

# THE WAY OF THE CROSS

## Part 2 - The Sun

As we go 'Into Our Community Together' as a church this year, Easter brings with it the sharp focus of not only our own personal liberation, but also the power of salvation for the world around us.

Easter makes us family, and restores the access to the Father's presence, gives us the reason to be released, gives us the good news to declare and the power to demonstrate it.

Today's image that we want to focus on as we journey towards Easter is – The Sun. The Risen Son – the resurrected Messiah – anointed one of God! The resurrection life of Jesus is the life that we are all invited into! It's an invitation to live like Jesus.

### The Power to Change

Can you imagine what the resurrection meant to the disciples who were huddled together after Jesus' death and burial – broken and sorrowful at the loss of their leader and friend (John 20:20-23).

In the weeks and months after Jesus appeared, however, these same men and women went out proclaiming the message of Christ to great crowds, suffering imprisonment, beating, and even martyrdom for their relentless testimonies. They went about the same work of Jesus in healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing the leper, driving out demons. What transformed their timid lives and broken hearts into faith filled, miracle working testimonies to the life of Jesus?

The same life-changing resurrection power that is available to us today (Ephesians 1:18-20). Jesus' grave is empty. That fact changes everything not just about who Jesus was but about who we are in Him.

### Jesus and the Holy Spirit's Power

Jesus says that we will have access to the same source of supernatural power that Jesus had, namely, the Holy Spirit (John 14:12).

Jesus was the only individual who ever existed as 100 percent God and 100 percent human. Although Jesus was never without all the attributes of God, He voluntarily gave up the use of these attributes during His incarnation. He did all the supernatural works through the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38).

As believers and disciples of Christ, we have His Spirit dwelling inside us, and because of this, we have the same mission He did (Luke 4:18-19). We also have His anointing. If Jesus needed the anointing of His Father in order to carry out His mission, how much more do we need it?

## **Jesus' Commission to Us**

Jesus calls us to the impossible. Supernatural power is necessary for God's purposes to be fulfilled (Luke 24:49).

- + Matthew, "Make disciples of all the nations" (28:19)
- + Mark, "Preach the gospel to every creature" (16:15)
- + Luke, "Repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations" (24:47)
- + John, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (20:21).
- + Matthew, "Obey everything I have commanded you" (28:18-20; 10:7-8)
- + Acts 1:8 says, "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."
- + 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, "Ambassadors for Christ and ministers of reconciliation"

God never requires anything of us that He does not equip us to do.

## **Kingdom Priests**

Freely you have received; freely give! Because of the resurrection of Jesus, we are invited into a life of faith and obedience to carry out the supernatural works of declaring and demonstrating His kingdom with His power at work through us.

We have a priestly role to fulfil (1 Peter 2:9) which includes us cooperating with God to have all the facets of the Kingdom of God come to earth (Matthew 6:9-10).

The secret to being an effective Kingdom Priest is found in the ministry of Jesus (John 5:19; 8:26). We need to stay in the right place with God our Father to hear from Him, so we might do as He desires with the power He provides.

## **How Do You Live an Empowered Life?**

Four "steps" for receiving an empowered life.

1. First, become discontent with your dry, dead, empty form of religion, and get desperate for a fresh move of God in your life. We must have a deep hunger and longing for more of the presence of God (Psalm 143:6).
2. The second step to receiving the anointing is to be clean and pure (Ecclesiastes 9:8). Ask God to have the Holy Spirit search your heart and convict you of any hidden or known sin. Don't pass over this step lightly!
3. The third step to receiving the anointing is to ask the Heavenly Father to anoint you and fill you afresh with the power of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:9-10; 13).
4. The fourth step to receiving and walking in the anointing is to start confessing what God's Word has to say about you and how the kingdom of heaven looks on earth. Pray that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven and exercise faith to step out into His will.

We want the empowered resurrected life not so that people will look at us, but see Jesus! That's what we have to do to walk in true anointing: put Jesus on display in our lives (2 Corinthians 3:18).

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe to one another times where you have seen the power of God at work in its various different ways.
2. Do you think many Christians tend to stereotype God's power as spectacular? In what ways have you seen God's power at work in more subtle ways either in your life or through your life?
3. What would being an effective Kingdom Priest look like in your current field of influence (work place, home, place of study)?
4. Are you prepared to pay the price for God's anointing? Discuss together what areas of life for you are hard to let go of.
5. Take some time to read through the steps to living an empowered life. Discuss which step for you is hardest right now. Action the steps outlined.
6. Pray for one another and ask for the power of the Holy Spirit to overwhelm you to fulfil His Kingdom's reign through you.