



Small Group Study Guide for June 5, 2022

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: Pentecost is the celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus promised, to launch the Gospel message from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. We celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst today as He continues to call, gather, enlighten, and sanctify the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps us together in the one true faith.

Getting Started:

1. How do you celebrate birthdays in your family, or how did you celebrate them growing up, and what special traditions or customs did you have?
2. What are some questions you have about the person and work of the Holy Spirit?

In the Word: Acts 2:

3. There are a number of practical and theological reasons why God chose Pentecost to launch the Christian church after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension. The festival of Pentecost was the ancient "Feast of Weeks" that God gave to the Israelites to celebrate at the first harvest of spring wheat (Exodus 34:22, Deuteronomy 16:10). It was the beginning of the harvest. The feast of Tabernacles ("Feast of Booths") was in the fall at the final incoming of the harvest. Why was Pentecost an ideal time for the fulfillment of Jesus' promise about the Holy Spirit?
4. When we speak about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, some people mistakenly understand this as a one time event - as if the Holy Spirit only or at least first came upon the disciples at Pentecost. Read **John 20:21-22** and **Acts 10:44-46**. The Holy Spirit comes upon the disciples multiple times, in multiple ways, for various purposes. What does that mean for the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church today?
5. The miracle that the Holy Spirit worked at Pentecost was not that the apostles spoke in different languages, but that the people listening all heard the apostles in their own language. Make a list of the nations listed in **Acts 2:8-11** do some searching as to where these regions are today.

6. Some people mocked the disciples as being drunk. There are always people who respond to God's work and words and those who reject God's work and words. What are some of the accusations that people hurl at Christians who are "proclaiming the wonders of God" today?
7. Peter quoted the Old Testament passage from the prophet Joel so the people could understand what was happening. The Holy Spirit is mentioned all over the Old Testament, even from the beginning of creation in Genesis 1. Moses, Joshua, the prophets and kings are filled with the Holy Spirit. What do you think is the connection between the written word of God (Scripture) and the Holy Spirit? (for a clue from Jesus, see John 14:26).

Putting it Together

8. The Holy Spirit helps us believe and speak about Jesus. He gives us the gift of faith and helps be a witness to the work of God in Jesus Christ. We cannot do these things on our own. Think of a time when you were aware of your own weakness and limitation, and then think of a time when you felt empowered and emboldened with regards to your faith. Share these moments that give credit to the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.
9. The Holy Spirit draws believers together from all nations. It is difficult for us to do that naturally, and without the Spirit's work, we segregate and separate from other cultures or nations. How can we be intentional in the church to promote unity and oneness in Christ with believers from other nations, languages and cultures? How do we do that currently at Our Savior, and how might we improve in this area?
10. There are always people who receive God's word and who reject God's word. The ultimate reality is that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." We need to trust God's promise of salvation to receive it. That trust is a gift of the Holy Spirit. We don't know why some are saved and not others - that mystery is left up to God and will be revealed in the end. We only know our mission is to share the word of God with as many people as possible so that many might believe and call on the name of the Lord to be saved. How can we as individuals and a congregation continue and increase the ways we share the word of God with others?

Prayer: You can pray to the Holy Spirit! He is God! And we pray in Jesus' name. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill and enliven our hearts, homes, and church and school, that we might give a bold witness to Christ and declare the wonders of God to those in our community and beyond.

Next Week: Trinity Sunday highlights the nature of God as Father Son and Holy Spirit. It is also Graduation Sunday at our 10:30 service. This will be the LAST SERMON STUDY GUIDE for the season. We will resume the study guides in the fall.