.
- Long-form content is out because of our shrinking attention spans.
- The truth is that you and I can’t grow a deep, vibrant spiritual life on digital snacks.
- If the word is not dwelling in you richly—what is?
- Social media, your favorite podcaster, sports programming, news, or binge-watching your favorite show?
- All of these things are competing voices screaming to dwell in you, to take up residence in your heart.
- Contrast this by what our Lord said to Satan when tempted in the wilderness, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.* (Matt 4:4).”
- When we allow other things to dwell richly in us rather than God’s Word, we are lacking the proper oxygen we need to fuel our spiritual life.
- We need to be saturated with God’s word, so filled with it that when we are squeezed by the world or the pressures of life, conflict, or trying circumstances, the Word leaks out of us.
- When you overfill a cup of water and get bumped, you spill some water.
- What spills out of you when life bumps you?
- Fear? Anxiety? Anger? Or is it the truth of God’s Word?
- What dwells in you richly will spill out of you naturally.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- Start with small, sustainable habits. 10 minutes a day is better than 10 chapters once every 2-3 weeks.
- Commit to touching your Bible before you touch your smartphone.
- Write a verse out and tape it to the bathroom mirror to help you memorize it.
- Read a Psalm with your morning coffee.
- Pick a Bible reading plan that works for you.
- Invite someone to join you.
- Remember, if you miss a few days and get off track, don’t abandon the plan.
- Listen to Scripture on your commute to and from work or school.
- Better to read the Bible slowly than trying to complete large reading tasks.

CONCLUSION

- You might feel out of breath at the start of the new year. You’re exhausted with the pace of life, the pace of the world, the weight of your anxieties, the constant noise of a culture that wants to take up residence in every room of your heart.
- The air you’re breathing might feel suffocating; the truth is a life apart from the Word of God is suffocating.
- But here is the beauty of the Gospel, Jesus is the Word made flesh who came to dwell among us so that he could ultimately dwell in us.
- And the good news is that he doesn’t demand that you clean the house before He moves in.
- He just wants the keys to every room and when he moves in, he speaks a word of peace.
- Let me ask you directly, what voice is dwelling in you richly right now?
- What thoughts fill the closets and hallways of your mind?
- What words spill out of you when life bumps into you?
- If it’s not the Word of Christ, it can be.
- Not because you need to read the Bible to earn God’s love, you already have it.

- Not because spiritual maturity requires many hours of study, but because even a single verse or a few verses, inhaled deeply and often, can set your heart ablaze, and you'll want to inhale even more of the Word.
- Don't just read the Bible. Let the Word of Christ move in. Give him the keys.
- Inhale his promises until they become more real to you than your problems.
- The spiritual life God desires for you is not complicated or mysterious. It's wonderfully simple, as simple as breathing.
- Next week, we'll look at the 'Exhale,' how a heart saturated with the Word naturally breathes out in prayer, worship and thanksgiving.
- But for tomorrow morning, just breathe, inhale the life of Christ.
- Begin with ten minutes. Begin with one passage.
- Give God's word room in your heart and let that expand to the whole house.
- And you will find that the Word of Christ, dwelling richly in you, will strengthen your soul, anchor your mind, fuel you with joy and peace, and transform your life for the glory of God.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?