**BETTER TOGETHER** in 2022

May 8, 2022

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**Reforesting Faith**

**Breathe**

Genesis 2:7



The **Tree of Life** is accessible only through faith in **Jesus**.

Everything God **created** has the ability to **reproduce** itself.

**How long can you hold your breath?**

The Guinness Book World Record for someone holding their breath voluntarily (male) is **24 min 37.36** achieved on March 27, 2021.

**What makes up the air we breathe?**

* **Nitrogen** = **78%**
* **Oxygen** = **21%.**
* **Argon** = **.93%**
* There are also **trace amounts** of **carbon dioxide**, **neon**, **helium** **methane**, **krypton**, **hydrogen**, **nitrous oxide**, **xenon**, **ozone**, **iodine**, **carbon monoxide**, and **ammonia** in the atmosphere.

Breathing is a miracle we do not stop to think about very much. It is involuntary; **we just do it.**

**We all need to breathe.** It is the foundational activity which determines life.

**Take a Deep Breath!**

Breathe in, breathe out. We do it 12-14 times a minute without thinking. At rest, our lungs take in **six liters of air per minute**. When we’re working hard, **we can take in more than 100.**

**What a difference a leaf makes**! We have 3.1 trillion trees on earth -that is **422 trees per person.**

If you look closely at any any leaf (or, for that matter, the surface of any green plant, even a blade of grass) with a magnifying glass. You will find little breathing tubes called **stomata**. **That’s “mouth” in Greek**, because, like mouths, they are openings that allow outside air in.

**They are like lungs,** often with squeezable openings. That is where the carbon dioxide gets in and the oxygen slips out. Photographer Robert Dash used a scanning electron microscope to magnify the surface of an actual oak leaf 150 times, and all those little cheerio-like openings can be seen.



God made trees unique in that they inhale in CO2 and exhale O2. According to the Arbor Day Foundation, in one year, a mature tree will **absorb more than 48 pounds of carbon dioxide** from the atmosphere and release oxygen in exchange.

If trees don’t **breathe**, we do not breathe.

*then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and* ***breathed into his nostrils the breath of life****, and the man became a living creature.* Genesis 2:7

The Hebrew **ruach** and Greek **pneuma** mean breath, wind, and/or spirit.

Breath is **life**.

*Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold,* ***I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live****.* Ezekiel 37:5

The Spirit is breath to the **soul**.

*Spiritual breathing, like physical breathing is a process of exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure, an exercise in faith that enables you to experience God’s love and forgiveness and walk in the Spirit as a way of life.* Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ

So to live … we must **breathe**.

The psalmist wrote …

*Let* ***everything that has breath*** *praise the Lord!* ***Praise the Lord****!* Psalm 150:6

Prayer is like breathing – **spiritual** **breathing**.

*To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.* Martin Luther

*Prayer is to faith what breath is to life. How a man can live and not breathe is past my comprehension, and how a man can believe and not pray is past my comprehension too.* J.C. Ryle

*Pray without ceasing.* 1 Thessalonians 5:17

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even* ***the Spirit of truth****, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for* ***he dwells with you and will be in you****.* John 14:16–17

**Inhale . . . exhale . . . spiritually breathe.**

**A hymn by A.B. Simpson** aptly describes the experience of breathing in God by prayer.

**O Lord, breathe Thy Spirit on me**

*O Lord, breathe Thy Spirit on me, Teach me how to* ***breathe Thee in****;*

*Help me pour into Thy bosom, All my life of self and sin.*

*I am* ***breathing out*** *my own life, That I may be filled with Thine;*

*Letting go my strength and weakness,* ***Breathing in*** *Thy life divine.*

***Breathing out*** *my sinful nature, Thou hast borne it all for me;*

***Breathing in*** *Thy cleansing fulness, Finding all my life in Thee.*

*I am* ***breathing out*** *my sorrow, On Thy kind and gentle breast;*

***Breathing in*** *Thy joy and comfort,* ***Breathing in*** *Thy peace and rest.*

*I am* ***breathing out*** *my sickness, Thou hast borne its burden too;*

*I am* ***breathing in*** *Thy healing, Ever promised, ever new.*

*I am* ***breathing out*** *my longings In Thy listening, loving ear;*

*I am* ***breathing in*** *Thy answers, Stilling every doubt and fear.*

*I am* ***breathing every moment****, Drawing all my life from Thee;*

***Breath by breath*** *I live upon Thee, Lord, Thy* ***Spirit breathe in me****.*

**Chorus**

*I am* ***breathing out*** *my sorrow,* ***Breathing out*** *my sin; I am* ***breathing****, breathing, breathing,* ***All Thy fulness in****.* A.B. Simpson

**Breath In**

*The Spirit of God has made me, and* ***the breath of the Almighty gives me life****.* Job 33:4

*I never pray more than five minutes at a time, but I never go five minutes without praying.* Charles Spurgeon

**Breathe Out**

A busy mom confesses that spiritual breathing is the way she stays close to God.

*Confessing my sin is the key to a peaceful life. If I don’t readily confess, it pulls me down and eats me up.* ***As a mom****, I don’t always have time for an extended quiet time or Bible reading.* ***Spiritual breathing helps me to stick close to God****, to get right with him moment by moment and remain conscious of his presence.*

***Spiritual breathing*** *is an integral part of maintaining personal purity.... The practice of breathing spiritually aids in developing a God-consciousness, which in turn serves to keep the revived heart spiritually focused and less susceptible to continual iniquity.* Life Action Ministries

**But spiritual breathing is something that requires conscious action.**

**Breath Prayer**

The Breath Prayer appears perhaps as early as the 3rd century. Known as the “Jesus Prayer” or “Prayer of the Heart,” it draws from Mark 10:47 where a blind man, Bartimaeus, calls Jesus to heal him.

*And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “****Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me****!”* Mark 10:47

**A common form is**:

“***Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.”***

By placing a few words on the inhale and a few on the exhale, it unites the prayer with the body.

**I have asked Gail Edmonson**, Spiritual Director and past Director of Spiritual Formation here at The Fellowship, to come and lead us in this ancient practice of ***The Breath Prayer.***

**So what do you need to do to Spiritually Breathe?**

Be **intentional.**

Make it a **habit**.

Muse on the **Word**.

To muse on the word of God is to enjoy His word as His breath and to be infused with God, to breathe God in, and to receive spiritual nourishment.

*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 complete, equipped for every good work.* 2 Timothy 3:16–17

Take **breathing** breaks.