

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 1.11.2026

PART 2 - THE ECHO OF THE HEART

I. INTRODUCTION

- Last week, we looked at the necessity of the word of God dwelling richly in us.
- The Word is the inhale of the Christian life.
- But you were never meant to just inhale. To live, you also must exhale. Inhale-Exhale, that is the rhythm.
- Many of us are walking around spiritually 'holding our breath.'
- We read the Word, we hear sermons, we take in truth, but we feel a stagnation in our souls.
- Why is that? Because we haven't mastered the rhythm, we only inhale.
- If the Word is the inhale of the Christian life, then prayer is the exhale.
- Today we look again at Colossians 3:16 to see how the Word that dwells in us must flow out of us.
- We're looking at "The Echo of the Heart."
- When God's Word resides in us, it should reverberate back out of us as an exhale of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.
- The Word and prayer are the spiritual lungs of the Christian life.

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. PRAYER IS A RESPONSE OF THE HEART

- The order of the text is the word of God taking up residence in our hearts first. Paul starts with God's provision.
- God has given us his Word.
- The word of Christ is the gospel message, everything about the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.
- All Scripture is breathed out by God... (2 Tim. 3:16)
- We saturate ourselves with the Word, giving it the keys to every room in our heart, to shape us, transform us, and to give us new priorities.
- Then, in response, we exhale. The Word that dwells richly in us naturally flows out of us.
- We find ourselves teaching and admonishing others and singing with thankful hearts.
- Prayer is the echo of the heart.
- An echo cannot exist without an initial sound.

- Prayer is a response to God's initiative.
- He speaks to us through His Word, and we "echo" him back in prayer.
- While the text doesn't use the word "prayer," it is deeply implied.
- It produces thankfulness.
- A thankful heart is a praying heart.
- What is prayer?
- Prayer is the expression of our thankfulness and dependence on God through requests.
- Philippians 4:6 "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."
- Prayer is how we talk to God. It encompasses a lot of things: confession, thanksgiving, praise, claiming God's promises, and petitions.
- Through prayer we commune and fellowship with God and we ask for things we need and desire.
- There is no limit to the things we can pray for.
- God doesn't limit our requests. "*In everything by prayer...*"
- Prayer is an expression of dependency upon God, it is not telling God something he doesn't already know.
- It's expressing that we know that the all-sufficient God cares for us and provides for us and we depend on him for everything.
- Prayer isn't trying to convince God to go along with my plans.
- Prayer is not reminding God of his promises because he forgets.
- Prayer is not me attempting to twist God's arm to do something he doesn't want to do.
- Prayer is not trying to bend God's will to conform to mine.
- Prayer is an immense privilege that every child of God has.
- We pray because God has told us to ask.
- We pray because God answers prayer!
- 1 John 5:14-15 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.
- How can we know we are praying according to God's will.
- Through His Word. If we ask anything according to his Word he hears us.
- Notice the correlation between the Word and our asking, and God hearing and answering what we asked of him.

III. USE THE VOCABULARY OF SCRIPTURE

- Why is it that many believers have a difficult time cultivating a life of prayer?
- If you find it difficult to know what to pray about or what words to use, it's often because you are trying to start the conversation by yourself.
- But that's the wrong starting point.
- We don't find the "spark" to ignite prayer from ourselves, we look to the Word.
- We need to have the Word in us so that those words will flow out of us in prayer.
- Bible intake and Word-saturated prayer are inseparable disciplines.
- If you are weak in one, the other eventually fades.
- The Word gives us specific vocabulary to our prayer life.
- When you don't know what to pray, pray the Word.
- When you open your Bible this week, don't close it the moment you finish reading.

- Leave it open. Look at the verses you just read.
 - If you read something about God’s power, steadfast love, wisdom, or holiness, Then let your “exhale” be a prayer of adoration.
 - If you read something about how we are to walk in a manner pleasing to God, how we are to put off certain sinful habits in our life, then let your exhale be a prayer of confession.
 - If you read something about Christ’s sacrifice for your sins, or that your life is hidden with Christ in God, then let your exhale be a prayer of thanksgiving.
 - If you read something about virtues that characterize the Christian life, or that we are to put on the new self, let your prayer be one of supplication.
 - Let the Bible be your script. If you run out of words, look down at the page, the next verse is your next prayer.
- Use the A.C.T.S. prayer template: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (requests).
- Prayer is not a discipline for the spiritually elite, it should be the natural exhale of the believer.
 - When the Word is in us and it is shaping our thoughts, our prayers become:
 - God-centered instead of me-centered
 - Christ-exalting instead of comfort-driven
 - Scripture-saturated instead emotion-saturated
 - Faith-strengthening instead of doubt reinforcing
 - Prayer warms the truth we know until it becomes devotion.
 - The Word ignites our prayers.

IV. TURN INDIVIDUAL DEVOTION INTO CORPORATE ENCOURAGEMENT

- In the original language, the “you” in “Let the Word of Christ dwell in ‘you’ richly,” is plural not singular.
- *“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as a community, not just individually.”*
- Paul links prayer and singing to “teaching and admonishing one another.”
- 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.
- Why? Because our private prayers fuel our corporate worship.
- When we sing together, “we are teaching and admonishing” one another.
- Teaching means “to instruct” and admonishing literally means “to put in mind.”
- It is singing with the goal of edification; singing that instructs and “puts in mind” what God’s Word says concerning who He is and what he has accomplished for us through Christ.
- What kind of singing?
- Singing Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.
- It’s singing the Psalter, the 150 Psalms
- It’s singing Christ-exalting, God-glorifying, faith-building, Scripture-saturated songs that build up believers.
- This is just prayer set to music. It’s the corporate exhale of prayer.
- Of course our singing is first and foremost to the Lord. He is the One we worship and exalt.
- But your singing does something to others.

- Corporate singing is worship that is God-directed and ministers to other believers.
- We want the Word to dwell richly in us, so that what flows out of us is His Word in prayer and singing and in our conversations.
- It's why you are encouraged to sing loudly with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
- That's the exhale of the Christian life.
- As the Word dwells richly in us and leads to teaching, admonishing and singing, prayer leads to:
 - Increased unity.
 - Greater encouragement
 - Authentic worship

CONCLUSION

- As we embark on 21 Days of Prayer, this isn't just an event on our church calendar; it's a training ground for your spiritual lungs.
- If you feel like your prayer life is 'gasping for air,' if you feel like you have nothing to say to God, my challenge to you is, stop trying to start the conversation.
- Open the Word, let God speak first, then simply breathe back to him what he has already said.
- Imagine what would happen to our church if we all started 'echoing' the Word in our private and public prayers.
- If in our worship gatherings, our singing wasn't just a melody but a thunder of collective confidence because we actually believe the Word that is dwelling in us.
- Tomorrow morning, when you open your Bible—inhale.
- And before you move on with your day—let the Word turn into a conversation—exhale.
- May we be a Word-filled church and a praying church that overflows with thanksgiving.
- And may our hearts be a home where his Word lives, his people pray, and his glory shines forth.

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?