

Preparing for Pentecost: Holy Spirit

Monday, 5/18/09 – Read Genesis 1:1-5 and John 3:8

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: May 31 is Pentecost Sunday. On that day we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus. We'll read the account of the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost next week. This week, we begin our preparation for Pentecost by considering a number of the Bible's descriptions of the Holy Spirit. ... Today's reading is the familiar words of Genesis' first creation story. The Hebrew word "ruach" is translated into English as "wind" or "breath" or "spirit." Those three English words are all the same word in Hebrew! So in Genesis 1:3, the "wind" of God is also the "spirit" of God. (Jesus makes this connection between wind and spirit -- in John 3:8.) How is spirit like wind? Is this a clue to understanding spirit?

Tuesday, 5/19/09 – Read Genesis 2:4b-9 and Psalm 104:24-33

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The breath (spirit!) of God is pictured in the Bible as life itself. It is aliveness, vitality. In the Genesis story, when God breathes into the dust of the ground, it comes alive; it becomes a living human. ... Stop for a moment and think about it: what's it like just to be alive? According to the Bible, this "being alive," this "aliveness" is literally the breath/spirit of God. ... What do you think? Can you feel your own liveliness as God's presence, God's spirit?

Wednesday, 5/20/09 – Read Acts 17:22-28

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: In his little sermon to the people of Athens, Paul picks up an interesting idea about God -- that God is the one in whom "we live and move and have our being." ... Use your imagination for a moment. Imagine all the "empty" space around you as not really empty at all. Imagine it as FULL space, full of God's spirit. So that all the time we are living and moving IN God. ... How would your life feel to you if you were aware that all the time you were living in God, in God's active presence?

Thursday, 5/21/09 – Read Luke 2:25-32

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: One of the briefly mentioned characters in the stories of Jesus' birth is Simeon. Today's reading says of him that "the Holy Spirit rested on him." ... Have you ever known anyone you'd say that about? What was that person like? What was it about that person that suggested that God's spirit was on her or him?

Friday, 5/22/09 – Read Luke 3:15-16

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: John the Baptist anticipated the coming of Messiah. And one of his expectations was that Messiah would "baptize with Holy Spirit." As John drenched people in water, Messiah would drench people in God's Spirit. ... What

would it be like to be drenched in Holy Spirit? How do you imagine it? Have you ever had an experience when it seemed like you were drenched in Holy Spirit? What was that like for you? Make some notes for yourself.

Saturday, 5/23/09 – Read Mark 1:9-13

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The gospel of Mark’s account of Jesus’ baptism says that Jesus saw the Spirit of God descending onto him, and he hears the voice declare that he is God’s beloved. The Holy Spirit is the love of God! It’s been said that, if you substituted the words “love of God” for the words “Holy Spirit” in the Bible, the meaning would not be changed. Maybe Holy Spirit is simply the love of God active, moving. Would that make sense to you?

Sunday, 5/24/09 – Read John 14:18-27

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Jesus promised that he would not leave his disciples orphaned. He would come to them as the Holy Spirit. And indeed the New Testament sometimes refers to the Spirit as “the Spirit of Jesus” (Acts 16:7, Philippians 1:19). ... What’s your experience? Does it ever seem that Jesus is present to you? Does the Spirit of God sometimes seem to make Jesus real and present. Make some notes for yourself about your own experience.

My Faith Journal, May 17, 2009

Fanning the Flame of Faith

What do I hear God saying to me today?

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.