

CREW Bible Study

Youth XP3 Message Series – EXPLAINED – Week 3

- **BOTTOM LINE:** When it comes to the Bible, we read it because God is in it.
- **GOAL:** To help students understand how and why the Bible is useful and applicable to their lives.
- **SCRIPTURE:**
 - *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. – 2 Timothy 3:16*
 - *Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. – Genesis 2:7*

MESSAGE

When was the last time you felt completely and utterly exhausted? Like, you were so tired, you felt that the life was taken out of you? Was it something physical, maybe after a work-out? You pushed yourself until you had no more left to give? Was it mental exhaustion, after studying for hours and hours for an exam, or *taking* that exam? Was it emotional exhaustion, after dealing with a ton of friend drama? Maybe it's coronavirus exhaustion, or Year 2020 exhaustion, after all that has happened this year!

We all have times when it hits us – when we feel like the life has been taken out of us and we just can't go any further. But today I have good news for you, and it's based on this phrase, "When God breathes, life follows, and life is good."

For the past few weeks, we've been talking about the Bible in this series called "Explained." The truth is, when it comes to the Bible, we could all use some help explaining it. We could all use help understanding how and why the Bible is useful and how it applies to our lives today. And I'm guessing that phrase I just mentioned, "When God breathes, life follows," could use a little more explaining. Am I right?

This phrase comes out of a letter that the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy. Paul was like a mentor or coach to Timothy who was much younger than Paul. Timothy was chosen to help gather and develop and lead followers of Jesus in the early church after Jesus died. Paul would send letters to Timothy giving him instructions on what to do when it came to leading his church.

So, Paul writes to Timothy saying this in 2 Timothy, chapter 3, verse 16:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.

Paul didn't know that what *he* was writing in his letters would later be considered Scripture, so when he himself says "Scripture," he's referring to Jewish Scripture from the Old Testament.

The first five books of the Bible are referred to as Jewish Scripture, also called the Hebrew Bible or the Torah. This includes the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These books include writings of God's laws to the people, the history of the people of Israel as they became a nation, messages from God to the prophets like Moses, and poems and songs from Hebrew history. Paul tells Timothy that all of these words and this information is *God-breathed*, that all Jewish Scripture is useful and needed. He wanted to make sure that Timothy understood that this Scripture was part of who they were and where they came from as followers of Jesus. And perhaps just as important, or even more important, it would also help them in where they were going. And it's the same for us today.

That all sounds nice, but it still doesn't quite explain the term "*God-breathed*." But stay with me.

At the very start of the Bible in the book of Genesis, we read about how God breathed life into humans. In Genesis chapter 2, verse 7 we hear this:

Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

So here is where it begins – when God breathes, life follows. Literally breathing life into humans, and figuratively breathing life into us with His words on the pages of Scripture. This is what Paul means when he tells Timothy, "All Scripture *is God-breathed*."

But what's interesting is that so often we assume something different. We assume God breathed life into us – that's how we're here - but we tend to think of God's words as life-less or boring. They're old and outdated, right?

His words were never meant to be that. They were meant to bring life to you, to instruct you, to inspire you and to challenge you, no matter what age or era.

Paul knew this. He knew that if the message of Christianity to love and serve both God and others was ever going to continue on into the future, to last longer than he did, he had to make sure people knew where to go to find God. Paul knew that the best place to find God was in His *God-breathed* words in the Bible.

So, it comes down to this - we need to decide to read the Bible because it's where we find and connect with God. God is in the words. And because God's spirit is in the words and God's spirit is in YOU, it's important to get God's *words* IN you. It will breathe more life into you when you need it most.

- To bring a word of encouragement when you feel down.
- To bring you words of wisdom when you aren't sure what to think or how to handle something.

- To bring words of understanding when you have a hard time knowing how to move next.
- To bring words of compassion, empathy and grace when you don't know how to deal with someone or maybe even how to deal with yourself.

All of these words can give you life in those times when you are exhausted, when you are spent, when you feel like the life has been taken out of you. God's words can give you a much-needed push forward when you don't have the energy to push yourself. And that can make life good!

That's good news! But how can you do this? One way for God's words to be "in you", to be useful and helpful and to give you that push forward is to memorize them. And this week, I encourage you to try it! Here's how:

1. Pick a passage that stands out to you. Here's one of my favorites, Proverbs 3:5-6: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.*
2. Say it, sing it, draw it, write it on several sticky notes and post them around your house. Do whatever you need to do until you know the words by heart.
3. Remember this: Maybe this verse will be obviously useful to you right away. Maybe it won't. But either way, over time, pay attention to how the verse you memorized helps you make decisions, helps you remember what's important, and helps you feel connected to God, knowing that He breathed life into you in the beginning and wants to breathe life into you now.
4. And there's a bonus benefit - not only do God's words have the power to breathe life into you, but they have the power to breathe life into others *through* you. When you have God's word in you, it's more likely to come *out* of you. It will show in the ways you think, in what you say, and in how you act. You can breathe life into your friends, your family, your co-workers, your team. You can pass it on and make life good for them too.

Here's why this is so important - you are in a unique stage of life where you are old enough, mature enough and independent enough to establish a faith of your own. Not a faith of your parents or your grandparents, but a real faith that is yours. And real, mature faith doesn't happen without spending time getting to know the God who is within the stories and words found in the Bible. A real, personal, grown-up faith happens when you read the Scripture, you seek explanations for what doesn't make sense to you, and you discover how to apply those words yourself.

The truth is, there are probably a bunch of moments every day when you feel like you need some life breathed into you. I know I do! Life can be confusing and challenging, people can be mean, and our circumstances can be difficult. It's exhausting.

When it all seems too much, remember this: When God breathes, life follows, and life is good. Seek out God's words and let them bring you life.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Who are the content creators (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, etc.) you follow? Why do you follow them?
2. What do you know about the content creators you follow? Do you care to know more about them? Why or why not? As the content Creator of the Bible, does this make you want to know God more?
3. What are the reasons we read (or think we should read) the Bible? What are the reasons we're turned off of reading the Bible?
4. Talk about a time when you felt so exhausted, it was like the life was taken out of you. What happened? Were you physically, mentally or emotionally exhausted? How did you get refreshed?
5. Paul tells us that Scripture is "God-breathed," and Genesis tells us that God breathed into Adam and gave him life. Where God breathes, life follows. Is there an area of your life where you wish God would breathe more life?
6. Read 2 Timothy 3:16. What are some of the ways the Bible is helpful in your life?
5. In order for God's words to be helpful and breathe life into you, you've got to keep them close to you. One way to do this is to memorize Scripture. This week, find a passage to memorize. Say it, write it, sing it, draw it, write it on several sticky notes and post them around your house. Do whatever you need to do until you know it by heart. Here's a few suggested verses to try:
 - a. Proverbs 3:5-6
 - b. Isaiah 41:10
 - c. John 15:7
 - d. Romans 8:28
 - e. 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - f. Galatians 5:22-23
 - g. Philippians 4:6