

*Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw it was the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."
--John 20:19b-22*

What comes first? The chicken? Or the egg? Which comes first? Renewal of spirit or response to God?

Of course the answer is "They go hand in hand." Jesus came to them and they rejoiced. Jesus assigned them a task (sent them) and then breathed renewal into them. The Divine Spirit touches us in ways we are not even aware of, as light as a breath. God breathes power into us; calling us to faith, inspiring us to life, enthusing us with a desire to serve. As we live day by day, exercising faith, seeking truth, serving those in need and being a blessing to those around us, we are strengthened in faith, renewed with a vitality, wisdom, serenity and hope that then inspires further service, deeper living and more powerful joy. It is an unending cycle. It is a wonderful perpetual motion machine. The life of faith is kind of like breathing; taking in a breath allows us to function, but we must let out the breath before we can take in another. We must respond to God's presence before we can be renewed and filled again. If we try to live off the initial "breath of the spirit given" we will eventually suffocate. Take a deep breath and live. Breathe again and serve. It is really living.

blessings to you,

Pastor Karla

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