

# FOOD

In the same way that we need physical food for physical strength we also need spiritual food for spiritual strength. Recently a young man approached me and enquired, "Pastor, I've noticed that you stay strong no matter what! How do you maintain your strength in difficult times?" What may not be evident when looking at my life is the fact that my strength is not located in my own abilities but "in the Lord." Ephesians 6:10 says, "**Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.**" The best way to be strong in the Lord is to be strong in His Word. We need to feed on His word if we are to remain strong! The Word of God describes itself as spiritual food - the water, milk, bread, and meat of our spiritual lives. It is everything we need to build us up and sustain us.

No commanding officer would send one of his soldiers into battle if he had not eaten for days. He would not have the strength to fight! Likewise, you are not going to have much success in winning the spiritual battles you face if you're starving yourself. That's why we need to constantly feed ourselves on the Word of God. We need to eat and drink from the Word to have the strength to accomplish the tasks ahead. Jesus said, "**You cannot live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God**" (Matthew 4:4).

Unlike eating physical food, you will notice that whenever you feed on God's Word, you get even hungrier. The more you taste and see how good God is, the more you will desire to eat. Colossians 3:16 says, "**Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly.**" Paul is telling us to let the Word of God take up 'residence' in our lives in a life-giving way. So how do we feed ourselves on the Word in order to allow that to take place? Rick Warren points out four keys to receiving strength from God's Word:

- (1) Receive the Word with your ears. Commit to attend church regularly and listen to God's Word being preached.
- (2) Read the Word with your eyes. Remember, having a Bible in your house is not going to bless your life - you must have the Bible in your heart.
- (3) Research the Word with your hands and mouth. When studying the Word of God, keep a pencil or pen in your hand. Write down what the Holy Spirit is teaching you. Then talk about what you have discovered with those around you.
- (4) Reflect on the Word with your mind. Think about and meditate on God's Word. Fill the reservoir in your heart! Commit God's Word to memory as it's unlikely that you'll have a Bible handy when you need it.

Let me ask you.... Are you feeding yourself correctly by following all of the points above, or do you usually stop after hearing the Word at church? What changes do you need to make in your life so that you are spiritually nourished? Because without nourishment you have no strength! If you are encountering hardship today you need sustenance. And the only way to 'stay strong' is to allow God's Word to take up residence in your life richly! That way you will be strong in the Lord and in the power of His life. That way you can live a victorious life in Christ Jesus!