

N U R T U R E  
**F A I T H**  
with  
Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.

June 4, 2017

A Timeless Word

**READ:** Isaiah 50:4

*“He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.”*

**MEDITATE:**

How many books are worth reading more than once? I have a few on my list ... the Lord of the Rings trilogy, the Chronicles of Narnia, Pride and Prejudice, a few Dorothy Sayer’s Lord Peter Wimsey mysteries ... but even with these classics, I wait several years before picking them up a second time. Long enough to forget the details and be surprised and delighted all over again. Rarely have I opened a book a third time.

Yet there is one book that I have opened every day for over thirty years and have never grown tired of reading. Amazing, isn’t it, that one book could never grow old? That’s because the Bible is more than a book. It is a key to the most vital relationship in my life. And when I open the Bible every morning, I do more than read. I meet with God. Ours is a two-way relationship that involves two-way communication. I speak to Him in prayer and He speaks to me through His Word. This is an amazing thing and not to be taken lightly. The God of the universe speaks into my life. That’s enough to get me up every morning eager to read the same book that I’ve read for over thirty years.

In this verse, Isaiah is also eager. It’s as if God says to him each morning, “Up, Isaiah! I have things to say to you!” And Isaiah gets up to listen. The Hebrew word used here for “listen” means “to give undivided attention to, to seek to understand, to give heed to and obey.” This is no half-attentive ear, no sleepy nod in God’s direction, but a fully engaged Isaiah, expecting God to speak and ready to do whatever He says.

God is ready to be intimately involved with our lives. He waits to speak to us and He does so through His Word. The problem is that too often we read the Bible more as a devotional exercise than a vital communication with the One who knows us most and loves us best. To develop a “listening ear” begin your time with God with the simple prayer, “Lord, what do You have to say to me?” Remember Soren Kierkegaard, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Danish Christian philosopher: “When you read God’s Word, you must remember to be constantly saying to yourself, ‘It is speaking to me; I am the one it is talking about.’”

What happens when I read with a “listening ear”? God speaks to me about who He is and who I am. He tells me how the world works and how He works in the world. He reveals the most profound message of grace the world has ever known, but He also speaks into my life challenge, comfort, counsel, and hope for change. This is worth getting up for every day.

*Written by Susan Sutton, a friend of Dr. Doug Hood*

