

Holy Spirit – The Ministry of Jesus

As Christians, we have been entrusted with God's message. Speaking and living out this message faithfully will not be without challenges. While you will most probably never face imprisonment for your faith, you will face, at times, a certain degree of opposition and trials. The good news is that God is faithful and He will give you the strength and the wisdom to be a faithful and effective witness of Jesus Christ. This also is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, John and Peter spoke boldly of Jesus' Resurrection and publicly performed, in the name of Jesus Christ, the healing of a man who was lame from birth.

Read Acts 3. 12-20

On the one hand, their message was sharp and uncompromising (let people in your group discover the points mentioned here under)

- God has glorified Jesus and it is in his name that this man was healed 3. 12,16
- You handed him over to be killed and you disowned him 3. 13
- You released a murderer instead of the Holy and Righteous One 3. 14
- You killed the author of life 3. 15

On the other hand, their message was also filled with mercy and compassion (let people in your group discover the points mentioned here under)

- I know that you acted in ignorance 3.19
- Repent and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out and times of refreshment come 3.19

Our context is different but the message is the same.

- What in the Gospel will bring offence?
- How do you fill your message with mercy and compassion?

Read Acts 4.23 -31

Jesus had warned his disciples of the cost of following him: "Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also." (John 15. 20)

John and Peter's obedience resulted in their imprisonment and in a court trial. On release, John and Peter went back to their faith community and shared what had happened. In reaction, the early faith community prayed not for protection, but for boldness and effectiveness.

- What was the content of their prayer ? What did they ask for ?
- In contrast, what do we ask God when faced with opposition ? How do we pray for Christians who are persecuted and silenced ?

Holy Spirit – The Ministry of Jesus

In John 4. 6-14 Jesus teaches that:

- To know Him is to know the Father
- Those who have seen Jesus, have seen the Father
- The words Jesus speaks are the words of the Father
- The works Jesus does are the works of the Father
- That He is in the Father and the Father is in Him.

Jesus is now with the Father and we are commissioned to do the work Jesus has been doing (whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing)

For your personal reflection and prayers this week:

Jesus who carries out the Father's works in his ministry on earth will continue to perform "greater" works from heaven in response to the prayers of the disciples he left behind

Think of the “works” of Jesus while on earth (including his death and resurrection) and compare those with the priorities in your life and the life of his church.

- What “works” and prayers are in tune with Jesus ministry and agenda ?
- What could be “dead” works/prayers (works done under your/our independent initiatives, in your/our ‘own authority’, for your/our personal enjoyment) ?

Prayer

Sovereign Lord, Maker and Redeemer, fill us afresh with the enabling presence and power of your Holy Spirit. Consider the challenges we face and enable us, your servants, to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs through the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ