

"Exhaling"

Vital Signs – Pt. 5

February 12, 2017

INTRO ...

It's a common thought that inhaling is the important phase in the act of breathing, and people try to control it. Many say, "take a breath" or "tank up" when singing. I find that this controlled inhale can actually place unhealthy pressure on the diaphragm, often tensing neck and chest muscles that do not need to be overly involved in breathing.

Because most people are busy taking an in-breath, they do not pay much attention to the exhale process. Without exhaling completely, excess carbon dioxide — a known stressor in your nervous system — may remain in your lungs. The system detects that there is too much carbon dioxide and not enough oxygen. Then, it does the only thing it knows how to do: ask for more oxygen, causing another inhale. Since the lungs are still partially filled with carbon dioxide, not as much oxygen can get in. A cycle is set in motion and you keep inhaling for more oxygen, but can't get enough because the lungs have not been properly emptied. This habit can lead to shallow breathing and holding your breath.

*However, when you exhale completely, your body is designed to take a "reflex" inhale. By releasing your ribs and expelling all air in the lungs, you engage the spring-like action of your ribs to expand and create a partial vacuum, and the air comes in as a neurological reflex. This is what I call an optimal breath. **Betsy Polatin**, "Breath in Motion: Why Exhaling Matters Most", *The Huffington Post**

Many Christians diagnose their lack of vitality (their "oxygen poor lifestyle") as a problem with their INHALING (and there is truth to that), without being aware or addressing their ongoing practice of POOR EXHALING!

So, What is Poor Exhaling (Spiritually)?

Spiritual Exhaling is what we do when we "Export" or "Expel" the Life of God from our lives. It has to do with what we "give away". ...it is associated with Biblical Vocabulary Words like: "Serving" ... "Giving" ... "Sacrificing" ... "laying down our lives" ... "ministering" ...

- NOTE: A Healthy Christian Life is a "Giving Life" ... a "Serving Life" ... a "Sacrificial Life" ... a "Ministering Life" ...an "Other Oriented Life"

Observations from the HEALTHIEST PERSON EVER!

Mark 10:35-45 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." 36 And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" 37 And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." 38 Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" 39 And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, 40 but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." 41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. 42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

...the helpful CONTRASTING Nature of this passage. ...man's ambitious grasping and consuming and maneuvering...

YET... Jesus is among them as THE MOST FULLY ALIVE MAN who ever was, and His life is defined by another principle! ...His life places a Premium on EXHALING ... "serving", "slave of all", "coming to serve", and "to give his life"

Phil 2:4-9 "...do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, NASU

...v.4 ...**DON'T Merely Look Out for YOU!! ...The Air We Breathe today is SATURATED with "Personal Interests"!!**

"...as the industries of entertainment, image, technology, and consumerism grow, other less glamorous yet vital institutions fade and fall, institutions that were created to foster a sense of community and meaning. Unlike the industries of technology, consumerism, lifestyle, and entertainment, these fading institutions required more than just our money. They asked for commitment. They fostered a sense of duty. They reminded us that freedom needed to be tempered by responsibility and limits, otherwise we would end up as very unhappy and lonely narcissists. Without realizing it, the church, like so many other institutions in our culture, has been caught in tension between the rise of individual autonomy and the unraveling of social institutions. Journalist George Packer calls this phenomenon "the Unwinding," a process in which the communal ties, institutions, and commitments that bind us together have begun to unwind in an unprecedented process." Mark Sayers, "Disappearing Church", Kindle loc 1685

Our culture is depleted and burned out because it rebels against the God-given limitations placed on it. ...we burn ourselves out seeking greater freedom and autonomy. ...In an age that encourages maximum autonomy and the transgressing of limitations, perhaps we need to adhere to Todd Hunter's advice to see the institution of church as a spiritual discipline. We get the idea that making the choice to wake up early and read our Bibles or to commit to regularly giving away our money to a charity or to fast may not always be pleasurable, but in the discipline of these things that we become more Christlike. Yet we expect church to always be pleasurable, enriching, and exciting." Mark Sayers, "Disappearing Church", Kindle loc 1875

- Our culture has taught us that EVERYTHING exists to further our personal interests—and when it doesn't feel that way, we disconnect from it. People stop connecting with the church, when they perceive "they are not GETTING anything out of it."

Ronald Rolheiser captures this truth well when he writes, "Church involvement, when understood properly, does not leave us the option to walk away whenever something happens that we do not like. It is a covenant commitment, like a marriage, and binds us for better or worse." We fear church because we fear that it will take something from us, that it will restrict us. ...For as Rolheiser writes,

"What church community takes away from us is our false freedom to soar unencumbered, like the birds, believing that we are mature, loving, committed, and not blocking out things that we should be seeing. Real churchgoing soon enough shatters this illusion, and gives us no escape, as we find ourselves constantly humbled as our immaturities and lack of sensitivity to the pain of others are reflected off eyes that are honest and unblinking." Mark Sayers, "Disappearing Church", Kindle loc 1886

"As Rolheiser comments, "Our age tends to divorce spirituality from ecclesiology. We want God, but we don't want church." However, the great flaw of our search for spirituality and faith minus church is "the unconfrosted life. Without church, we have more private fantasy than real faith. ... Real conversion demands that eventually its recipient be involved in both the muck and the grace of actual church life." More than ever we need the limitations and glorious messiness of church. We need its relational concreteness. We need it because it is the vehicle, in all its warts and spots, of the grace of God." Mark Sayers, "Disappearing Church", Kindle loc 1896

Php 2 ...By living a life that "does not merely look out for its personal interests", Jesus reveals a life that is "other-oriented", "serving-oriented", "humble", "laying down His life", "giving".

...v. 6-7 ...He was "not grasping" but rather "emptied Himself" ...He effectively exhaled, he didn't lead a "Shallow-breathing life" that was always "grasping/GASPING" for air!

"emptied" (Gk. kenosis - the self-emptying of Christ) - from kenós (2756), empty,... To make empty, (I) The antithesis of pleroo (4137), to fill. (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)

KJV translates this word, "made...of no reputation

So, what's Healthy Christian Exhaling Look Like Today? ...Let's use our "Exhaling Vocabulary"

- **Serving = ?**
- **Giving = ?** (Tithe is a form of "exhaling" —we receive and we give away...)

1 **Tim 6:17-19** As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

- **Sacrificing = ?** Merriam Webster def = *to give up (something that you want to keep); an act of giving up something especially for the sake of someone or something else*
- **Laying Down Life = ?**
- **Ministering = ?**

BE AWARE: We get the word "Exhausted" from the word "Exhaust"

Dictionary.com ... Exhaust - to drain of strength or energy, wear out, or fatigue greatly, as a person: 2. to use up or consume completely; expend the whole of

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-- If These Things Don't Characterize Our Lives, then WE ARE NOT HEALTHY!

Being Filled is Connected with Being Emptied!