

## **Lent Series / Hearing That Still, Small Voice and Finding Your Own**

Lent 2: “Finding Your Breath: Listening to Our Bodies”

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February 25, 2018

The New Testament lesson for Lent 2 in our series is from the book of Romans, chapter 8, verses 26-28; 38-39. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. This is God’s word for God’s people.

Please pray with me. Lord we pray your blessing on the hearing, reading, and understanding of your word today. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen. Peace be with you!

Last week we took a glimpse of Elijah the prophet. He was running scared from the wicked Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab. Elijah had killed her false prophets, and that was a great victory for Elijah, but now, Jezebel was thirsty for revenge. So she sends a message to Elijah: “Let the gods kill me if I fail to do to you what you did to my prophets by this time tomorrow.”

Elijah runs and ends up in a cave hiding from life’s circumstances. He hears a furious wind, he feels Mt. Horeb shake from an earthquake, he sees a fire, but the Lord isn’t in the fire. Then Elijah hears a small still voice. Not exactly what he expected. Perhaps not exactly what we’re expecting either when we listen for God and we need direction in our lives.

Times like these our minds and bodies just go numb. We feel the chaos and hear the opposition and the heat of trouble, but we’re not sure what to do. Maybe we hide in our prayer cave, turn off the phone, and simply listen for God. We might go for walk through the woods or lay flat on our backs and listen to our breathing. Finally we settle down and focus on our need to relax.

This is when we lay the fullness of your lives before our Maker and listen. We close our eyes and allow our breathing to connect with God. We know God blew breath into us at creation, and He breathes His Holy Spirit through us even now. The early church believed that breath and Spirit were one in the same. Perhaps that’s a way to connect with God . . . as we listen . . . as we pay attention

to our breathing as a prayer connection with God. Scripture tells us that our bodies are holy vessels and temples of God's spirit. So we embrace that and listen.

Have you ever hid away in your place of solitude and then realized you have absolutely no idea how to pray about a particular situation? You feel weak and dependent on God, and you admit to yourself, only God knows the way to deal with your troubles. So let God do that.

Let God's spirit search your heart, because the mind of the Spirit of God knows how to pray and intercede for you according to His will. Lay the fullness of all that you are before God. Release yourself to God. You realize your weakness, your inability to influence your situation for the good, so release it to God. Let go of it and allow God to work. Get out of the way and give it to God.

In Romans 8 scripture tells us that “. . . all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” We hear the words, but we know deep down, there's nothing good about trouble or chaos and conflict. Still, we give our troubles and sufferings to the Lord and allow God to work through it as we trust Him in all situations.

Know that God loves you and has called you for a purpose in your life. Rest in that thought. Be convinced that God is on your side. God has never let you down. How can you lose? God through the work of Christ didn't waver for a moment when he gave his life for you and put everything on the line, in hope, that

you would trust him. With God on your side, praying for you, as a child of God, you are more than victorious because God loves you and is working on your behalf.

Surely if God has given you His only Son, will you believe and trust that the Lord will gladly and freely bless you as one of God's chosen son or daughter? Not one bully, not one word of slander could ever drive a separation between you and God's love. Not trouble, chaos, hard times, not hatred or hunger, not anything.

No trouble has to discourage or intimidate us because Jesus loves us. Be convinced that any kind of negative power is ineffective when it's confronted with God's love for us; it's incapable of separating us from God's presence.

Listen for God and connect with your dependence on His ability to work in your situation. Know that you are empowered and can be controlled by the Spirit of God. As you breathe and connect with God in prayer, confess your dependence on Christ and give God the control. Most importantly, continue to connect and keep on being filled with God's spirit as you listen, pray, and come and rest before your Maker.

Please pray with me. God help us to turn to you and reorient ourselves once again. Connect us with a spiritual oxygen that breathes in us and keeps us alive in you. Help us to breathe deeply, to release control of our lives to you—knowing that you work all things together. Amen.