



REPENTANCE

Spiritual Exercises

Day 1: When Jesus rose from the dead, He defeated the power of Satan. Now he can free you from the power of darkness and the hold of Satan's kingdom. He can give you a whole new life - if you are willing to leave the old.

"He has taken us out of the power of darkness and created a place for us in the kingdom of the Son that he loves, and in Him we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins" (Col. 1:13-14)

How can you respond today to this offer of freedom and forgiveness?

Day 2: God has a new life for you because He loves you. It is a gift. You cannot earn it or deserve it. God's word says:

"But when the kindness and love of God our Savior was revealed, He saved us. It was not because of any good deeds that we ourselves had done, but because of His own mercy that he saved us, through the Holy Spirit, who gives us new birth and new life by washing us. God poured out the Holy Spirit abundantly on us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that by His grace we might be put right with God and come into possession of the eternal life we hope for." (Titus. 3:4-7)

Unearned. Freely given. Undeserved. Given in love and kindness. Have you received this kind of gift before? What thoughts or feelings does this gift God offers bring up for you?

Day 3: The new life in the Spirit is a gift, but you have to turn to Jesus to receive it. All those who come to Him receive new life abundantly. Jesus says:

"Whoever is thirsty should come to Me, and whoever believes in Me should drink. As the scripture says, 'Streams of life-giving water will pour out from his side.' Jesus said this about the Spirit, which those who believed in Him were going to receive." (Jn. 7:37b-39a)

To receive is still an active posture. We must be open, accept, embrace, use the gift. What does it look like to truly receive a gift? To receive this gift God offers?

Day 4: To turn to Jesus, you turn away from everything incompatible with the life He is offering (repentance) and accept the promises He is making (belief and faith). When you turn to Jesus in repentance and faith, He can give new life to you. Jesus says:

"The right time has come, He said, and the kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!" (Mk. 1:15)

Spend some time meditating on and imagining this turning. What are you turning from? Who are you turning towards? What difference might this turning make in your life?

Day 5: This new life is for everyone who will turn to the Lord. The gift of the Holy Spirit is for you. Satan will try to deceive you into thinking that you are someone who cannot be renewed in the Spirit, but the Word of God says:

“Peter said to them, ‘Each one of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God’s gift, the Holy Spirit. For God’s promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away – all whom the Lord our God calls to Himself.’” (Act 2:38-39)

“For God’s promise was made to you . . . to all who are far away.” You are offered this gift. You can receive it. Share any doubts or concerns about this with the Lord today.

Day 6: Faith means relying on what God has promised. You know that God can do anything. You know that He does not lie. Rely on God’s promises and claim them from Him as Abraham did, and you will see Him work in a new way in your life. God’s word says:

“[Abraham’s] faith did not leave him, and he did not doubt God’s promise; his faith filled him with power, and he gave praise to God. He was absolutely sure that God would be able to do what He had promised.” (Romans 4:20-21)

God is able to do what he has promised. What concrete thing can you do to carry this truth throughout your day? Claim God’s promises as your own.

Day 7: When you turn to the Lord in repentance and faith, all you have to do is ask the Lord for the fullness of life in the Holy Spirit. We know that we can have the Holy Spirit because God loves us and wants to be as fully united to us as possible. Jesus promises that the Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.

“And so I say to you: Ask, and you will receive... Would any of you who are fathers give your son a snake when he asks for fish? Or would you give him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, will the Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.” (Luke 11:9-13)

Go to the father and ask for what you need today. What specific grace or concrete help do you need to turn and receive God’s gift of new life? Ask for it in trust.

NEXT WEEK’S STUDY FOCUS: FAITH & THE HOLY SPIRIT

Please Read: John 14:15-31 & Romans 8:2-17

Take some time each day to slowly read and meditate on the Spiritual Exercise for the day:

1. Read once through simply for content, to get a big picture idea of the topic and scripture.
2. Read a second time slowly to see what words or phrases stand out to you. Talk with God about these words or phrases asking:
 - Why do they stand out to you? What meaning do they have for you currently in your life?
 - What emotions or feelings do they bring up and why?
 - What might they reveal to you about God? About yourself? About some future course of action God is inviting you to?
3. Read the passages one final time lifting up the words as prayer and asking God to help you live the truths he has revealed to you during the time of reflection.