



JANUARY 2020



"Seize the Moment" Part 1

David Mathis (@davidcmathis) is executive editor for desiringGod.org and pastor at Cities Church in Minneapolis/St. Paul. He is a husband, father of four, and author of [Habits of Grace: Enjoying Jesus through the Spiritual Disciplines](http://Habits of Grace).

Is there any single habit more important than getting your soul regularly within earshot of God? Right there with the basic natural habits we cannot avoid — breathing, eating, sleeping — one supernatural habit stands at the fountainhead of all others for our spiritual life and health and growth in a new year: *hearing God's voice in his word*.

The first and most fundamental means of God's grace for the Christian life is his word to us in the gospel and in the Scriptures. Having his ear in *prayer*, because of Christ, comes in response to God's self-revelation in his word, incarnate and written. And belonging to his body in the *fellowship* in the local church is a reality created and sustained by God's word.

Vital as prayer and fellowship are, all spiritual life and health and growth begins, just as creation, with the word of God (Genesis 1:3).

First and Greatest Habit

Is there anything more fitting, then, for starting every day in the New Year than the word of God? The Bible never commands the modern "quiet time." Nor does it specify that we must read our Bibles first thing in the morning. In fact, the concept of Christians having their own copy of the Scriptures for private reading is a fairly recent phenomenon in the history of the church. So, here at the outset of the year, we're not talking mainly about an obligation

but an opportunity. "Is there any single habit more important than getting your soul regularly within earshot of God?"

For Christians, getting our souls within consistent earshot of God's voice in his word is as basic as sleeping and eating and even breathing. Our fully human Savior himself said, quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). If Jesus needed his Father's revealed words for daily human living, how much more his fallen brothers?

Grow in Grace — or Fall Away

Twice in the Apostle Peter's letters, he encourages his readers to *grow*. The second is his final word to them, at the end of his second letter, very last verse. You . . . beloved . . . take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:17–18) Note first the parting of the ways. Peter's "beloved" fellow believers are either being *carried away* and *losing their stability* (verse 17), or they are *growing* in the grace and knowledge of Christ (verse 18). Standing still is not an option. There is no neutral in the Christian life, back then or in the coming year. We are either regressing in the faith or progressing. Losing stability or gaining maturity. Shrinking or growing. The all-important question, then, here at the start of a new year is *how*? We want to grow, don't we? We don't want to regress or fall back or be carried away or lose our position of security and stability. Rather, we want to grow in the grace of Christ, and increase in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10). And grow in knowing him (John 17:3; Philippians 3:10). *How*, pray tell, Peter, will we grow this year?

Taste His Goodness

Only one other place in Peter's two letters uses this same verb *grow*: Put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may *grow up* into salvation — if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

(1 Peter 2:1–3) "Salvation," in this instance, is not something Peter's readers have already attained (unlike Ephesians 2:5, 8), but something they are, if healthy and true, *growing into*. This is like Paul's statement in Philippians 2:12 not to *work for* but to *work out* our salvation with fear and trembling. Which means, this "pure spiritual milk" Peter mentions has a real part to play in our final salvation. What, then, is this "pure spiritual milk" that we not only drink but *long for*? Where is it that we will *taste that the Lord is good*? The answer, as the immediately preceding verses make plain, is "the living and abiding word of God" (1 Peter 1:23), which is "the good news that was preached to you" (1 Peter 1:25). "Take steps to remove or keep yourself from whatever is keeping you from the Bible." In other words, the key to spiritual life and health and growth — the pure spiritual milk — is God's self-revelation to us in his words through his inspired prophets, culminating in the gospel word about his Son, attested to by the inspired apostles. The pure spiritual milk by which Christians grow up into salvation is the living and abiding words of God in the Bible, with the gospel of Jesus Christ at the heart and center.

Seize (the First Moments of) the Day-

What we do each morning in the first fifteen to thirty minutes of our day is doubly revealing: it reveals both where our treasures really lie, as well as the trajectory of desires and decisions that will direct the day and, over time, our life. Therefore, while the Bible does not command morning devotions, all Christians would do well to consider starting each day in the Book. What baby steps might you take, along with these suggestions below, toward a new-year's resolve to be in the Bible more next year?

"Seize the Moment" Part 2 will be in February's newsletter

Fox River Baptist Vision Statement

We desire that everyone who enters Fox River Baptist Church grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and grow in authentic, loving, familial relationships to make the name of Christ known in our community and world, all for the glory of God and joy of all.

Birthdays:

23-Bill Olson
26-Walter Delaney



Happy Anniversary

1—Jay & Linda Hoffman

Brad and Deb Mashburn will be joining us on Sunday, January 5 and will be speaking during the Sunday School time, 10:45 am.

St Joseph's Food Pantry

Each month we will collect non-perishable food items. Place your food items on the table provided in the foyer.



Evening Service

January 19, 5 pm

January 12, 5 pm

January 26 5 pm



Fox River Baptist Church
2600 E. Henry Street
Appleton, WI 54915
920-734-6162

Website: foxriverbaptist.com
Email: office@foxriverbaptist.com

Office Hours:
Tuesday & Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon

Nursery Schedule



Usher Schedule



January 5

Bob Abitz & Keith Brown

January 12

Jeff Middlestead & Jerry Kroehler

January 19

Ron Van Asten & Howard Schimke

January 26

Romy Garzon & Jay Hoffman

Financial Update

December 1-29, 2019

Budget needed weekly: \$ 2606.00

Received: \$ 1950.00

Contact Rob Mlodzik with questions.



This women's group will meet every Wednesday morning at 9:30 am. EVERY woman of the church is welcome to join us. We will include prayers for our country, our church family, pastor and elders, other needs of the church organization, health needs of our church family--you get the idea ☺.

Join us Wednesday, January 8 at 9:30 am.

No Prayer Time January 1.

If you have events and need bulletin inserts made please send me the information by Tuesday of each week, bulletins are printed Thursday morning

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY WORKSHOP

SATURDAY, January 25

10:00 am-12:00 Noon

(More details to follow)



December 2019-February 2020

Our Daily Bread
Devotional booklets are available on the ledge near the baptistry.

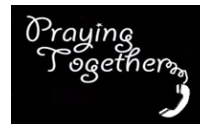


Praises & Prayers

Here at FRBC, we have a prayer chain meant for the sharing of prayer request needs and for sharing praise for the awesome & mighty work God does in our lives. Please feel free to share any praise or request at our new prayer request email address:

prayer@foxriverbaptist.com

Care to be part of the prayer chain? Email or call Shari Middlestead: shari@middlestead.com (920)209-1989 or Renee Brown: eener654@gmail.com (920)428-5306



Celebrating the Sixty Six

FRBC will be reading through the Bible in 2020. There are 3 printed Read through the Bible plans available in the Worship area. Below are other websites available to use.

<https://fivedaybiblereading.com/>
www.esv.org
www.biblegateway.com