

Tower Chimes article for March, 2010

During our Tuesday morning staff meeting this week I shared a devotional reflection with Vicki, our secretary. For many years I've been using the daily devotions out of David Jeremiah's book "Sanctuary." Tuesday's devotion was based on II Corinthians 4:16: "Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day." The point is that our physical life in the world is temporary. And although we begin our life as young, growing, healthy human beings, there is a cycle to our physical life. Even as God created us "out of the dust of the earth," so we also return to this dust.

By contrast, Paul reminds us that there is a part of us that is not subject to this kind of process—and that part is our souls. Our souls will live forever. And the fact that we have a soul that will live forever, calls us to value our soul and to attend to it. We value our bodies and we make good food choices and exercise our bodies on a regular basis. We want to do the same for our souls—we want to feed them with good spiritual food and exercise our souls through the practice of spiritual disciplines.

What kinds of spiritual food do you find the most nurturing for your spirit, and which spiritual disciplines give you the most strength for your journey?

Spiritual food includes all the gifts that God has given us to build up our faith and identity as people of God. These gifts include the Scriptures, the writings of Christian authors, Christian music and media, the sacraments (the Lord's Supper and Baptism), Christian friends, and the glorious beauty of nature, to name a few.

Spiritual disciplines are "*hands-on*" *behavioral practices* in which we engage God's gifts in ways that strengthen our faith and help us express that faith in the world. These disciplines include reading and studying the Scriptures and other spiritual reading, engaging the Christian music and media that is available to us, participating in the sacraments, especially the Lord's Supper, being in Christian conversation with other Christians and experiencing the world of nature as an expression of God's creative power and his love for the creation.

So during this month of March, in which we experience most of the Lenten season and the first four days of Holy Week, take time to focus on your soul. Treat it in a lavish way, with abundant spiritual food and regular spiritual disciplines. Take time to receive spiritual bread for the journey and spiritual strength for God's call on your life.

Peace in Christ,  
Pastor Ruth