

3. The Holy Spirit and Jesus

Opening question

How do you think Jesus was able to do the miracles He did?

Fact-check: Jesus is the one on whom the Spirit rests and who baptises with the Spirit

There are only a small number of events in the life of Jesus that are found in all four gospels (for example, only Matthew and Luke say anything about His birth). So, if four writers include something, it must be significant!

- Read one of these references together: Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, John 1:32. All four mention that the Spirit came to rest on Jesus at His baptism.
- Read one of these references together: Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33. All four declare that Jesus will baptise His people with the Holy Spirit. (Luke mentions this two more times, in Acts 1:5 and 11:16!)

Discussion

Why do you think these two facts about Jesus were considered so important by the first gospel writers?

Jesus ministers in the power of the Holy Spirit

As the eternal God, Jesus has power and authority beyond our comprehension. But Luke's gospel in particular highlights that He depended on the power of the Spirit throughout His ministry.

Ask different members of your group to read out these verses:

- Luke 1:35
- Luke 4:1
- Luke 4:14
- Luke 4:16-21
- Luke 10:21
- Matthew 12:18 (verses 9-21 if you want more context)
- Matthew 12:21

Discussion

What do these verses tell us about the work of the Spirit in Jesus's life? What does this imply for our understanding of John 20:21-22?

Pray together: Jesus promises the Spirit

“God does not give us the Spirit so that we can enjoy a few more up-tempo songs. He gives us the power that Jesus had to live as He lived, to speak as He spoke and to do what He did. He is looking for a church which will reach the nations with the gospel... When we understand the

immensity of the task, we become acutely aware of our lack of power. We think, 'If Elisha needed power to follow the ministry of Elijah, how much more do I need Jesus' power to continue the ministry of Jesus? If I'm going to accomplish great things for Him, I must have the Spirit that He had.'" (Terry Virgo and Phil Rogers, *Receiving The Holy Spirit and His Gifts*)

Do we believe the promises that Jesus makes? He gives promises to us that we would increasingly believe them, that we would bring them to God in confident prayer, that we would wait patiently but eagerly for them to be fulfilled, and so that we would step out in faith because of them.

Ask people to read out these verses. (We've included lots of them to highlight how emphatic Jesus is in promising the Spirit.) You might want to start playing music beforehand, or prepare yourselves in another way to pray with the help of these verses:

- Luke 11:9-13
- Luke 12:11-12
- John 7:37-39 (N.B. the glorification that John speaks of has now happened!)
- John 14:12-17 (ignore any chapter headings that separate the parts of this text!)
- John 14:26
- John 15:26
- John 16:7
- John 16:13-14
- Luke 24:29
- Acts 1:4-5 (N.B. despite all of the training they got from Jesus, He wouldn't let them start without the Spirit)
- Acts 1:8

Ask Jesus to give all of you His Holy Spirit, just as He repeatedly promised to. Use the promises themselves, pray about specific situations where you need the Spirit's breakthrough, and about the general call on God's people mentioned in the quote above. Call on God together for your group, and the whole church, that we would all be filled with the Spirit.

To reflect on during the week

How can Jesus say, as He does in John 16:7, that it is better for us that He go away?! This quote gives us an explanation:

"Were Jesus the man still walking the earth, I could expect to get one billionth of his time, and he would show up in my church once every 20,000 years. The Helper, by contrast, lives in me 24 hours a day, helps me in my weakness, prays for me, reveals truth to me, and comes with me to every church service and car service I ever go to." (Andrew Wilson, *Incomparable*)

How can you become more aware of the Helper's presence with you this week?