

Power for Service - 1

by Jackie Pullinger

Jackie Pullinger emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit's power and authority in practical ministry and the necessity of compassion in reaching the lost.

Duration: 35:26

Scripture: Matthew 9:35-36, Matthew 10:1, Luke 9:1

Topics: "Service"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the mission of the church, which is to preach the good news just like Jesus did. They emphasize the importance of reaching out to both those outside the church who are lost and poor, as well as those inside the church who may be struggling. The speaker references Matthew 9:35-36, where Jesus preached the good news and healed the sick out of compassion. They also mention the need for more workers in the harvest field and the importance of prayer in this mission. Overall, the sermon encourages believers to be involved in sharing the good news and bringing healing to those in need.

Transcript

See, we believe in practical ministry. If you weren't here at the last session, we're doing a follow-on from the last session. What we've been looking at is the mission of the Church, which is the same as Jesus' mission, which was to preach good news.

That is, something someone would like to hear. Good news to the poor, whoever they are, and then anointing to change those who may be found. So we're talking about reaching people outside the Church who are lost and poor, and those who are found who may be sitting somewhat uncomfortably inside the Church.

How we can pray for them to be set free and to see and to be healed in their hearts and their bodies. So today, right now, we're going to show how we may be involved in that, but just let's look at a few scriptures. Because I was quite bossy in the last session and said I didn't want to do any more seminars if you didn't bring your Bibles.

So, now you know. Matthew. Matthew, at the end of chapter 9, Jesus says in verse 35, he preached the good news of the Kingdom, healing every disease and sickness.

Verse 36, Matthew 9, when he saw the crowds he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. So what we have seen or talked about in the last session is that Jesus always used a combination of a heart that was moved with compassion and the power of God to change men's bodies and their hearts and lives. But he saw so many, and because there were so many, he actually couldn't touch them all.

Because although he was the Son of God, he was also the Son of Man, which meant everyone he touched got healed and everyone who touched him got healed. But he could only reach so many because he was the Son of Man at that time. So here, he sees that beyond those that he has touched, there are still more.

And says to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest therefore to send out workers into his harvest field. When you have seen and when I have seen that there are still more beyond, he says pray and send workers into the harvest.

And in the next chapter 10, that's what happens. Having told his disciples to pray for workers into the harvest, he sends them. So watch out.

You're not allowed to pray for workers in the harvest field unless you're ready to go yourself. He called his 12 disciples to him, Matthew 10, and he gave them authority to drive out evil spirits to heal every disease and sickness. And if we look over at Luke, we'll have a similar passage in chapter 9. He called the 12 together and he gave them power and authority to drive out demons and to cure sicknesses.

He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And again, after sending the 12 in chapter 9, in chapter 10, he appointed 72 more and gave them power and authority. What we're going to do in this session is to talk about the power of the Holy Spirit, to talk about authority and how all of you can receive this and use this.

Now, everywhere I go, I prefer, if I can, to take a team with me. I can't take teams to the USA because they won't let our people in because we've all got criminal records. But all our people are under orders.

And I say, wherever you go, you will prophesy. Now, this is not presumptuous of me. This is scriptural.

Because 1 Corinthians 14 says, you may all prophesy one by one. Now, the reason you don't get it in your group is that you haven't told everybody at the beginning of your group you will all prophesy. And, should you be a vicar, that you're all a bit young, should you be the leader of a church and you want spiritual gifts during your service instead of on Wednesdays, if you want them, you've got to give a space for them.

You've got to say something like, at the end of the next hymn, those with a word from the Lord may share it. So, then everybody expects. And you will, of course, have told them how they get words from the Lord, won't you? Because it's very simple, you get them by asking.

It's just that. And, so wherever I go, our people will all prophesy. Every time.

We usually don't have time to share ten, and scripture says that three at one time is quite enough, because you can't digest more. So, they will always do this because we are expecting them and believing scripture to behave like the church. And the church is never supposed to be one man doing everything.

Or, if the Holy Spirit enables us to get healed without a long think, which is sometimes what it's for. So let's think about different works of the Holy Spirit. Do you remember when Peter and James and John went up the mountain with Jesus? And they saw Jesus all shiny.

And Moses and Elijah. And they were having an experience. I hope you will have many experiences.

For when we know him, we will experience him ongoing in many ways. But the experience was so great. They said, Oh, the Holy Spirit's up this mountain.

Could we please take another plane trip next month? Because over in that city is really where God is working. And in the last few years, you have heard about shiny things on mountains, and people take plane trips to that city. It's good.

So many of the world might have been fed with that plane money. It's been millions of pounds they've spent going to that city. But it's good.

It's good. But so far, we've not yet seen that those that went to that shiny city have yet taken that shine to a lost and hungry world. It was something else that was happening in that city.

The same as it was something else for Peter, James and John when they were up the mountain, and they said, Oh, this is so good. We're having this great experience. Dear Jesus, could we lie on the floor for five days and we'll build some huts in case it rains.

We'd like to contain this experience. And it disappeared. So we will experience the Lord and His shiny presence from time to time.

And it's good. And then they had to come down the mountain in that story. And there was a man with a child who had a spirit.

He caused the child to throw himself into fire and water. And the disciples couldn't heal him. You see, the experience on the mountain was not the power to deal with the bottom of the mountain at that time.

And I think that some of us have got a little confused about whether we've received the Holy Spirit or not, and what it's for. Now let's look at Jesus. If you look at Him, I suppose you could say He was a Christian from birth.

By the way, the word Christ means anointed one. Therefore a good word for Christians should be anointed ones. As we are like Him.

So He was a Christian from birth, if you like. He was certainly born of the Holy Spirit, because that's how His mother got pregnant. Had there been no Holy Spirit, He couldn't have got born.

So, at birth He is a Christian. He has the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures remark that He had the Holy Spirit without measure. And yet, at the age of 30, He goes into the river and it says the Holy Spirit descended upon Him like a dove.

And it's one of the things I will ask in heaven, I think. How did they know the dove was a Holy Spirit? I mean, was it a dove and they said, Oh, that's the Holy Spirit. Or, how can the Holy Spirit be shaped like a dove? I don't know.

Anyway, all the Gospels record this. That it came down from heaven. There it was.

I was once praying with a drug addict. This was a long time ago. And he'd come to Jesus.

And there'd been big changes in his life. It was wonderful. He'd stopped running the gambling dens.

He'd stopped running his prostitutes. He'd set them free. And this was wonderful news.

But a few months later, he'd come to me and said, I'm terribly sorry, but I can't be a Christian anymore because I can't afford it. I've given up the girls. And I've given up the gambling dens.

And I just don't have enough money for my heroin. What do you mean? Heroin. Because I thought, when somebody knew Jesus, they got off heroin.

But, of course, I know better now. I know that we have to find ways with the power of God to help that happen. Anyway, what had happened was we took him to a friend's house and we were praying that the power of the Holy Spirit would come upon him.

He certainly was born again. He did know Jesus. And as we prayed, he suddenly was flat on the floor.

And this is a very unusual thing because he was a gang leader to find him flat on the floor. What had happened was that as we prayed for the power of the Holy Spirit, my friend's parrot escaped from the cage and circled over his head and landed on it. So he's been confused about doves to this day.

But after this, he began to speak in a new language. And it was after this that we sat with him for three days and three nights and prayed. We prayed in tongues.

He prayed in tongues much less than we did because almost as soon as he prayed in tongues, he went to sleep. And then he'd wake up and have a cheese sandwich, which is very unusual for Chinese. And he made us get a pot, a spittoon to vomit into, but he didn't vomit.

He just spoke in tongues and ate cheese sandwiches. And at the end of three days and three nights, he was off his heroin. He didn't need the money.

And his body was healed. And he'd had no withdrawal pains. And he looked wonderful.

And I looked awful. I'd been sitting by his bed for three days and three nights. So that's how we understood that although he was born again, which meant that he did have the Holy Spirit, you understand, he needed the power of the Holy Spirit to share good news of Jesus and to start working miracles.

Because the same power that Jesus received at his baptism, he offered to us. And he offers us, as well as the power, the authority. Now, I'll just give you a few more Bible verses to help you understand this.

If you look at Acts 1.8, you'll see that Jesus says, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses. Okay, so we're talking here about power to do the works of God. And I would like to distinguish between two works of the Holy Spirit.

They may not be that clear cut, but we'll make a distinction. There's the inner working of the Holy Spirit which draws us to Jesus and causes us to be born again. Okay? Now, if all of you who know Jesus will probably think back to the day you came to know Him.

And when you come to know Him, you say, on that day I believed Jesus. But some years later, you say, before that day, He was drawing me. And we understand that something was going on before that day.

I believe that the Holy Spirit works in us. And when we receive Jesus as our Saviour and ask Him to forgive our sins, He dwells in us. And the more we talk to Jesus, the more like Him we get.

And the more authority we get. Now, authority comes not from shouting, but from knowing. Okay? Okay? Now, you know that.

If you want to reach someone important, the best way of reaching an important person is by finding someone they trust. Who's got that person's ear? And therefore, if you know Jesus very well because you talk to Him every day, when you come to pray for the sick, it doesn't give you more power, but it does give you more authority. Now, the inner working of the Holy Spirit was going on in Jesus from the age of conception up until 30.

So, He was coming to know His Father very well. And His Father said, I'm really pleased with Him. Long before He'd done anything.

This is my kid. I'm delighted in Him. I'm really pleased in Him.

Hadn't done anything. But He knew Him. So that's where Jesus' authority came from.

Because He said, whatever the Father says, that's what I say. Say it, I don't. If the Father doesn't do it, I don't.

So He had this close relationship with His Father. And if you have a close relationship with Jesus, what should happen is you grow fruit, which is in Galatians 5. Now, sometimes people confuse gifts with fruit. They're quite different.

You get patience, love, joy, long-suffering. You get fruit. Now, you don't need to pray for fruit.

Dear God, give me patience! No, you don't. You just need to know Him. And fruit grows, you see.

It's a growth. It's not a gift. Got it? Now, if I were to choose between people who demonstrated power and demonstrated fruit, there's no doubt which I would choose.

Okay? I mean, all of us would choose the fruit people, wouldn't we? They're the sweet people. They're the loving people. They're the kind people.

They're the long-suffering people. But we don't have to choose in the year 2000. Now, if you look at people's Bibles, you can always tell which church group they've come from.

The evangelicals have underlined 1 Corinthians 13. Without love, gifts are useless. You're just like a loud clanging cymbal.

And the Pentecostals and the Charismatics have underlined chapter 12 and 14 all about power. Well, you're not supposed to choose one or the other. It's a sandwich.

So, you're supposed to have the power in chapter 12, and if you read in chapter 12, it's how the gifts work together. Nobody is more important than anyone else. Chapter 13, use the gifts with love.

Not, love is better than the gifts. And love isn't a gift, by the way. It's a fruit.

But why not pray for the power of the Holy Spirit and use the power of the Holy Spirit with the fruit of the Holy Spirit? This is the offer today. And chapter 14, again, is a very practical chapter on how you use the gifts of the Spirit when you meet together. Never, never to use the gifts of the Spirit to make yourself feel good, but always so that every single person feels included.

And for that reason, don't all pray in tongues together, out loud. Because, if somebody else can't join in, that's not loving. So don't do it.

Because gatherings are supposed to be inclusive. You may come in, you may join in. We are gathered that you might be helped, not that we might feel good.

So the gifts of the Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit, are not given to us to show off that we've got power or to go on a trip. They're to make every single person present, all of you today, feel, I can be part of this. And wherever I'm at, God still accepts me and apparently these people do too.

So don't ever use the power of the Spirit to make some people feel less or left out. Because receiving the power of the Holy Spirit is not a badge of maturity. All our people receive tongues and prophecies and gifts of healing when they're on heroin.

And they haven't got any of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. You know, they prophesy one night and hit someone the next. You know, we certainly know that the power of the Holy Spirit is not a shortcut to maturity.

But, all of our people are offered the power of the Holy Spirit at conversion and then we encourage the growth of the fruit at the same time. And after all, it's not us giving them the power of the Spirit, it's God, so that's His business. Acts 1.8 You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses.

Receiving the Holy Spirit in our hearts is to know Jesus and to grow more like Him. Receiving the power of the Holy Spirit upon our lives is what I call the external work of the Holy Spirit is to give us power to share Him with the lost outside and to help the found inside get changed enough to go out. That's what it's for.

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