

PRAISE INTERNATIONAL

LIVING ALIVE – JESUS IN THE DESERT

LUKE 4:1-14

I had the privilege of watching my son perform as one of the leads in his school play. Much of the play was centered around family road trips in a car - and oh how they portrayed so many of classic road trip situations.....what made this particularly funny for me to watch was how well he was simply mimicking things I have done so many times on long trips. 'I am going to stop this van'.....

It was actually a little bit scary to see him mirror my words and posture.....but isn't that the way things operate.....children learn from their parents the good the bad and the ugly. Its become something that we expect and anticipate - you can see children who sound like, walk like and carry themselves just like their parents. The humorous yet painful thing for me to watch was my imperfections so perfectly displayed.

We have somewhat come to expect that haven't we....my father lived in a pattern set by his father...

- My point is that our pattern and reference of what it means to live in our humanity - no matter who you are is a faulty pattern because we have all been touched by the word in our body marked by failure weakness and sin.
- In fact we often refer to this pattern as 'only being human'.

Yet in the life of Jesus we see something very different – He lived what it meant to be Human – Fully Alive! With the Word of His Father in His Body!

He has a physical father and mother.....who talked and lived with certain quirks that were no doubt specific to their story.

- **Yet as Jesus begins His ministry the scripture tells us that He was filled, led and empowered by the Spirit – that Jesus defines as never saying or doing anything apart from what He saw and heard His Heavenly Father say and do**
- **A fully human life = Fully Alive to the Living Word of His Father!**

Now we have very little written about Jesus life from like age 2-30 - in those 28 or so years we have one snapshot in Luke 2 of Jesus in the Temple talking about His Father....but other than this reference we have 2 verses Luke 2:52

And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.

Then we have Hebrews 5:8 that was not just restricted to His childhood -

....although He was a Son He learned obedience by what He suffered.....

What Jesus did was to display what it is actually like to live as Human Being. That a real Human being does not have to mean a broken and frail excuse for failure and weakness but in reality is very state in which we were created to exist - in Daily Moment by Moment Spirit empowered communion with God and to represent that God to others.

A couple things happen between Luke 2 and 4. He is baptized - Matthews account of Jesus baptism in Matthew 3 tells us that John hesitated....and Jesus response was

- *'permit it at this time, for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness'*

The next thing that happens is that the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus.....

***And the secret is simply this Christ in you!
Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come.
Col 1:27b JB Phillips***

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Jesus passion is about His heavenly Fathers agenda - and the Father is so pleased He breaks and says that's *'My beloved Son in who I am well pleased'*

- The beginning of Luke 4 tells us that Jesus now is walking in what is promised for every believer verse 1 - ***full and led by the Holy Spirit.....***

Verse 14 however gives us this distinguishing word....Jesus returned to Galilee in the Power of the Spirit.....

*** The very way in which God intends that we as humans walk Fully Alive!**

Luke 4 - Jesus being full and led by the Spirit and verse 14 returning in the Power of the Spirit.

- Jesus is led by the Spirit to deal with the false gods, voices and words that wanted to led His flesh. **Led by the Spirit to the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.**
- 40 days He became hungry.....now can I tell you something? This was not as some may imagine a supernatural fast. Do you know how long a human body can do without food? 40 days!
- After 40 days without food Jesus is confronted with His appetite -
- Now to be clear - His appetite was real and the hunger was legitimate.
- The question that was being resolved was this - will you be led by your appetite or by the Spirit?

What does it look like to move in the Power of the Spirit?

The first thing Jesus shows us in Luke 4 is that it means NOT being led by our appetites!

- Man will not live by bread alone - my appetite will not be what nourishes and comforts my soul!
- We live in a culture that is addicted to feeding every appetite - Jesus resisted this lie!

If you look up the word **discomfort** on the Internet most of the images that pop up are people holding their head or curled over.....**the point being discomfort is most often perceived as something internal.**

If you look up the word **comfort** the opposite occurs we see images of things and places....we even name blankets comforters.....**meaning that we mostly perceive comfort as something that comes externally.**

- Why are we a culture that is led by our appetites?
- We have believed the lie that our deepest needs can be met by things outside of us.....
- What is fascinating about this is that today we have more mental health issues than in the history of our nation.....

Yet Here is Jesus Fully Alive – IN THE DESERT – because of the Word in His body!

Jesus said No to appetite

I will live by every word that proceeds by the mouth of God....I am going to allow God to fill my appetite....

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Allow me to unpack this a little -

My words are the result of my thoughts and perceptions - which is why they matter! The words formed and declared are the the outcome of something deeper.

Now I want you to think about this - the words that came from Jesus mouth.....according to Jesus Himself were not the result of His thoughts and perceptions....but the result of the Fathers perceptions and thoughts.

- **Jesus words then are the perceptions and thoughts of the Father.**
- Now if you just hang on that for minute it has some depth.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us to reveal the thoughts and perceptions of the Father toward humanity! The words of His mouth were the result of the Word dwelling in Him!

Now beloved stay with me here.....how often have you perhaps like me read Psalm 19 as a call to better 'mastery' of the word in my life - the words of my mouth and meditations of my heart be acceptable? Yet beloved my best will never be acceptable!

- Its Christ in me the hope of Glory - it is only through Him that the righteous requirements of the law are fully met in us!

Beloved living alive in the midst of the desert is not my best memory of scripture.....

Its allow my mouth to agree with the perceptions and thoughts of the Living Word in me!

In the Desert – Jesus said No to Appetite and Yes to the Word – who is a Person!

Verse 5-8

The devil shows Jesus the Kingdoms of the world in a moment...the power, the success, the accomplishment, achievement - I will give all this domain and its glory...

- **Glory** - what evokes a good opinion and something that has inherent and intrinsic worth....
- Jesus - no one knows who you are! Know one even notices.....**the devil introduces Jesus to the next toxic tonic for the soul - Ambition!**

Ambition - you will matter and everyone will know it!

- Now this was a Worship matter and the devil knows it - Jesus what drives your heart?
- What and who will you will worship?
- **Worship is agreement** - with what God says about Himself beloved.
- The first thing God said to Moses....I am going to let my goodness pass by you - the temptation in the Garden was an attack on the Goodness of God.
- Again we live in a culture in which Ambition is worshiped and applauded.
- **Take notice of the person who has been able to accomplish much - they matter!**

Even in the Church - now we know the bible talks about selfish ambition - but what about those who have 'done' so much?

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- I have certain acquaintances who are a challenge to exchange conversation with - because as we talk about what the Lord is doing.....the one thing they are most infatuated with is what they have done. How many people they have seen 'go down' under the spirit - the words that God delivered....beloved I want to say this tenderly but clearly - **Ambition - this obsession with looking at our own accomplishment and measuring ourselves is a tool of the adversary.**
- **The Glory belongs to God! Because its all about Him! Not us!**

Jesus said No to ambition and if you look at His life and ministry

- Truth be told there a ton of folks throughout Church history and some alive today who have had ministry impact that has been much larger.....
- Don't misunderstand me I am not talking about the Redemption and the Work of the Cross - I am simply speaking terms of metrics - the numbers of people whom Jesus reached.....

Jesus said No to Appetite - Ambition and finally to Approval!

Luke 4:9-12

The devil takes Jesus onto the pinnacle of the temple.....through yourself down.....and the scripture he quotes is littered with the word you.....*Prove yourself Jesus...prove you have the approval of your Dad - prove You are who You say you are.....*

Talk about a strong heart issue!

- Again one that I think so many of us wrestle with - I mean when was the last time you observed a person speaking like an authority about something - not because they actually are but because they desperately want the approval of those listening.
- How about this one - the sleepless night filled with thoughts about the person who said something disapproving of you. Failing to deal with poor service appropriately. I could go on and on - likely because this one has been a life long wrestle for me!
- Pilgrims progress – the darkest and hardest issue to deal with?

So here is the point I want us to see in Luke 4

Jesus movement from being full and led of the Spirit to returning in the Power of the Spirit - Was He chose the Word of the Lord – I will choose the Fathers Perceptions and thoughts over

- **Appetite**
- **Ambition**
- **Approval**

So that we are really clear – I am not talking about Scripture as our life – I am talking about the Word of the Father! **Yes Scripture contains the words of the Father....but you can get knowledge of the scripture and miss the Father!**

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Now here is the deal - most all of us wrestle with one or two of these issues more than the other...

- I want to submit this morning that to Move in the Power of the Spirit in your life is to be filled - yes and to be led yes - but it also means to intentionally say No to the things that can distract my heart.....

To Choose the Word of the Lord – a Person in me!

Let the words of my mouth and meditations of my heart be the Word!

- What is the Spirit saying to me?
- **Voices?** Denise

Living Fully Alive in the Desert.....

Recognize we live in a culture sapping with temptation -

**Appetite
Ambition
Approval**

Choose what Jesus chose - Words of Father – the Thoughts and Perceptions of the Father

- Revealed word of God - where is the scripture in my life on a daily basis?
- Psalm 19, 119

Choose what Jesus Chose - Worship of His Father

This is not a chord structures we sing but the song of the heart!

- 2 Cor 10:1-5
- Powerful weapons -
- Can be external but is primarily internal - **taking captive every thought - raised up against the knowledge of God...**
- **The knowledge of God is a big big issue!**

Choose what Jesus Chose - to be consumed by the Knowledge of His Father -

Col 3

- Consumed with the knowledge who His Father was and what He has done for us in Christ!
- Choose what Jesus Chose - Words of His Father - Worship of His Father and the Ways of His Father...

John 5:19 - I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 12:49 - For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.

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Closing Prayer

**God of the covenant,
in the glory of the cross
your Son embraced the power of death
and broke its hold over your people.
In this time of repentance,
draw all people to yourself,
that we who confess Jesus as Lord
may put aside the deeds of death
and accept the life of your kingdom. Amen.**

Communion

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