



Just Breathe!

Ecclesiastes 9:1-10

Listen! How breathing works.

We don't breathe solely to sustain life.

We may feel that we have to set aside life to enjoy God or set aside God to enjoy life.

I. **BREATH IS AN OPPORTUNITY** (vs. 3-6)

- Everyone dies
- Death is final
- You still have opportunities to live life to its fullest and make changes while living.

II. **JUST BREATHE** (vs. 7-9)

Ecclesiastes 9:7 - Go *then*, eat your bread in happiness and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works.

- God approves of our enjoyment of life.
- God's original design for mankind is one of balance and yet we fall into imbalance.
- It takes purposeful reflection and discipline to bring balance into our lives.
- Margin is the space between our loads and our limits.

III. **BREATHE DEEPLY** (vs. 10)

- You can enjoy "Whatever your hand finds to do..."
- It takes purposeful reflection and discipline to enjoy all of life.
- One way to "breathe deeply" is to enjoy expressing the image of God in all of life.

Application:

Consider what balance you need to gain or perspective you need to change in order to regularly "breathe in" God's goodness of life.

“Walking Papers”

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk each day this week.

You can use the following for daily reflection and/or use some or all for discussion starters in your small group.

Monday: Using breathing as a metaphor for the enjoyment of life, list 3-5 (or more) ways that breathing compares to life. For example, “Sometimes the routine of life can be like being in a box. Yes, we can still breathe but the air is stale and hot” or “I ‘hold my breath’ until the weekend.”

Tuesday: Just Breathe! Look at Eccl. 9:7-9 and list the things that Solomon says that we should enjoy in life as a gift from God’s hand. Do you think these are specifically mentioned or representations of wider areas of life? If you think they are representations, write down the broad areas of life you think they represent.

Wednesday: Colossians 3:17 expounds on Eccl. 9:10 when it says “Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” What 2-3 areas in your life do you struggle to enjoy? How can a change of perspective help you to “breathe deeply” and enjoy even those areas?

Thursday: Genesis 1:26-27 says that we are created in the image of God. What aspects of God can we express in all of life, even the mundane areas? Gen. 1-2 shows numerous attributes of God that we can reflect (creativity, organization, etc.)

Friday: Margin Chart – Plot a dot on the chart below to represent the strength or weakness of each life area listed in the middle. What does it show you about the balance in your life? In what areas do you need to reduce, and in what areas do you need to increase, your energy?

