

WHERE'S YOUR MINDSET AT?

It's 2021, a new year full of expectation and perhaps also anxiety. It's quite certain that most of the world is embracing the New Year with a hint of wonder and perhaps skepticism at what may come. Whatever mindset we're bringing into 2021, it is probably highly associated with the news feeds that our smartphones, TV's, radios, and newspapers (if you're still old school) are serving us. And as we eat up the global and local news at a rapid speed, our brains are simply trying to play "keep up".

Do you ever feel like your brain may explode from all the news? Mine does. In fact, sometimes I wish my brain could adapt and expand to accommodate large amounts of information from newsfeeds just like my stomach does with food. Have you ever noticed the incredible and often times useful capacity of your stomach to enlarge itself when you consume much food? Perhaps you experienced this over the Christmas break—I know I did. Indeed, the functioning of the organ is possible because of its ability to use a powerful hydrochloric acid that assists in the breakdown of food. The more food you consume, the quicker your stomach will adapt.

In 2020, BBC News filmed a short video on "How our brains are processing the pandemic" to explain what preoccupies and distracts our brains. Susan Whitbourne, professor of brain sciences at the University of Massachusetts, describes that the human brain can have difficulty cognitively processing heightened amounts of information, leaving us in a constant state of strain. And this strain is further amplified by the weight of social isolation.

You may be entering 2021 with this same strained spirit. That's no accident given the guzzle of information coming through our newsfeeds coupled with social isolation— however, there are good news; a weighed-down spirit does not have to linger forever.

Since we are entering 2021 with rampant news infiltrating our brains, the practice of balancing high intakes of information with the Word of God has become increasingly important. Proverbs 17:22 states:

"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones."

Perhaps God knew that our finite brains would require something stronger than the forces of hydrochloric acid to process all the information and stimulation our brains are constantly interacting with on a daily basis. Our Maker knew fully well that the ways in which we process information would impact our mindsets and spirit, both of which influence our day-to-day life.

My prayer for you, is you notice the act of reading God's Word as a mirror in how our stomachs process digestion. The more time we spend in His Word, more cheerful our hearts become. And with a cheerful heart, we are better off adapting to the news of the world. Although we are uncertain on what 2021 will bring, let's remain certain on the hope we find written in the 66-book Love-Letter: The Bible. For it is through God's Word that we have an open invitation for the Lord's presence to infiltrate our lives and brighten our mindsets.

