



SERIES: John Believe
SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD
Saturday, April 22, 2023
Scripture: John 17:13-19
TITLE: How's Your Diet?

Recently I hiked up a small mountain near Phoenix. I probably should have trained for it, but I didn't know what I was getting into. My diet is solid. I'm very intentional about what I put in my mouth. But I'm not the best at the physical training and exercise. So, when I attempted to hike up a mountain, I struggled.

I'll bet that if I didn't eat well but trained hard, I still would have struggled. To be fit and healthy involves both the discipline of feeding and training my body well.

Jesus knew that life for a believer would be more like an obstacle course than a treadmill, so we need proper training and diet to sustain the journey. This is what He said about this in John 17:13-19.

“But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

Jesus is praying to His Father as He prepares to head to Gethsemane and then to the cross. In verse 11, Jesus has acknowledged His near departure in death and ascension back to heaven. His departure is what will be the catalyst for the disciples' ministry. It would create the movement that still is active today.

And here, He is praying that the disciples' joy may be fulfilled. Despite the hardship and sadness of Jesus' departure, they can be joy-filled in the power of the Spirit because they are living God's will.

As Jesus' has already spoken of the world's hatred for Him and His followers, again, Jesus acknowledges this paradigm. The love and truth that should emanate from the disciples would be rejected and despised by the world.

Rejection is undesired even if it's expected. Hatred stings when love is provided. Hostility is mourned when hope is available. So Jesus prays, “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” Sanctify means to be “conformed inside.” Jesus' gift of salvation does more than give you white robes. It creates a new heart and reformed spirit. It provides the daily process to be conformed or

molded into Jesus. The primary mechanism is God's Word. Yes, prayer, repentance, submission, and worship are part of this process too. And God's Word is the tool to renew our minds as Paul wrote in Romans 12.

There's a lot of static and noise in the world today that distracts us from truth. We run on emotions and headlines instead of God's truth. If you want to stand firm and stand faithful in a world of darkness and hatred, you must stand on God's Word.

So here's my challenge for you today: evaluate how you are training and feeding your spiritual health. How much time are you putting into engaging in God's Word? How much time are you spending to consume social media, streaming shows, political news, and other sources of mental and spiritual food? How much time are you giving to prayer, worship, service, and submission to God? How much time are you giving to the things that take you away from feeding and training your spirit?

Then take one step to feed yourself and train more. Do this today and see what difference it makes. Jesus knew we would need to train for spiritual health in a world of unhealth and hatred. When we feed and train for our spiritual health, we will win the day.