**Small Group Sermon Study Guide: Pentecost**

 *Ezekiel 36:16-30 The Key Resource of a Showcase People*

1) **Pentecost Sunday.** Pentecost celebrates the unleashing of the Holy Spirit on the

 world and empowering of the church to reach the world with the gospel.

On the quote sheet Tom Wright shares the Old Testament origins of the Pentecost

 festival.

How do those origins help you appreciate our calling as a people of God?

2) Read Ezekiel 36:16-23. ***“****Their conduct was like a woman’s monthly uncleanness*

 *in my sight.”*

Some find this a hard saying. How does it “strike” you?

 (See explanation: A Hard Saying)

3) Read Ezekiel 36:20-23 and Isaiah 61 *These are the Lord’s people*

 *“When I show myself holy through you”*

 *“A Planting of the Lord for the display of His Splendor”*

For good or for ill, God has permanently tied up His reputation with His people.

A week ago, a fantastic solar eclipse occurred. The moon is designed to reflect

 the splendor of the sun but it can also eclipse it.

 In what areas does the church display the beauty of the Lord’s way?

 In what areas does the church eclipse the beauty of the Lord’s way?

What steps can you take as a group to address this problem?

4) Read Ezekiel 36:24-30.

 The Lord promises “cleansing”, “regeneration—a new heart”, and also the gift of the

 Holy Spirit so we can obey God’s law.

 What does Paul say in Romans 8:4-13 about the effectiveness of the Holy Spirit to help

 us obey?

 In what areas of your life do you find yourself personally struggling to obey?

This week yourself that” “By the Spirit’s power I can overcome this

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” The mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

***Quote Sheet***

***Pentecost Way of Life***

 50 days after Passover, the people came to Mount Sinai, where Moses received the law. Pentecost, the fiftieth day, isn’t just about the “first fruits”, the sheaf which says the harvest has begun. It’s about God giving to his redeemed people the way of life by which they must now carry out his purpose…

 When the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai, Moses went up the mountain, and then came down again with the law. Here, Jesus has gone up into heaven in the ascension, and…he is now coming down again, not with a written law carved on tablets of stone, but with the dynamic energy of the law, designed to be written on human hearts.

--Tom Wright, ***Acts for Everyone,*** @12%

***A Hard Saying***

Some scholars claim Ezekiel is oppressing women by this verse, as though Ezekiel

 were suggesting that menstruation or women are especially sinful. In Leviticus 15, Moses first speaks of male uncleanness and then speaks of female uncleanness. Both nocturnal emissions for men and menstruation for women rendered them unclean for a period of time. These body processes were never considered sinful. But since they were a sign of death they did render you unfit for fellowship with a Holy God. The above statement speaks of Israel’s behavior, their habitual idolatry and social injustice. Such behavior was not only sinful, it reeked of death and made them unfit for fellowship with a Living Lord.