Sermon Notes

**“Food and Oxygen”**

John 15:1–11

1 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. 9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

5 characteristics of those who grow in depth and fruitfulness:

1. Build rituals
2. Maintain accountability
3. Grow through hardships
4. Practicing spiritual disciplines
5. Establish all activity in the gospel of grace

**The Importance of applying these to Bible and Prayer.**

*7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

**Here’s the ritual we want to build:** Daily, personal engagement with God through the Bible and Prayer. “Devotional time.”

***Why read the Bible?***

1. Spiritual \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Deuteronomy 8:2–3
1. Bible is God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* 2 Timothy 3:16–17
1. Bible provides \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in a world of “fake news.”
* John 17:17
1. It provides \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_for life.
* Psalm 119:105
1. It has a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ power. From de-formed image-bearer to re-formed image-bearer.
* Hebrews 4:12
1. Bible \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Jesus and the gospel of his life, death, and resurrection.
* John 5:39-40

***Why pray?***

Prayer is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to life in Christ.

**Philippians 4:6–7
6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

**How to Structure a Devotional Time (Food and Oxygen)**

**1. Devotional book/booklet**

* Pray
* Read devotional (scripture and thought)
* Pray and take action
* Devotionals: https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals

**2. Read through a book of the Bible**

* Choose a book (Gospels, New Testament, Psalms, Proverbs, Old Testament).
* Bible Project Read Scripture videos (https://www.youtube.com/user/jointhebibleproject).
* Use a Study Bible.
* Pray. Read 2-3x. Notes. Reflect. Pray through passage. Take action.

**3. Reading plan (several daily readings).**

* Pray
* Read all Scriptures (Use a study Bible).
* Focus on one.
* Read 2-3x. Notes. Reflect. Pray through passage. Take action.
* Reading plans: (https://www.ligonier.org/blog/bible-reading-plans)

Best Study Bibles:

* *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*
* *NIV, Faith and Work Bible*
* *ESV Study Bible*
* *NIV, Understand the Faith Study Bible*
* *Zondervan NIV Study Bible*

**2018: “Clarifying the Bible” Course**

Prayer Supports:

**A.C.T.S Prayer Structure**

* Adoration: Give God praise and honor for who He is as Lord over all.
* Confession: Honestly deal with the sin in your life.
* Thanksgiving: Verbalize what you’re grateful for in your life and in the world around you.
* Supplication: Pray for the needs of others and yourself.

***Do something rather than nothing.***

***Persistence instead of perfection.***

**Questions for Discussion**

1. What insight from the message left the biggest impression on you? Why?
2. What personal need in your life did the message expose? How can others pray for and with you in relation to this need?
3. Review the Scriptures Jeff cited under “why read the Bible?” Which one most powerfully challenges and/or inspires you?
4. What is the single biggest obstacle you face in developing a vibrant devotional life? How could friends or members of your small group help you deal with these obstacles?
5. What could be the personal and corporate consequences of not heeding this message?