

Meditation
Psalm 1

Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
²but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

In the name of Jesus:

This past Sunday I was listening to a sermon delivered by Pastor Reed Lessing of Fort Wayne, Indiana. He used an illustration that I had never thought of before, but it is quite appropriate. Most of us have flown on planes, and before the plane takes off the flight crew reads a series of announcements for the passenger's safety. The crew instructs us on where the emergency exits are, how to access the life preservers in the event of a water landing, how to buckle the seat belt, and then usually concludes the announcements by pulling out and showing how to use the oxygen masks. The announcement goes something like this: "In the rare event of a loss of cabin pressure face masks will drop down from the over head bins, Stick the mask over your nose area like the flight attendant is doing now and please put the mask over your mouth before you put one on of your children and then help your child. Please remember it is normal for the bag not to inflate completely."

The normal natural response in the event of a loss of cabin pressure is to put the mask on your loved one, especially your child sitting next to you, so that they have what they need. While that is nice, and you may think totally appropriate, it is necessary for you to put your mask on first. Why? So that you then would be able to help those around you, including your child or loved one sitting next to you. You need to attend to your needs first before you can help others.

As we live through these historic times of a pandemic, remember to put your oxygen mask on first! As Christians we want to do what Jesus would have us to do, which means that in the face of trials and need, we want to help! And this is good and pleasing to God. But before we help, and there will be and there are a great many people who need our help, we need to attend to our own needs. We need to receive from God the life giving spiritual oxygen of His Word, the forgiveness of our sins and the strength that He provides in His Son Jesus Christ. We need to receive from Jesus His blessing and strength before we help others so that we can be a blessing to others.

Now is a wonderful opportunity to receive God's strength and blessing in His Word. My confirmation verse is Luke 11: 28, "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it," that is, treasure it.

When you hear God's Word, God is at work powerfully in your life. As you read and meditate upon the Word of God, God speaks, giving His blessing to you. When you read and hear how much God loves you in Jesus, you are receiving the life giving super saturated spiritual oxygen that you need to meet the trials, troubles, and tribulations of the days ahead. Listen to how the Psalmist puts it: "Blessed is the one who delights in the law of the Lord, on His law he meditates day and night, he is like a tree planted by streams of water, whose leaves do not wither." God always works through His Word, accomplishing what He wants in your life and mine. His Word never is an empty Word; rather, God is always working through His Word.

That is why I want to encourage each of you to meditate on God's Word today and into the future. If you haven't meditated on God's Word, now is a wonderful time to begin to implement this spiritual discipline in your life. Follow the example of Martin Luther, who would every day take his Catechism and Book of Psalms and find a place where he could be alone, undisturbed. Then he would read aloud the Scriptures, pausing to reflect, think about and concentrate on what God was saying to him in the Word. If you want to learn more about how Luther prayed, do a look for the little book he wrote called "A Simple

Way to Pray". It is on the Internet. What is most important for you and me during these times is to learn how to be still and know that God is God. So turn off the news, get off of Face book and Twitter, and open the Bible. Spend some quite time with God. Read, mark, learn, and meditate, or as we used to say, inwardly digest God's Word during this time when we are to stay at home. Let God speak to you. For He speaks to give you strength, He is our ever-present Help in times of trouble.

Amen

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always. Amen