

2013\_10\_20 Pentecost 22 | Sermon (Ascension Batavia)  
Ascension Lutheran Church, Batavia IL  
Pastor David Pfeiffer

**Continue Hearing the Healthy Sound of God's Inspired (breathed) Word**

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

INI

Let us PRAY:

**Breathe, oh, breathe Thy loving Spirit  
Into every troubled breast;  
Let us all in Thee inherit,  
Let us find the promised rest.  
Take away the love of sinning;  
Alpha and Omega be;  
End of faith as its beginning,  
Set our hearts at liberty. Amen.**

Grace and peace to you in Christ Jesus. We begin a two week sermon series drawn from from Paul's second epistle to Timothy. We consider the importance of continuing in the word both in hearing and preaching. That God-breathed Word which forms the basis for this reformation series comes from...

**2 Timothy 3:14–4:5** <sup>14</sup> But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, <sup>15</sup> and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. <sup>1</sup> I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup> Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup> and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. <sup>5</sup> But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

**Continue Hearing the Healthy Sound of  
God's Inspired (breathed) Word**

1. God breathes salvation into the Word  
(All Scripture is God-breathed)
2. God breathes salvation into your ear  
(healthy preaching and teaching)
3. God breathes salvation into your heart  
(equipped for every good work)

This is the inspired Word, the breath of God.

In Jesus name, dear fellow redeemed,

If you've ever visited someone suffering from some sort of respiratory illness, you'll know what I'm talking about. It makes us cringe. That low crackling sound; the wheezing. These are indications something is not right. We cringe because we know breathing is essential to life.

Today we take a listen to this under a spiritual stethoscope. We listen to the sound of God breathing.

The idea comes directly from our text. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." The Greek word here is "θεόπνευστος" (theo-pneustos). Literally – God-Spirited or God-Breathed. We get the same meaning in the English translation "inspire." Rooted in that English word is the word "spirit" – simply a breath. All Scripture is "in +spirited." That is, "breathed into."

So you have the NIV translation: "All Scripture is God breathed." and the ESV: "All Scripture is breathed out by God." And our NKJ: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

May God breathe His Holy Spirit upon us today as we **continue hearing the healthy sound of God breathing salvation – into the Word, into your ear, and into your heart.**

**1. God breathes salvation into the Word (All Scripture is God-breathed)**

In Genesis 2, God's work of bringing life to mankind is described as the breath of God. *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into His nostrils the*

*breath of life (2:7). Job compares the work of the Holy Spirit in the same terms: Job 33:4 The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

In fact, the word “Spirit” in both the Hebrew and the Greek has that essential meaning: “a movement of air, a breath.” So Jesus compares the Spirit’s work in baptism to the wind blowing here and there, John 3.

All Scripture is God-breathed. The Bible is God’s breath of life. Listen closely and you’ll hear the Holy Spirit moving.

You can hear it in the Old Testament prophets.

*2 Peter 1:20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

Those Old Testament writers like Moses, Isaiah, David, were carried along by the Holy Spirit; moved and influenced to write all things necessary to make us wise unto salvation.

Listen again and you’ll hear it in Jesus’ gift to His apostles.

*John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”*

And this Word has but one goal: “to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” *These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing we may have life in His name. (John 20:31). So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17).*

God has made the word itself the power by which you are saved. The word is the breath of life. It is the Spirit’s presence and movement as He convinces us of things we would otherwise never think possible. The Son of God born of a virgin. A crucified Savior. The atoning sacrifice for my sins. The Christ risen from death who lives and reigns to all eternity. God breathes in this message. God breathes a breath that declares that you forgiven; that breathes salvation. And the Lord God breathed into this Word, the breath of life.

**2. God breathes salvation into your ear (healthy preaching and teaching)**

There is a problem though. There is a problem and it has to do with our ears. By nature these ears and this heart is not attuned to these healthy sounds. By nature we these ears itch for something different.

*3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound (lit.: "healthy") doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

Your ears are bombarded on all sides. So many opinions. So many words. Words about words about words. Turn on TV, flip on the radio, open this best selling book, read this magazine article, link to this blogs. In an instant Google can give you an answer. One teacher heaped upon another. What is it your ears are itching for?

Seeking marital advice? Just click here and you can read about "irreconcilable differences." You can find out why its his fault because he doesn't communicate. You can find out why its her fault because she always pesters you too much. Go to this counselor or that counselor. They'll give you some suggestions. But does their advice breath God's Spirit? Where is the Spirit moving through the word to bring teaching and reproof, acknowledging sin, providing correction and instruction? Where is the Spirit breathing righteousness and faith that centers in Christ and forgiveness?

Or how about homosexuality? Open this book and you'll find its as genetic as hair color. Read again and you'll see that opposing homosexuality is no different than being a racist. Another article will tell you that Paul's writings were shaped by his cultural setting and no longer apply today.

Or maybe you're looking for suggestions for church growth? Here's an article that will show you the future of the church is to be more inclusive. Cast off labels. Don't let doctrine prevent you from getting another member on the church roster. Jesus taught us to love one another.

The wheezing, the coughing. Something just doesn't sound right. The Word is being choked out by this ever changing culture, turning our ears this way and that – so we find Jesus saying in our verse of the day: *Luke 18:8 ... when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"*

Only one thing can prevent these fables from infecting our ears and keep us in the sounds of sound teaching. v.14 – continue hearing the things you've learned, knowing

from whom you've learned them; knowing that from childhood you've known the Holy Scriptures; knowing that all Scripture is God breathed.

In other words: Turn your ears here, time and time again, to the sound of God breathing salvation into your ears and ultimately into your hearts.

### **3. God breathes salvation into your heart (equipped for every good work)**

Because this Book is more than an instruction manual. It is more than a book of rules. It is God's means of breathing salvation into your heart.

*16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Perhaps you've had to train someone for the first time. You'll know then, that it is not a matter of just telling them what to do. This person has no experience doing what you've been doing for 15 years. Do you just tell them everything once and expect them to do the job? Or do you simply have them watch you do it all for them and then leave them alone to do it themselves? If you've been in this situation, you probably know the importance of patience; the importance of letting the other person do it themselves; the importance of teaching them where they went wrong and where to go for the solution.

You will mess up. Your children will mess up. Your parents will mess up. Your spouse will mess up. It is not as if at the moment of baptism we suddenly know how to do it all perfectly. You need experience. You need forgiveness. You need to be taught, reproofed, corrected, and instructed in righteousness. God is breathing – now through His Word, into our ears, and into our hearts.

Central to our good works is that we realize it is not about us doing anything. It is all about God doing; it is about God breathing salvation into His word, into our ears, and into our hearts. It is about Jesus fulfilling these things for you and continuing by faith in Him. As Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branch. He who abides in Me bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing."

It comes through experience, through failure, through correction, always breathing the life giving forgiveness that comes through the cross of Jesus. The Word is not an instruction manual. It is not a set of rules. The Bible is God talking to you. It is His breath. The Word breathes Christ Himself into this assembly; it gives you the Holy Spirit, living, moving, equipping you for every good work.

Looking for marriage advice? Open the word and find life breathed into a marriage that is all but dead. Open the word and be convinced – be convinced that divorce is a sin; be convinced that God can reconcile the irreconcilable differences. That Word equips the husband with a love that serves his wife’s needs unconditionally as Christ serves the Church; that word equips the wife with a respect that appreciates and honors the husband without condition. God breathes into your heart.

Or perhaps you have questions and struggles with sinful desires? Whether homo- or hereto- struggles, open the word and be convinced – be convinced that any and all sins lead to death apart from repentance and Christ. Open the word and see how these struggles are not genetic in terms of hair color; they are genetic in terms of the Old Adam who lurks within our flesh. Open the word and be convinced that Jesus has sacrificed Himself for these every one of these very sins, every one of our worst weaknesses. Through that word, God breathes a new desire within us; a desire to honor God with our bodies, to flee youthful lusts or homosexual struggles, and to live in the forgiveness that Christ has won. God breathes into your heart.

Open God’s Word and find the key to true Church Growth. Through Scripture alone, God breathes into this Church, into these believers the wisdom of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Not to use though gimmicks or to compromise teaching; but through the sound teaching and a genuine passion to seek and save the lost. God breathes into your heart.

All Scripture is God breathed. Can you hear it? No more crackling; no more wheezing; nothing but the healthy sound of God breathing salvation – into the Word, into your ears, into your heart.

**Breathe, oh, breathe Thy loving Spirit  
Into every troubled breast;  
Let us all in Thee inherit,  
Let us find the promised rest.  
Take away the love of sinning;  
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