

Harnessing the Spirit

Scripture Reading — John 3:1-21

“The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

—John 3:8—

On the main road between Indianapolis and Chicago the land is dotted with monstrous wind turbines. It looks like an eerie scene from a science fiction movie. Each turbine has three blades that turn to produce electricity whenever the wind blows between 7 and 30 miles per hour. On some days, all of the windmills are turning, but on other days, the blades are all stationary, because the wind is not blowing enough.

Indiana wind farms cannot control the wind, but well-designed generators can harness some of the wind's power.

Today is Pentecost Sunday, and on this day we remember the way the Holy Spirit's power was evident fifty days after Christ rose from the grave.

The practice of spiritual disciplines is intended to help us grow nearer to God. One of the dangers of focusing on our disciplines, however, is that we can mistakenly think that our spiritual growth is powered by our spiritual disciplines. Practicing spiritual disciplines is similar to building a windmill. Our disciplines do not compel the Holy Spirit to work on our behalf, but by developing habits that draw us nearer to God, we are in a better position to be propelled by the Spirit's power when he moves.

Prayer

Holy Spirit, prepare my heart to be moved by you so that I am ready to respond whenever you call me. Amen.

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