

"MAYBE YOU..."

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"GASP!" is a teaching series about looking into and questioning the role Inspiration plays within each of our lives.

- In a culture obsessed with measuring talent and ability, we often overlook the important role of Inspiration...

"Inspiration is supposed to awaken us to new possibilities by allowing us to transcend our ordinary experiences and limitations."

Within my story, Inspiration has played a significant role.

- When I met my wife, Erin, and her son Gabe for the first time
- The first time I stepped in front of a room full of Junior High students and delivered a very messy message
- When after 10 years in ministry, I decided to move overseas as a full time missionary
- When I decided to come back home and deal with my leftover emotional wreckage
- When while I was going through great suffering, I had the Hebrew word 'Chesed' (Kessid) spoken over my life to remind me that God's love was steadfast and true
- When I eventually left all that was comfortable and certain to help plant a little church with people I loved
- All of these and many more came from moments of inspiration

But... Where does inspiration come from?

- Can it be cultivated? Is it something far off and hard to find? Or is inspiration as close to us as our own breath?

"Is it a moment of personal genius? The voice of God speaking directly to us, or is it the result of good, old-fashioned hard work? Maybe, it's both."

- We are going to look at all of these things, the moments that leave us changed, that motivate us to be more, and that make us GASP!

To start today...

- I want to give you a posture for this series:

“Emotional and Spiritual Postures help determine the way in which we approach a topic or experience.”

- This series Posture will be one of “Ease or Simplicity”
- This is because we will pick up on a theme that, “Inspiration is evoked spontaneously without intention.”
- It’s something that happens to you and is not willed... You can’t force it, create it , or build it.

We are Poised and ready for this place...This is the place we have been preparing for over the last year at Kessid.

- Learning not to run from, but face our Dragons and Dandelions.
- To Untether from and wrestle with big thoughts like “What if I read it wrong, or got it wrong, or just am wrong.”
- To seek out the unexpected “whys” around our beliefs and what they all mean.

We will also learn that this does not mean that inspiration is completely outside our control...

- In the coming weeks, we will look at a study discussed in the Harvard Business Review that states...

“Contrary to the view of inspiration as purely mythical or divine, I think inspiration is best thought of as a surprising interaction between your current knowledge and the information you receive from the world.”

And yet the Bible is full of inspirational stories and illustrations...

(Vs) Matt. 5:14-16 – “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

We are described as a bright light that’s meant to be seen!

- We are meant to be beings who both inspire and are inspired... To “Light up the darkness” as they say!

Our earliest written English uses of "Inspire" give it the meaning "to influence, move, or guide."

- The word was originally used of a divine or supernatural being, in the sense to 'impart a truth or an idea to someone'...
- The word shares a connection with the word "*spirit* - which comes from the Latin word for "breath," *spiritus*, 'breathe or blow into.'

I am reminded of a story in the Bible in which Jesus appears to His followers, the very people whom He's trained and entrusted to carry on with His work.

- There's just one problem — they're not doing it. They're afraid.
- They have the skills and the experience...
- But they lack the encouragement, the power *within*, to do what they must do... They weren't shining bright!

So, Jesus does something strange...

(Vs) John 20:19-22 - "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week..."

- Jesus performed this work upon 10 of the eleven disciples (Thomas was not present).

Question: Now, was this the moment that these ten men received the permanent indwelling of the Spirit, as Christ promised to them in the Upper Room?

- Apparently not, because in Acts we read:

(Vs) Acts 1:4 - And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, "You heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

- These apostles were the same men as those present in John 20, so whatever Jesus did in John 20, we know He did NOT give the apostles a permanent indwelling of the Spirit at this moment, otherwise the Spirit would not have come again to them in Acts 2...

Therefore, how do we interpret the events of John 20?

- In all probability, Jesus was giving His disciples a symbolic and memorable introduction to the Spirit, who was to come upon them later...
- This moment was a demonstration of what Jesus would do at Pentecost after He returned to the Father.
- Within the Bible, breath is often a picture of the Spirit ...in fact, the Hebrew word for Spirit is also the word for breath.

“Jesus “breathed” on the men while He was standing with them in His physical presence to indicate what He was preparing to do later by the Spirit.”

He was Inspiring them...

- He breathes on them, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” And then he sends them out into the world to change the world... And change the world, they do!

But... this Biblical Symbol of “breathing into” or Inspiring was not just for those believers then, but for all who follow still today...

- This is because to live our lives as we should for The Lord...
- We need more than a calling. We need more than gifts. We need more than even a Mission...
- We need Inspiration!
- And even though it comes in mysterious and unexpected ways... It does come!

“Maybe You...”

- Maybe this coming year you need to make some changes...
- In your marriage, in your vocation, in your relationships, in your spirituality...
- Inspiration is the avenue by which many of these things can finally happen.

"It is never too late to be what you might have been." George Eliot