

Influence Ministries

FRESH AIR

LESSON 1

TITLE: THE DOLDRUMS

As we begin this series, I want you to think about at least one area you need a fresh air experience.

A stagnant, lifeless condition is called the doldrums.

The word doldrums are a sailing term.

What does it mean to be in the doldrums? Depressed; dull and lifeless...

This expression alludes to the maritime doldrums, a belt of calms and light winds north of the equator in which sailing ships were often becalmed.

The effects can be felt from 5 degrees north of the equator to 5 degrees south of it.

Right in the middle of that zone, there is not a breath of wind, it's the doldrums.

Back in the day, there were no motorized boats, they depended on the wind in their sails.

So, to get caught in the doldrums would mean they would not sail.

Therefore, there was no wind and no movement, and many ships never got out and people died there.

This illustration is the way so many people feel like.

They're stuck in a place and there's no way out. You feel like you're dying, and here's the catch, usually no one even knows you're there.

We've all been there. We learn how to smile and act like everything is OK.

It's interesting that a lot of people end up in the doldrums when everything looks good on paper.

You have a great job, living in a nice house, you have a good life... but something is missing.

Emotional, physical, spiritual? The goal of this series is to rescue you from the doldrums.

To send the spiritual coast guard and tow you out to that place into a place with fresh air.

There is a gravitational pull for all of us toward the doldrums.

Maybe your marriage seems empty or far less than what you dreamed it would be.

Maybe the life you once had is just not there anymore. Maybe in your relationships, your job, your emotions.

Perhaps most importantly, your relationship with the Lord.

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I wonder how many of us just go through the motions of life. Just living on autopilot or cruise control.

You go to church on autopilot. You know when to sing, when to sit, when to say amen, when to shake hands.

You wake up, pack lunches, clean the house, wash clothes but no matter what you do in your life there's this longing for something more.

You go to work, you know your job, you even excel at it, but something is off.

The real question is... what are you going to do about it?

I'm convinced all of us get there from time to time, but here's the first step in the process.

We need to be honest and admit it exists. It's time to get honest with ourselves.

James 5:16

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

I realize you may not be ready to share your struggles/doldrums, my hope is during this series you'll find someone to help tow you out the doldrums to safety.

If you do that, you'll find comfort, support, trust and so much more.

We need God's help too.

Phil 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

My challenge for you today is to take a step into the uncomfortable, possibly even unfamiliar territory and identify the areas that you struggle in.

Here's the question I want you to think about... in which area of your life, could you use a blast of fresh air?

As we answer this question, we're taking a step to a fresh air life.

Let's pray.