weekend

resource guide

for the week of 22 April

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*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. (Acts 1.8; 2 Corinthians 4.7)*

*My life has all the ingredients necessary to be an adulterer. Let me list them for you:*

*1. I love Jesus.*

*2. I love my wife Carol.*

*3. I love my four girls, my son-in law, and my grand-children*

*4. I love the congregation I pastor.*

*5. It is my singular desire to live in such a manner as to honor my God and Savior, honor my wife and family, and honor the family of God.*

*These may not sound like the values that lead to adultery but they are for this simple reason. There is no relationship between the choice to commit adultery and values people may say they hold dear. Nearly all of the Christians I have met, who have committed adultery, did so because they denied two fundamental realities of human temperament.*

*1. People have a marvelous capacity to disassociate long-term values for immediate gratification.*

*2. People (especially men) allow personal attraction towards others to lead to arousal.*

*I remember the incident that first convicted me that marital fidelity was a spiritual discipline and a covenant that I needed to make to the Lord…*

*Carol and I enjoyed a wonderful honeymoon in San Francisco and Lake Tahoe area. One week later we moved into a very small two-bedroom house in Spokane, Washington. I was completing my undergraduate work and Carol was completing her teaching credential. I was working at that time as Assistant Chaplain at Whitworth College where I oversaw the campus interns. One of the interns, like me, was an older senior and very attractive… She met me one evening in my office to review her plans for one of the dorms. I quickly became aware that I was not paying attention to what see was talking about. Instead I found myself reflecting on how exceptionally attractive this woman was! I began to break out in a cold sweat once I realized the direction my mind was taking me a mere three weeks after my wedding day! I looked down at my watch, feigned surprise, and lied as I blurted forth that I was late to a meeting that I had forgotten about! I stood up and ran out of my office like Joseph fleeing Potiphar’s wife. Except she was not the problem– I was. I ran to one of my secret places on campus and hid myself. I cried out to God: “I have only been married three weeks and already I am an adulterer! O God have mercy on me and take away these feelings.” What happened next completely surprised me. The Lord spoke to me very clearly, “I will not take these feelings away from you. I will help you to master them and allow them to enrich your life as I intended them to.”*

*God has been faithful to His word. I have enjoyed tremendous liberty. But I have never forgotten that day I learned more about myself than I wanted to know…Here are some very simple steps that God has inspired me to take as a result of that incident.*

*1. I have made a covenant with the Lord to be faithful to Carol. Each day I take a fresh look at my wedding band and remember the life it calls me to lead before the Lord, Carol, my children, and our extended community.*

*2. I have some very close friends with whom I have made a covenant to be faithful to my wife, honest with my use of money, diligent in my pursuit of Jesus Christ, and militant in my quest for personal purity.*

*3. I take time to pray for Carol every day and extol specific virtues she possesses before the Lord.*

*4. I find the freedom to share about Carol whenever appropriate in my conversations with others. This allows me to affirm and, more importantly remember my love, loyalty, and respect for her. It is interesting to note that in the Old Testament a relationship is jeopardized every time a person or people begin to forget.*

*There can be no integrity where there is no passion for fidelity in our body, mind, and spirit. More on this next week... In the meantime… Enjoy your LifeGroup!*



Getting to know one another better…

What is the first sermon/bible message you remember hearing? How old were you and how did it make you feel?

Acts 2.14-47: First responders…

*Acts 2.14   But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. 15 “For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; 16 but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:*

*17 ‘AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,’ God says,*

*‘THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND;*

*AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHESY,*

*AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS,*

*AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;*

*18 EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN,*

*I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT*

*And they shall prophesy.*

*19 ‘AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE*

*AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW,*

*BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE.*

*20 ‘THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS*

*AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD,*

*BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME.*

*21 ‘AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.’*

*Acts 2.22   “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know — 23 this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. 24 “But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.*

*25 “For David says of Him,*

*‘I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRESENCE;*

*FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN.*

*26 ‘THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED;*

*MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN HOPE;*

*27 BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES,*

*NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.*

*28 ‘YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE;*

*YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.’*

*Acts 2.29   “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 “And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. 32 “This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 “Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.*

*34 “For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:*

*‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD,*

*“SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,*

*35 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.”’ 36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified.”*

*Acts 2.37   Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” 38 Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 “For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.” 40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!” 41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. 42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

*Acts 2.43   Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

What?(does the Bible say)

Read Acts 2:14–21. How does Peter use Joel’s prophecy (found in Joel 2:28–32) to explain what was happening?

What promises does Peter reiterate from Joel’s prophecy?

How do Peter’s hearers respond to his words that they had crucified the one God made Lord and Messiah?

Now what? (how will I think based on what this passage says)

How is the activity of the Holy Spirit new or different in Peter’s eyes? How is it different from Israel’s experience?

What does it mean to you that Christians are a “repent-and-be-baptized” people (see v 37)?

When and how did you first respond to the Christian message to let God “save you” (v 40)?

So what? (difference will this passage make in how I live)

How has your life been affected by the gift of the Holy Spirit?

What has the Spirit recently done in your midst that has grabbed your attention or the attention of others? If nothing, why?

Peter quotes Joel 2... what areas of your life do you think you think you need “new dreams and vision” from the Lord? How can your LifeGroup pray for you?

My prayer requests (write in advance what you want your group to pray for…)

Praying for my group…