

## Is the Holy Spirit in Everyone?

- I. What to do with Pentecost—and the Pentecostals
  - a. Kick out the crazies
  - b. Explain it all away
  - c. Pretend it's not there
  - d. Explore the world of the holy spirit
    - i. My first real job
    - ii. One winter's day against the radiator
    - iii. My missionary friends
    - iv. Tonight ...
- II. The meaning of a word—a *contest* (with prizes!)
- III. But how does this spirit-breath work in me?
  - a. Like siege-works: *Elihu* (Job 32:2-5, 6-7, 8-9, 16-20)
  - b. Like satin: *Daniel* (Daniel 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11-12; 6:3)
    - i. Spirit to the n<sup>th</sup> degree
    - ii. How to be filled with spirit to the n<sup>th</sup> degree
      1. Eat your veggies!
      2. Live for the long haul!
      3. Don't do a thing!
  - c. Like skill: *inspired artisans* (Exodus 28:3)
    - i. Uninspired translations
    - ii. Our options for understanding this spirit
      1. Native talent—but what about the language of filling?
      2. A burst of charismatic activity—but what about wisdom of heart?
      3. Filling to the brim—the force of the Hebrew מלא
    - iii. The spirit and the language of lavishness

“What Elihu feels is not a soft or subtle spirituality; he feels the spirit-breath welling up from deep within, as a relentless force. The spirit is the breath that rolls over his tongue—a torrent of words that fills the void of old ignorance with his fresh, new wisdom. Yet, despite Elihu's claim to inspiration, a quick read of his advice to Job tells us how uninspired Elihu is, how clumsily he wields the blunt-edged ax of advice” (*Fresh Air*, 51).

“Daniel did not plan and plot to climb the ladder of success by knotting himself to the coterie of handsome, hunky Israelite men whose futures were bright with promise. The lesson is clear: the Spirit-breath of God pulses in people who opt for simplicity and humility rather than ambition and acquisition, people who choose simple veggies over lavish meals and fine wines.”

## Ezekiel 37

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup>He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup>He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.” <sup>4</sup>Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. <sup>5</sup>Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup>I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.” <sup>7</sup>So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup>I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup>Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” <sup>10</sup>I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. <sup>11</sup>Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ <sup>12</sup>Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup>And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup>I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act,” says the LORD.

## Does the Holy Spirit Inspire Compromise?

- I. **A strange—and wonderful—verse**  
“For it seemed good to the holy spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials” (Acts 15:28)
  
- II. **The Holy Spirit breaking boundaries**
  - a. Pentecost in Jerusalem
  - b. Pentecost in Caesarea
  - c. Pentecost in Antioch
  
- III. **Human beings creating boundaries (Acts 15:1-2)**
  
- IV. **The church debating boundary disputes**
  - a. The conflict
  - b. The resolution
  - c. The compromise
  
- V. **The church resolving boundary disputes (your turn!)**
  
- VI. **The church arriving at an inspired compromise**
  - a. Recognition
  - b. Experience
  - c. Reason
  - d. Scripture
  - e. Decision
  - f. Communication

## Acts 15:1-35

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”<sup>2</sup> And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders.<sup>3</sup> So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers.<sup>4</sup> When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.<sup>5</sup> But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, “It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.”

<sup>6</sup> The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. <sup>7</sup> After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. <sup>8</sup> And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; <sup>9</sup> and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. <sup>10</sup> Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? <sup>11</sup> On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

<sup>12</sup> The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles. <sup>13</sup> After they finished speaking, James replied, “My brothers, listen to me. <sup>14</sup> Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name. <sup>15</sup> This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written,

<sup>16</sup> ‘After this I will return,  
and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen;  
from its ruins I will rebuild it,  
and I will set it up,  
<sup>17</sup> so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—  
even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called.  
Thus says the Lord, who has been making these things <sup>18</sup> known from long ago.’

<sup>19</sup> Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God, <sup>20</sup> but we should write to them to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood. <sup>21</sup> For in every city, for generations past, Moses has had those who proclaim him, for he has been read aloud every sabbath in the synagogues.”

<sup>22</sup> Then the apostles and the elders, with the consent of the whole church, decided to choose men from among their members and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leaders among the brothers, <sup>23</sup> with the following letter:

“The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. <sup>24</sup> Since we have heard that certain persons who have gone out from us, though with no instructions from us, have said things to disturb you and have unsettled your minds, <sup>25</sup> we have decided unanimously to choose representatives and send them to you, along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, <sup>26</sup> who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>27</sup> We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. <sup>28</sup> For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials: <sup>29</sup> that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

<sup>30</sup> So they were sent off and went down to Antioch. When they gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. <sup>31</sup> When its members read it, they rejoiced at the exhortation. <sup>32</sup> Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. <sup>33</sup> After they had been there for some time, they were sent off in peace by the believers to those who had sent them. <sup>35</sup> But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, and there, with many others, they taught and proclaimed the word of the Lord.

## The Church Resolving Boundary Disputes

Identify in Acts 15:1-35 instances of the role experience, reason, and scripture play in conflict resolution.

Acts	Experience	Reason	Scripture
15:1-5			
15:6-11			
15:12-21			
15:22-29			
15:30-35			

## Is the Holy Spirit an Eagle or a Dove—*or Both?*

- I. A resonant and remarkable word
  - a. Last night: breath, wind, Spirit
  - b. Fluid
  - c. Fire

*“God’s mystical, practical, expansive, unbridled presence in the world, where we least expect it—in every breath we take, in social transformation, in community, in hostile situations, and in serious learning” (Fresh Air, page 5)*

- II. Is the Holy Spirit a He?
  - a. Big name authors
  - b. The spirit as an angel (Isaiah 63 and Exodus 23)
  - c. The spirit and Mary
- III. Is the Holy Spirit a She?
  - a. The spirit and wisdom
  - b. Korean Christian friends
  - c. A (very) distant colleague
- IV. The Spirit as an eagle (Genesis 1:1-2)
  - a. The femininity of the spirit
  - b. Father knows best
  - c. The forcefulness of the spirit
- V. The Spirit as a dove (Mark 1:10-13)
  - a. The femininity of the spirit
  - b. Father knows best
  - c. The forcefulness of the spirit
- VI. Is the Spirit an eagle or a dove—*or both?*
  - a. Beyond he and she
  - b. Both is better
  - c. Wild and growing in imperfect rows

**Genesis 1:1-2**

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters"*

**Deuteronomy 32:10-14**

God sustained him [Jacob/Israel] in a desert land,  
in a howling wilderness waste;  
God shielded him, cared for him,  
guarded him as the apple of his eye.

<sup>11</sup> *As an eagle stirs up its nest,  
and hovers over its young;  
as it spreads its wings, takes them up,  
and bears them aloft on its pinions,*

<sup>12</sup> *the LORD alone guided him;*

no foreign god was with him.

<sup>13</sup> God set him atop the heights of the land,  
and fed him with produce of the field;

God nursed him with honey from the crags,  
with oil from flinty rock;

<sup>14</sup> curds from the herd, and milk from the flock,  
with fat of lambs and rams ...

---

**Mark 1:10-11**

*"And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the spirit descending like a dove into him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my son, the beloved; with you I am well pleased'"*

**Mark 1:12-13**

*"And the spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him"*

## How Can We Cultivate Life in the Spirit? a crash course in living into stillness

- I. What Kalahari bushmen can teach us
- II. The 3 Ps of the spiritual life
  - a. Practice
  - b. Place
  - c. Plan
- III. Practice: the presents—and presence—of the saints
  - a. 1 minute reminder—*the Gloria Patri*
  - b. 3 minute retreat: <http://www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer.htm#sthash.4iWlZzb3.dpbs>
  - c. 10 minute AM retreat: routine maintenance (*Fresh Air*, pages 74-80) (Isaiah 50:4-5)
    - i. Awaken
    - ii. Listen
    - iii. Encourage
  - d. 10 minute retreat: *Book of Common Prayer*: <http://www.bcponline.org/> (click “The daily office” in the left margin, then “The order of service for noonday” or, at day’s end, “Compline”)
  - e. 12 minute retreat: pray as you go: <http://www.pray-as-you-go.org/>
  - f. 15 minute retreat
    - i. Eugene Peterson on meditation
    - ii. *Lectio Divina* (individually or in groups)
      1. 1 minute listening for a *word*
      2. 2 minutes listening for an *emotion*
      3. 3 minutes listening for an *invitation*
- IV. Place: the pull of settled space
- V. Plan: the power of regularity
- VI. Take a P today ... and *every* day!

## Resources for Meditation and Contemplation

**Eugene Peterson**, *Eat This Book: a conversation in the art of spiritual reading* (Eerdmans)

A wonderful book with personal reflections and rich insight into the art of meditative reading.

---

**Macrina Wiederkehr**, *The Seven Sacred Pauses* (Sorin Books)

A poetic resource for taking the seven pauses of monasticism (the hours of the day) into the workaday, rough and tumble world of everyday life.

---

**From Jack Levison**

*Spirit chatter on Patheos*

One-page reflections on everything from the food bank to miscarriage to a robust prayer life. This series is written for *black and blue saints*—people who've been beaten up but still believe. Visit [patheos.com/blogs/spirit chatter](http://patheos.com/blogs/spirit chatter).

*Fresh Air: the Holy Spirit for an Inspired Life* (Paraclete Press)

A book with a Bible scholar's insights, a father's personal stories, and a Christian's practical insights. In the back of the book, you'll find an excellent discussion guide, making the book ideal for small groups. Paraclete Press has also produced a DVD for group use, in which the author introduces each chapter in about 2-3 minutes.

*Inspired: the Holy Spirit and the Mind of Faith* (Eerdmans)

A book that combines rich biblical study (for those who love Bible study) with straightforward practical application to take the Holy Spirit from the mountaintop to the grit of everyday life. In the next few months, a wonderful study guide (written by Seattle author Ron Herms) will be available for about \$5, so the book will be great for serious small group Bible study.

---

**Taize service in the Eugene area**

Unity of the Valley, 3912 Dillard Rd, Eugene, OR 97405: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month at 9 AM  
<http://www.unityofthevalley.org/topmenupages/services/taizeservice.html>

---

**Labyrinth in the Eugene area**

Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Road, Eugene, OR 97404  
541-688-3269, [eugenetrinity@yahoo.com](mailto:eugenetrinity@yahoo.com), [trinityumceugene.org/PrayerLabyrinth](http://trinityumceugene.org/PrayerLabyrinth)

To locate labyrinths anywhere, see: [labyrinthlocator.com](http://labyrinthlocator.com)

---

**Retreat center in the Eugene area**

Mt. Angel Abbey, St. Benedict, OR 97373  
[mountangelabbey.org](http://mountangelabbey.org)

## *Lectio Divina* (for when you are alone)

Read the biblical text *slowly* three separate times followed first by a minute of silence, then two, then three. Before reading, ask people to listen for something specific:

Begin by breathing slowly and deeply!

- First reading: Listen intently for **ONE WORD** that grabs you.

[The text is read, followed by a minute of silence. Then focus on **ONE WORD** that grabbed you, moved you, hooked you, etc. Speak that one word out loud and turn it around in your mind.]

- Second reading: Listen for how your heart is **MOVED**; this is about emotion, feeling, heart.

[The text is read a second time, followed by two minutes of silence. After the two minutes of speak or write down the way the text affected you emotionally. Sometimes it is hard to get out of our heads. This is a time when you may use as many words as you need to describe how you feel with the words.]

- Third reading: Listen for the **INVITATION**.

[The text is read followed by three minutes of silence. This invitation does not deal with ten years down the road but with the next few days. What does God desire of you in the next couple of days? What is God inviting you to do, to hear, to be?]

### Select resources:

Joan Chittister, *The Rule of St. Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Crossroad, 2012) and <http://www.monasteriesoftheheart.org/home>

Roy DeLeon, *Praying with the Body: Bringing the Psalms to Life* (Paraclete, 2009)

Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God*

Kathleen Norris, *The Cloister Walk* (Riverhead, 1997)

Macrina Wiederkehr, *Seven Sacred Pauses: Living Mindfully Through the Hours of the Day* (Sorin Books, 2008)

### Application:

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Wakeup							
AM							
Lunch							
Afternoon							
Dinner							
PM							
Bedtime							

# Planning to Live Into Stillness

Chart times when you plan to live into the disciplines of faith (e.g., lectio, Pray-as-you-go)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
wakeup							
breakfast							
AM							
lunch							
early afternoon							
late afternoon							
dinner							
early evening							
late evening							
wee hours							