



6-11-17 Sermon Discussion Guide

“God Is Who He Says He Is”



Context

Throughout this summer we are talking about words and ideas that we often hear in church but rarely define. This summer provides a chance to hit “pause” and reflect upon these ideas, their importance, and their impact upon life. This series began by asking the question, “What is theology?” In answering that question, we have been studying the Trinity – God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

The Holy Spirit is often discussed with uncertainty. Is the Holy Spirit personal? Is the Holy Spirit our conscience? How do we know we hear the Holy Spirit instead of our own voice? In this study, we’ll dig into these kinds of questions and come away with some clarity. To start off, describe what experiences you’ve had of the Holy Spirit or what you’ve heard about the Holy Spirit in the past.

Discussing the Text

1. In both the Old and New Testaments, the words used for “spirit” are the same words for “breath” and “wind.” What is the significance of that? How might these words be connected?
2. In Genesis 2:7, God breathed the breath of life on Adam while the Nicene Creed says that the Holy Spirit is “the Lord and giver of life.” How does the Holy Spirit give life?
3. In John 20:21-22, Jesus gives his disciples the Holy Spirit by breathing on them. He also gives them peace and the authority to forgive sins. How are these connected to the Holy Spirit?
4. Job 32:8 discusses a new understand that we receive from the Holy Spirit while Jesus calls the Spirit the “Spirit of Truth” in John 15:26. Jesus goes on to say that the Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus. How does this help us determine the validity of people’s spiritual experiences?
5. In John 14:26-27, the Holy Spirit is described as the advocate, or “Paraclete” in Greek. This compound word means “the one who comes alongside in order to build up.” In what ways does the Holy Spirit build us up? Look also at Romans 8:26-27, and Genesis 1:2.
6. What do you think it means in Scripture when it says, “The Spirit of the Lord came upon...” like in Judges 6:34. Is this the same as what Jesus talked about in Acts 1:8? Is this same power available to us? Does 1 Corinthians 12 help answer this?

So what?

1. What differences does it make if we believe the Holy Spirit is personal, with a will and characteristics, instead of a mystical force?
2. How has the Holy Spirit refreshed you, lifted you up, and empowered you? Can you think of specific examples in life?
3. In the sermon, Austin mentioned “facing the wind” like a wind mill as a way of describing our need to cultivate a life connected to the Holy Spirit. How can you regularly “face the wind?”

Prayer

Share something you for which you are thankful and/or something for which you need support. In particular, invite people to pray this week to the Holy Spirit. They can ask the Holy Spirit to guide their prayers, to fill them or others up, to empower the, and to send them just where God wants them to be.