



CHAPTER 49: NOT BY BREAD ALONE

2 Timothy 3:14-17

You may or may not realize, but today during our worship gatherings, we have invited all ages to come in. We've not had any kind of childcare, and so, we have a nice assortment of noise to be totally comfortable with all throughout the service. So, no evil looks toward people with children, or anything like that. Like, this has been a good day. This morning, gathering together, and then tonight, with all ages represented from our families. We wanted to have a way to help children, our children in particular, to see, and smell, and, in a sense, taste the Word tonight. So, we've got my own little cooking show set up right here for us to dive into.

So, I've got two volunteers that are going to help me out. Where's Tripp and Jude? All right, if you guys could come up here and join me, what we're going to do is we're going to make some bread tonight. Some bread that we will be able to feast on later in our worship gathering. So, you all welcome Tripp and Jude up here. Okay?

Okay, Tripp, why don't you stand over there, and Jude...okay, do you guys have much cooking experience?

Response: Kind of.

Kind of? Well, that's good. What kind of things have you cooked before, Jude?

Response: [Inaudible comment]

Well, that's good. Well, then you've probably cooked more than I have, buddy. I've done frozen pizza and Pop Tarts, but beyond that, I have not done a lot of cooking until yesterday, when I learned to bake bread. So, anyway, all right. So, here's what we're going to do. Tripp, what I need you to do, is I need you to take this...and this is how you do it on a cooking show, you show the camera what's in there, and you say, "Wow, that is some good-looking flour." Very good, yes, nice...could you get that facial? There we go, okay, all right.

What I need you to do is to pour the sugar into the flour. Nicely done, and then that's rapid-rise yeast. We won't say what brands these are. We don't want to promote any particular brand. Then, salt, pour that in there. Then, I want you to take that spoon and start to mix it up, but be careful mixing it up. Don't push it around too fast because that flour will pop up all over your clothes, and your folks will not be happy with me.

So, Jude, what we need you to do is you've got a nice cup of warm, 120 degree milk. Not really, it's supposed to be warm; it's what it's supposed to be. However, take that oil and pour that oil into the bowl, and then, you get the fun of cracking the egg and putting the egg into the bowl. There we go. Oop...yeah, there we go. The egg went a little bit

everywhere. There, well done. All right, good job, Jude. All right, here's a napkin if you want to...

All right, you could take that spoon and start stirring that around, and while you're stirring that around, what I need you to do, Tripp, is I need you to pour about half of that into here. So, pour about half of it into there. Okay, a little more. All right, here, I'm going to take this, and I'm going to put a little...here, pour it up a little more. I'm going to pour a little more in there. There we go, nicely done. Okay.

Now, how's it stirring in there? Is it looking all right? All right, thanks, Jude. Will you pour that all into here? Nicely done. Give me that spoon for a second. I'm going to start stirring this around. Whoops. That's why they wear aprons, but I just couldn't bring myself to do it. So, did you guys have a good Christmas?

Response: Yeah.

So, what was the favorite thing that you received for Christmas.

Response: Hatchet.

Response: Recording software.

A recording software, wow. I don't know if you were here on Christmas Eve. Jude was leading us in worship on Christmas Eve, and then, I don't know if you heard Tripp share, he was the first person that I just happened to go to on Christmas Eve when I was going around and asking people what they wanted for Christmas, and his response was a...

Response: A hatchet.

A hatchet, of course. What every child wants and needs is a hatchet. So, you did indeed get your hatchet. Yes. I tell you what, why don't you pour this in there. I'll just go ahead and take it and pour it in. You're kind of second-guessing whether or not I should be involved with you in this cooking thing, Tripp. Tell me what you're going to do with your hatchet?

Response: Well, I've already cut down a tree.

You've already cut down a tree. Wow. How big was this tree?

Response: [Inaudible comment]

So, it was a pretty good size, huh? So, then like you all...you all can...you can go cut down your own Christmas tree next year?

Response: Probably not.

Probably not? No? Well, do you have a hatchet, too?

Response: Yes.

Oh, yes, a family full of hatchets. It was really interesting some of the gifts that people were wanting, like a hatchet. The first one was a hatchet. The second one on Friday night that I asked about was a chinchilla, which I didn't realize what a chinchilla was. Maybe you know, this cross between a gerbil/hamster/bunny...some kind of rodent, I think, is a chinchilla. So,

yeah, chinchillas, hatchets, cell phones...you know, the normal Christmas gifts that every child wants.

So, all right, what we're going to do is in just a second, I'm going to finish stirring all this together, and then you guys are going to get to have all the fun and get your hands in and play with this stuff. It's called kneading. I didn't know what kneading dough was until yesterday, but what it is, is you take...yeah, there you go. That's what you do. You bring it all together.

So, what I want to do is I'm going to move this out of your way, and I'm going to put this cutting board here. The cool part is...yeah, you might want to pull up your sleeves...in order to keep your hands from getting sticky with all the dough, put your hands...oop, hand sanitizer, there you go. This is a clean cooking exercise. Okay, what we're going to do is stick your hands in the flour, and get it all over your fingers, and that will keep it from getting...all the dough from getting stuck to your hands.

So, just kind of stick your fingers in there. There you go. Yeah, there you go. Kind of like a LeBron James kind of thing. Just do that right there. No, I'm just playing. Okay, that's good, all right. All right, Tripp, why don't you get some on your hands, too. Okay, well done. Okay, and what I'm going to do is I'm going to give each of you half of this. Yeah, nice. Okay, Tripp, that's your half. Jude, here's your half. Start kneading that. So, just kind of pressing it all together. Nice.

All right, and while you guys are doing that, I want to tell you a story. Exodus 16. The people of God had been slaves for 400 years in Egypt, and God miraculously by His power brought them out of slavery in Egypt, through a series of plagues, culminating in the Passover. He brings them out of slavery. The Egyptians come running after them. They get to the edge of the Red Sea. God splits the sea in half, and leads His people through on dry ground.

So, here they were, free from...nice, well done...free from slavery in Egypt. However, they found themselves in the middle of a wilderness, where they wondered...began wondering, "Where are we going to get food, and where are we going to get water?" They're wondering soon turned into complaining, and they began to grumble against Moses and Aaron, and ultimately against God, saying, "We don't have any food. God's brought us out here, and we have nothing to eat."

So, what God did in Exodus 16:4 is He said, "I'm going to send you, literally, manna, bread from heaven." The next morning, when they got up and walked out from their homes, there was bread all over the ground for them to eat. God said, "Take enough bread from the ground for the day to feast on it all day, but don't save some for the next week, or two weeks. Don't store it up because I'm going to provide it for you again the next day, and the next day, and the next day." That's exactly what He did.

For the next forty years, every single day, God provided bread from heaven. No kneading necessary; no work necessary. God in His sufficiency, sustenance, and His provision provided them bread on a daily basis. That's going to kind of set the stage for what I want us to think about tonight when it comes to what we live on and what really, truly sustains us.

Okay, how's it coming over there? Is it good?

Response: Yes.

All right, you just like playing with the flour, don't you? That's the fun part. Okay, what we're going to do is I want you to combine it together into one. Whoa, nice. All right, combine that together into one. Okay, and I'm going to bring this over here, and what we're going to do is we're going to roll it out on this cutting board here. Okay? I'm going to start rolling it, and I need you guys to help me kind of form it around so it covers the whole cutting board. So, let me roll it a little bit, and then you guys start forming it. There we go, all right. Start stretching it out a little bit. There you go. You're almost there. Nicely done.

Okay, looking pretty good?

Response: [Inaudible comment]

All right. Now what we're going to do is we're going to...let me get some more flour on here, make it a little easier. Okay, what we're going to do is we're going to roll it up into a nice batch to make for bread. So, I'm going to start rolling from this side. I tell you what, as I roll it, will you make sure it doesn't get off that side, because it'll start to get kind of...yeah, there you go, exactly, just like that, Tripp. Man, you're good at this. You done this before?

Response: No.

No? Has your mom taught you to cook a lot?

Response: Sort of.

Sort of? That's good. All right, we're going to roll it up here. There we go. There we go. Really tight. Then, the instructions say to pinch it on the sides. I don't know really what that means, so, we're just going to do this right here. Kind of pinch it and make sure it all sticks together. Here, help me do that. Just kind of make sure all that's sticking together. There you go. Yeah, or you could just kind of poke it with your finger like that. That's pinch or poke it with your finger. That works all the same.

All right, all right, I think we're good. We have just...whoops, now we're stuck together. All right, I think we have just created a nice loaf of bread. Now, the other cool thing that cooking shows do that we also do here is we have this nicely prepared, but you have to wait for it to rise for about an hour. So, we have a nicely pre-prepared loaf of bread that has risen already. So, we're going to stick this in the oven, where it will, over the next few minutes, cook, and we will see what happens later in our worship gathering.

Will you guys thank Jude and Tripp for me?

I tell you what, Miss Anita will meet you over there, and you guys can clean up a little bit, and then you can come back out in a second. What I want us to think about tonight is, "What does it mean when the Bible says that we are people who don't live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God?"

Living On Every Word That Comes From The Mouth Of God...

If you have a Bible, and I hope you do, let me invite you to open with me to Exodus 16. The main text we're going to look at is in 2 Timothy, but I want to start and give you a brief tour on the way to 2 Timothy. So, start with me in Exodus, second book in the Bible, Exodus 16. God has indeed designed our lives that we might be a people who seek Him in the morning and learn to walk in His ways as a result.

I want you to see this. I want you to connect, even the words that we just sang, with God's design for His people from the very beginning of the Old Testament. I told the story of manna, bread from heaven, appearing on the ground to nourish and sustain God's people in the wilderness. I want to show you why God did this. I want to show you why God led His people into the wilderness, and then ordained that they would be fed this way, with bread from heaven.

Listen to...and you might underline some of these verses. We're going to look at three...we're going to take three stops on the way to 2 Timothy 3 because I want you to see how God has worked among His people, and it pertains to what we're going to talk about tonight. Exodus 16:4 says, *"The LORD said to Moses..."* This is when they were grumbling because they didn't have food. He said, *"Behold, I'm about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I..."* Now, here's the purpose, *"...that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not."*

What God was doing in this picture of the manna was He was testing them. He was teaching them to walk in His law, to depend on provision from Him, and to trust in His Word to them on a daily basis. He was teaching them to walk with Him, to trust in His Word and His provision to them.

Now, flip over to the right a few pages. You'll go past Leviticus, Numbers. You'll come to Deuteronomy 8. Deuteronomy 8. So, God does this every day for forty years. He feeds them and sustains them this way in the wilderness. Then, in Deuteronomy, what you have is the people of God about to now go into the Promised Land, where there will be an abundance of food. So, I want you to listen to how God recounts what He's done, and again, emphasizes why He's done it.

We'll start in Deuteronomy 8:1. Key verse, though, is in verse 3. God said to His people,

"The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not."

So, that recounts kind of what we had seen in Exodus 16:4.

Now, listen to verse 3, *"And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know..."* and this is key phrase, *"...that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."* God did this whole manna thing to teach His people that their dependence on His Word was deeper than their need for food. He was

teaching them to depend, to be sustained...even more than by food...to be sustained by His Word.

Now, that leads us to stop number three. Go with me to the first book in the New Testament, Matthew 4. So, God has been teaching His people in this way in the Old Testament. You get to Matthew 4, and this is the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Actually, before He begins His ministry, and He is in the desert, being tempted by the devil. So, He's in the wilderness now. He's fasted for forty days. He has not eaten for forty days when we come to this passage. Listen to verse 1 of Matthew 4. It says, "*Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness.*"

So, same picture. Exodus 16, people of God in the wilderness. Now Jesus, Son of God in the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil. Verse 2 says, "*After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.*" That must be the most...the largest understatement in all of Scripture. Just simple as that, "He was hungry." Yes, He was really hungry. Verse 3, "*The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But [Jesus] answered, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

Jesus quotes from where? Deuteronomy 8:3. He says to the devil, to the tempter, He says, "My sustenance is deeper than even my physical need for food after forty days. I live on every word that comes from the mouth of the Father." So, what does that mean? What does it mean for us to be a people who don't live on bread alone. Bread, a picture of, obviously, food, the reality that all of us have built into our stomachs, into our bodies, a craving, a desire daily for food. If you have not had dinner tonight, you have a craving. We'll have a craving over the next couple of hours for something to eat. It happens all throughout the day. It feels like at the holiday, it's like happening all the time, and you just fulfill the craving every time you get a chance, and eat, eat, eat. However, we've been created with this in our bodies, and yet Scripture is saying that we have a deeper need within us, than even for bread. That more important than breakfast, more important than lunch, more important than dinner, we need the Word of God from His mouth.

That leads to 2 Timothy 3, which is where we're going to camp out tonight. 2 Timothy 3, starting in verse 14. I want to show you what it means to live on every word that comes from the mouth of God. How does that play out? I want you to see it in Paul's words to Timothy. This is a letter he wrote to Timothy, when Paul was in prison, literally coming to the end of his life. He is about to lose his life for the gospel. He's writing this...some of his last words that he pens, which is key. You think about the magnitude, when it comes to...you've got days left in your life, what do you want to write down? What do you want to make sure is there, now that you're coming to the end?

So, this is what he says to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:14:

[But] as for you, [Timothy], continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it; and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

God's Word is supreme among us.

What does it mean to live off of every word that comes from the mouth of God? You've got this in your notes, and we're going to go through this pretty swiftly, but I just want you to see this text is packed full. What does it mean to live on every word that comes from the mouth of God? It means that God's Word, first of all, is supreme among us. That more important than the basic daily necessity of food, that our most basic needs in this world, our most basic desires in this world, instincts in this world...more important than that is our need for and desire for this Word. In a few different ways; a couple different ways.

First, God's Word is supreme among us in our homes. Did you hear what Paul said to Timothy in verse 14? He said, "*As for you, continue in what you have learned and have...believed, knowing from whom you learned it...*" That's a reference...you go back to the first chapter of this letter, of this book, 2 Timothy 1:5, and Paul had said back there, "I'm reminded, Timothy, of your faith: a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and now I am sure dwells in you as well." The whole picture in Timothy's life that Paul has already pointed us to is the fact that the Word had been passed on to him, first by his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice. Like, this had been passed down to him in his home.

This is...you see this in Deuteronomy. You see God saying, "Put the Word everywhere in your home. Put it on doorposts, thresholds of your homes. Surround your homes. Fill your home with my Word." This is where I want to say to, especially to every parent in this room: Do not starve your children. Don't starve your children. It would be inconceivable for a parent in this room to intentionally physically starve their children of food...physical food. It would be inconceivable.

What I want us to see tonight is that more than physical food, our children need spiritual food of the Word. Yet, we, if we're not careful, can become very content with starving them of that which they need most. The reality is you can feed your children physical food for twenty years in your home...or, if they're there longer than twenty, however many years...you can feed them physical food alone for all of those years, and they will still go to hell. This is the food that lasts. This is the food that will sustain them for all of eternity, that will never pass away. Do not rob your children of immersion in this Word, and in the process absolutely starve them in this world.

Like, yesterday, we were doing gifts, and I gave Caleb a baseball bat. T-ball is around the corner, and so we are jumping into T-ball. So, I gave him a baseball bat and some batting gloves. He wore the batting gloves all day long. We couldn't go outside to swing the bat. He tried to swing it inside, which was not a good idea. So, we put the bat away. Then, he wore the gloves. This afternoon, he was...as soon as we got home from worship gathering this morning, he put his batting gloves on. Like, he's excited. I'm excited. It's going to be fun. However, oh, the last thing I want to do is to teach my son how to swing a bat better than he can wield this Word.

We know that in our culture...let's be honest, in our culture, we are tempted at every turn to teach our children to be good at this sport, or that activity, this talent, this skill. We pour hours of time and energy and money and effort into doing all of these things in the world well. If they have all the stats and all the accomplishments, the reality is in the end, all of it's going to burn up. The one thing that will matter is, can they wield this Word?

If people who believe that will make this Word central in their homes, this is not the primary responsibility of a pastor or a children's minister, or a youth minister, or this teacher, or

that teacher. Mom or dad, it is your primary responsibility to pour this Word into your children in your homes. Don't starve them. Feed them; fill them with this Word.

Let Timothy's legacy be the legacy of your life, your children's lives, as a result of your parenting. Make the Word supreme. More important than you getting your children breakfast tomorrow is you getting your children the Word, and more important than you getting them lunch and dinner on the table, is you filling them with this Word.

God's Word is supreme among us in our homes and in the church. Paul's writing to Timothy here, who's the leader in the church, and he's writing to him about church leadership. So, when you get to the next chapter, 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul says...now, he's coming to the end of his life. Sum it up here Paul. Paul says, "One command I give you." 2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the Word. Teach the Word," because if you don't, listen to 2 Timothy 4:3; read this with me. Tell me if this is not a commentary, not just on our culture, but on the church in our day. 2 Timothy 4:3, *"For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths."*

Ah, the Word must be central in the church in this community of faith. Because if it is not, then we will wander off into all kinds of ideas and opinions and thoughts that sound good to us, but lead to destruction. This is what we are prone to do. We need the Word to be supreme in the church. That anything I say, anything anybody else says in exhorting us to action or to do this or that, it must be based on the Word. If it is not, then we are wasting our time. It's all hollow if it's not coming back to this Word. This is what sustains and strengthens. It's supreme among us in our homes and in the church.

God's Word is sanctifying in us.

Second, it's sanctifying in us. Sanctifying means it makes us holy. It makes us like Christ. I want you to listen to in these couple of short verses here, all the benefits of the Word that are brought about in our lives. First, the Word saves us. God's Word saves us. His Word is "able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Yes.

Now, I want to be careful with that wording, "God's Word saves us." The reality is God saves us by His grace through faith, but it's faith in what? It's faith in His Word. We don't just make up a plan of salvation. No, that plan is revealed in this Word, and we trust in God's Word. Romans 10:17, *"Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God."*

It's the Word of God that shows us how to be saved. And this is huge because, well, I think about even kids in this room, kids in our lives, like we have this really dangerous tendency in our day to take the Word of God, and we want to make it understandable to children, and so we will begin to leave the words of Scripture behind and begin to make up words like, "Accept Jesus into your life," or, "Invite Christ into your heart," or, "Pray this prayer." You don't see these words in Scripture.

So, we need to be very careful not to begin to take that which is so important, "salvation," "eternal destiny," and begin to play with it into our own thoughts and ideas. Yes, we want to help people understand it, but let's stick with the Word, like "repent," "believe." These are good words. The last thing we want to do is try to make the gospel as palatable to people as possible and lead them to put their faith in our words instead of God's Word. It's God's Word alone that leads to salvation.

It's God's Word that says, "There is an infinitely holy God, and you and I have sinned against Him. We have rebelled against Him at the core of who we are. We are dead in sin."

This is what the Bible says. Not just we've done some things wrong here or there in our lives. No, we are dead in our sin, and we are children of wrath, deserving the judgment of a holy God upon us, and God, in His mercy has sent His Son, God in the flesh, who we celebrated His coming yesterday, to go to the cross and to bear the judgment of God due your sin and my sin upon Himself.

He has died on the cross for our sins. He has risen from the grave in victory over sin, so that anyone who repents, who turns from sin and turns from themselves and believes and trusts in Jesus will be saved from their sins for all of eternity. That's good. You don't need to change that. Let's just share that, and let's trust that this is how God will lead people to salvation. If you're here this morning, and you've never trusted in Christ to forgive you of your sins, hear the Word of God there and see that His mercy is available to you.

So, God's Word saves us. Then, again, God's Word educates us. All right, I'm smelling this back here. I'm going to check on the bread. Okay, I think it is about ready. The last thing I want to do...I don't want to get caught up in preaching and this stuff burn behind me. So, we'll pull this out, and we'll get to that in just a minute. All right, God's Word educates us. It teaches us. It's profitable for teaching, and oh, this is so key, that we let the Word of God teach us, because we have...we need to learn how to study the Word of God rightly. We need to learn how to not take the Word and twist it and use it and abuse it in ways that fit us.

Isn't this a constant danger for us? To take the Word of God and, instead of allowing it to teach us, for us to teach it? For us to say, "Well, that really doesn't fit with my preferences, or my traditions, or what is comfortable for me, and so I'm going to twist it to fit me, instead of adjusting my life to fit it." We need to learn how to handle this Word rightly, to be taught by it.

I remember, I was thinking about it yesterday, and this is a story I told a while ago at Brook Hills. It had been a few years ago, but I was thinking about it yesterday because it deals with Christmas. So, I was in eighth grade, and it was coming up on basketball tryouts for the eighth-grade school basketball team. Everybody who was on the...everybody who was cool was on the eighth-grade basketball team. So, I thought, "I've got to be cool, so I need to be on the eighth-grade basketball team." The only problem was, I was a little four foot-nothing runt, shorter than everybody else in the eighth grade.

So, that's not a good thing when you play basketball, because every time you throw the ball up, it comes back in your face. So, I was really concerned, "How am I going to make this team?" So, one day...now, this is a true story. You are not going to believe this story is true, but I promise you, every single detail of this story I'm about to tell you is totally true. So, what happens, I'm sitting one day with my Bible, and the tie-in with Christmas, Luke 1:37, which is when God is speaking to Mary about the virgin birth, and the verse is...Luke 1:37 says, "*Nothing is impossible with God.*" Now, that clearly is talking about the virgin birth, but I began to apply it to basketball. So, here's what went through my head. It was like the words of Scripture had leapt up off the page and into my heart. Immediately, my first thought was, "If that's true, if nothing is impossible with God, then that means I could dunk the basketball, and if I can dunk the basketball, then certainly Coach would put me on the team. I mean, what four foot kid can dunk the basketball?"

So...true story...I left the Bible sitting there in my room, and I went outside and grabbed a basketball. We had a basketball goal in our driveway. So, I went to the back of the driveway, way back, because I was going to get a running start. I got down on my knees, and I said, "God, I believe with your power and your strength, that I can dunk this

basketball. Nothing is impossible with you." I wanted everything to be perfect, and so I planned out how many steps it was going to take for me to get from the back of the driveway up to the goal. So, I was timing my steps. Then, my plan was, when I was about two feet away, I was going to close my eyes...okay, follow with me here...I'm going to close my eyes. I'm going to take the last two steps with my eyes closed, and then I'm going to jump with my eyes closed. That way, I could picture the angels lifting me up to the goal. So, Gabriel and Michael, I mean, these guys were there in Luke, so might as well be there here. So, they're going to lift me up to the goal. The next thing I'm going to feel is the rim. I'm going to throw the ball through the rim, and then I'm going to hang up there because I've never been there before. So, that is my plan.

So, I go back to the back of the driveway. One more time on my knees, I'm praying. Cars driving by; people walking by. They're having normal days; I'm having revival right there in the driveway, "Lord, I just believe I can do this." Totally true story. I start running as hard as I can. I get two feet away, and I close my eyes, and I take the last two steps with my eyes closed, and I jump. I could feel something on my left and on my right, and in the very next instant, I felt that basketball pole right in my forehead, right there.

I want you to imagine walking by my house on that particular day. I want you to imagine seeing a little kid get up off his knees, supposedly in prayer, and go running as hard as he could and jump into a basketball pole. So, all right, so, I had the heart, right? I had the heart. It's not that God's Word is not true. This text is talking about a virgin birth, not an eighth-grade, four foot-nothing kid being able to dunk a basketball. So, we need to know...we need to know how to be taught by this Word, how to learn this Word.

In the process...okay, so God's Word educates us. It convicts us. So, this is what God's Word does. It reproves us. It says, "*The Scripture is profitable for teaching, for reproof...*" which is literally, "conviction." When we begin to veer off of that which is good for us and glorifying to God, we are convicted as His people. We have an emotional response, where we feel bad for what we've done. We realize, "Oh, I've messed up." This is a gloriously wonderful thing.

Now, we don't think about conviction that way. We think, "Ah, who likes to feel horrible for what they've done, or to be caught doing something wrong?" Yes, certainly, it would better if we hadn't done it in the first place, but I want you to see the astounding grace of God in conviction. It is a very good thing that we have a Father in heaven, who, when we begin to step off of the track that is good for us, that He pulls us back. He keeps us from going that direction.

Every single one of us in this room is thankful for any loving discipline that we have received from parents in our lives that has kept us from going...kept me from going off in my four, or five, or six-year-old ways, and to know that we have a Father in heaven who desires our good more than we do, and is absolutely committed in His Word, when we begin to stray, to pulling us back.

However, the problem is, if we're not in His Word, feasting on His Word on a daily basis, then we begin to wander, and we continue to wander. We don't have this Word that is being hidden in our heart, that is pulling us back. The Word convicts us, and the Word corrects us. It doesn't just pull us back. The Word guides us forward, gives us a path. Psalm 119:32, "*I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.*" They guide us, and they lead us. Yes, it convicts us, but then it corrects us. It says, "Here's the path to walk in, and this is a good, good path." We miss it if we're not feeding on it and feasting on it.

So, okay, the Word educates, convicts, and saves...educates, convicts, corrects. The Word instructs us. It trains us in righteousness. Oh, this is beautiful. God's Word is not just given to us for information; it's given us for transformation. This Word has supernatural power by the Spirit of God to conform our hearts and our minds and our lives into the likeness of Christ.

We're going to talk about this some more next week, but just to give you a real quick preview, I know that there are people in this room who are walking through a variety of different struggles in your life that are not specifically addressed in this book. Whether it's divorce recovery, dealing with grief, parenting teenagers, struggling with what to do in this economy, what happens when that which you'd saved up is gone.

Now, the temptation is in light of some of these practical things that we face that are not easy to say, "Well, then why do I need to sit and study about the Israelites and the Moabites? We may not say that, but I mean what does that really have to do with my life?" Here's why. Here's why we read about the Israelites and the Moabites. Reading about the Israelites and Moabites is going to teach us about who God is, and by the Spirit of God, it's going to be used to conform our hearts and our minds and our desires to look more like Christ, to be more in touch with the Holy Spirit of God, who...get this...the Holy Spirit of God, who will walk with you through every bit of divorce recovery and grief, who will lead and guide you in every decision you make in parenting teenagers, and every financial hurdle that you come to.

The best thing for us is to be conformed to the likeness of Christ in any and every situation we face. That's what the Word does; it trains us to walk in righteousness. That's why this book is so valuable. It trains us, instructs us, and, ultimately, it equips us. Verse 17 says, "So that the man of God, woman of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." It's equipment.

Think football. No football player is going to go into a game without the proper equipment. Think your job. You're not going to go to your job and be able to work unless you are equipped, unless you have different gifts and skills, a set of things that enable you to do your job. Well, this is what equips us, this Word. We want to glorify Christ in our marriages? Then, we need to be equipped. We want to glorify Christ in our parenting in our homes? We need to be equipped. We want to glorify Christ in our work, and in our lives? We want to glorify Christ in Birmingham? We want to glorify His name in all nations? Then, we must be equipped. The beauty is, God's Word does all of that. This Word is good. Supreme among us, sanctified. This is why it's more important than breakfast or lunch or dinner.

God's Word is sufficient for us.

The last two: God's Word is sufficient for us. That's really part of the whole point of the manna, and God's daily provision of bread, because He was teaching His people. Just as we sang. Every morning, to wake up and to know my sustenance is based on the provision of God today, and the provision of God is most clearly seen in His Word: "*Man does not live on bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of God.*" Literally, daily bread teaching them.

The problem in Exodus 16 is that the people of God in the wilderness did not trust God. My prayer is for your life, for my life, for our life together as a faith family, my prayer is that we would be a people who trust His Word. Let's trust His Word. Let's believe that, in this book, God has indeed given us everything we need for life and godliness, and that it is good, and that it's our guide.

You know, we, over the last year, Radical Experiment, but longer than that, over the last couple of years, we've walked through some difficult truths and some difficult texts in Scripture. When Jesus says, "You must give up everything you have to follow me." What does that mean in this culture? You give up everything you have? When He says, to some people, not all, but some, "Go sell all your possessions and give to the poor." The reality that He could be saying that to any one of us in this room, and, really, to wrestle with those kind of truths. We've been walking on a journey. We've been wrestling with that kind of stuff.

You know, to be completely honest, I think we as a church are only at the tip of the iceberg for what all of this means for our lives and our church in this culture. I think we've only begun to explore what it means to really follow the Jesus of this Bible. Not adjusting Him to fit us, but adjusting ourselves to align with Him and His Word. I think we're only at the beginning.

Now, I say that, and I'm guessing for some that almost sounds a bit frightening because I know that some of the things we've walked through over the last couple of years have not necessarily always been easy to walk through. You say, "Ah, more?" However, this is where I want to remind us: This Word is good. It can absolutely and wholeheartedly be trusted to lead us.

We are always prone to think that our ways are better, and we're always prone to find our comfort more in the ways of this world than in the ways of this Word. However, I want to show us, this is, at the core, a heart issue. The question before us constantly as a church as we move forward in our lives and our families is, "Are we going to trust this Word? When it says, 'Do this,' are we going to do that? Are we going to trust that God has designed, given us His Word for our good and for His glory?" When we do, we can trust Him to lead us. Yes, in a way that is absolutely contrary to the way this world thinks, and that is uncomfortable and not always easy, but it is better. It is so much better because it's His Word.

God's Word is satisfying to us.

So, let's trust His Word. It is sufficient for us. Let's trust in God's Word, and then God's Word is satisfying to us. God's Word is satisfying to us. So, it's sufficient for us; let's trust in it. It's satisfying to us. This Word is to be desired more than gold, Psalm 19 says. It's, "more precious than fine gold," is the Word of God. Do we believe that?

This last year, we've had...each week we designed reading through the Bible, where we have a Bible-reading plan, which by the way, just as a side note, we're going to finish up this chronological reading through Scripture this next Sunday. This is our last week. We're going to finish up in Revelation next Sunday, and then we'll kind of have like a week off in there, where...obviously, feel free...well, any time, feel free to read anywhere in the Bible that you want. That's great.

However, if you want to follow along as a faith family in Bible reading, we're going to start up a new plan on January 9, where it's going to be different. A lot different because we're not going to be reading chronologically through Scripture the next year. Instead, like in the beginning of the year, we're going to be in the book of Acts. So, we'll have during that week selected passages in Acts. It will be a lot shorter, a little less intense than this last year, but giving a little more time to meditate and to study this past year's Scripture and supplemental passages.

So, anyway, we'll talk about that more later. However, we have a daily Bible-reading plan as a church, so we can walk through the Word together. If that is beneficial, profitable, we

want to encourage feeding on the Word of God, but then, part of that also is a memory verse every week, and I know that people...think about this more than fine gold. Like, people think, "Well, I just can't memorize Scripture." Certainly different people in this room have different abilities when it comes to memorization, but the reality is, like, if were to tell you that I'd give you a \$1,000 for every verse you could memorize in 2011, like I got a feeling most everybody could memorize some Scripture. Like, "Jesus wept," a thousand bucks. I mean, this could work.

I guess the real question is, "Is this Word more important to us than our money? Do we believe it's more valuable than pieces of paper and currency in our culture?" Oh, it absolutely is more valuable. It is sweeter than honey. The Word talks about itself with such great reward. I mean, you think about it, reward is an enticing and powerful thing. My sons will eat just about anything put on their plate when they know a brownie or banana pudding is coming at the end. Like, they will endure whatever this is. Now, that could be a dangerous thing, but to see, yes, there is reward. This is good. Oh, this is so much better.

The Word is not something that is intended for us to be a duty as much as it is a delight to be in this Word. To hunger for it; that's the whole imagery here. To live, not on bread, but on every Word that comes from His mouth. I know that some might be thinking, "I don't really have a hunger for God's Word, a desire for God's Word." Here's the key...if you want a hunger for God's Word, you want a deeper desire for God's Word, here's the key. Ready? If you want a deeper desire for God's Word in your heart, here's how you do it: You read God's Word. That's it. You read it.

Like, I think about...I've told this before...when Heather and I started dating. I grew up in a house where we never ate seafood. My dad didn't like seafood, so we wanted nothing to do with seafood. Well, the first time I go over to her house, her family fixes seafood. I don't want to, like, gag at the table. So, I choked down the seafood. After every bite, I'm going overboard, "Oh, this is so wonderful." I'm convincing myself this wonderful. So, I'm just telling them how great the seafood is. Well, the problem is, they bought it, and so every time after that, they thought, "Well, Dave's coming over. Well, let's have seafood; he loves seafood clearly." So, I mean, it was consistent. I'd go on vacation with her family, and we'd be down on the beach, "Well, Dave, what are your favorite seafood restaurants." I'm like, "Well, all of them are great. Like, I just love them all." So, every night, it was like this feast of seafood.

Well, the deal is, now I like seafood, because I had to eat seafood. Now, I'm not saying that this Word is, "Okay, just stick with it although it doesn't taste good." The reality is we shouldn't be surprised if we don't have a hunger for God's Word when we're filling our minds all day long with TV and football games and shows and Internet and movies and all this stuff. When our stomachs are full with the world, it's no surprise that we have no desire for the Word. Yet, I guarantee you, you begin to feast on this Word, and you will see that it's better. It's better than football, and it's better than TV and movies, and it's better than all the stuff we fill our minds with, and the Internet. This is better.

What happens is, you begin to see this is better, and you begin to taste of these things of the world, and you say, "That's nowhere near as good." That's my prayer for us continually: My life, for your life, for this church, that we would long for, desire this Word more and more and more and more. There are treasures, delights to be found here for all of eternity in His Word.

So, let's trust in God's Word because it's sufficient for us, and let's feast on it because it's satisfying to us. Let's feast on it daily, in our homes, in our lives, and then weekly, let's

come together and feast on it. This is where we come back to the whole point here. That is why we have this imagery of bread all throughout Scripture, pointing us to the reality that yes, we have in us something innate when it comes to food, that God has created us with, that says, "I desire food."

There was a guy sitting on the front row this morning that was like, "I was not a big fan of smelling this the whole time we were sitting in there." However, there's something in us that says, "Yes, I want...I want food." What I want to point you to tonight is the reality that there is a deeper craving in your soul that is so much more important than getting breakfast, lunch, or dinner, and it is a craving for this Word. God has designed us, as His people, not to live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from His mouth.

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