

Before we begin, think of all the different ways you spent your time in the past two weeks.
Write them below, and we will refer back to this list later.

Following his baptism, Jesus started his Spirit-empowered ministry.

Luke 4:14-21 (NIV)

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁵ He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

*¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because
he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, ²¹ and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

What exactly was the mission that the Holy Spirit empowered Jesus to do?

Jesus came to set the spiritual captives free, restore spiritual life, and bring people back to the joy of the Lord.

In order to accomplish this task he needed to live a sinless life, die as a sacrifice for our sins, and rise to new life, conquering the hold of death. He knew what he needed to do and he knew what it would cost him. At his baptism, Jesus symbolically accepted this mission and because of this, the Father responded with the words: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

What is the common denominator between the above passage and next two passages?

Disciples**Acts 1:8 (NIV)**

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Phillip**Acts 8:29, 36-40 (NIV)**

The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" ³⁷ ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Do you get the sense that the Holy Spirit is on a mission? What gives that away?

If the Holy Spirit is on a mission, what is the implication for everyone he fills and leads?

The question is not whether our lives should be mission-focussed, but where and how we will carry out that mission.

Paul & Peter**Galatians 2:8-10 (NIV)**

For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. ⁹ James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. ¹⁰ All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

What was Peter's mission? Witness to the Jews

What was Paul's mission? Witness to the Gentiles

What is your mission? Do any in the group have a clear sense of how they are to carry on the Holy Spirit's mission through their lives?

The Holy Spirit is very focussed on finishing the mission of bringing people to Jesus Christ. In fact, Jesus cannot return until the Holy Spirit has sent the gospel message to every people group around the world.

Matthew 24:14 (NIV)

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

If someone were to look at your description of how you spent the past two weeks (your list at top of study), what would they determine is your life focus or mission?

As a group, discuss what you think a mission-focussed life looks like.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (NIV)

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

As you reflect on how you are investing your life, what things from the past two weeks do you believe will go through the flames and come out on the other side? (Refer back to the list at the beginning of the study.)

Burned in the Fire

Purified in the Fire

What are some of the challenges or hindrances we face in living a mission-focussed life?

What is the difference between living a mission-focussed life, and doing a ministry?

A mission-focussed life says my whole life is centred on allowing the Holy Spirit to fulfill his mission through me in everything I do. Doing a ministry is simply something I do that helps the kingdom of God. It is possible to do a ministry, but have that as just one of many things I do in my week, and not necessarily flow from a life of mission focus.

Can you think of some people that are living a mission-focussed life? What is it about their lives that make that evident?

If we are “truly” disciples of Jesus, then we must embrace his mission:

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you

We are directed by Jesus to:

introduce people to him,
baptize them, and
disciple them by teaching them to obey everything he commanded.

Break off into groups of three or four and discuss:

How can we move from simply having a ministry we “do” within the church to living a life with a mission focus?

Are there some ways we need to simplify our lives so that we can have a greater spiritual impact?

Back as a big group:

Share some of your thoughts from the small groups.

How might our lives change if we truly surrender to the mission of Jesus and the Holy Spirit?

What is the alternative to NOT embracing a life of mission?

Luke 10:17,21 (NIV)

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."...

²¹ At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

Why do you think the disciples were filled with joy as they embraced the mission?

Why was Jesus filled with joy?

It is always exciting to see God work mightily through us in positively influencing the lives of others. The disciples were filled with joy because they got to partner with God in his mission to set people free from Satan and sin's bondage.

Jesus was filled with joy because he was seeing his followers embrace his kingdom mission and begin to represent his love and rule in the world. The walls of Satan's kingdom crumble and people are set free as Jesus' followers move forward in faith, confidence, and boldness for the kingdom of God.

There is no greater joy for God than to see people enter into a relationship with him because his present children are intentionally representing him well to the world.

THIS SAME JOY IS AVAILABLE TO YOU AS YOU EMBRACE HIS MISSION IN YOUR LIFE.