



"Empowered for Purpose"

Acts 3:1-16

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, our mission field is the ordinary places that we go every day (1)

Peter and John weren't going anywhere out of the ordinary that day they were going to the temple to pray. They were simply going where they always went at that time on that day. It was an ordinary path that they traveled to a familiar place in Jerusalem, but something had changed now that God was in them and with them through the presence of the Holy Spirit. All of a sudden, the ordinary path that they traveled often had become their mission field. All of a sudden, the familiar place that they worshiped in Jerusalem had become their mission field. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Peter and John were going to a place that was full of people who needed God. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Peter and John carried the presence of God with them and the message of Jesus that these people needed to hear. Peter and John had the answer to truly finding God and truly worshiping God. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Peter and John were on the mission field for Jesus every day, wherever they were! Our mission field -- like theirs -- is the ordinary places that we go every day because of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that is in us!

1. How often do you see the ordinary places that you go every day as a mission field? Why?
2. As a group, make a list of the ordinary places that you frequent as you do your work, take care of your business, enjoy time with friends, etc.
3. Discuss why these ordinary places that we frequent are a mission field, and share ideas on practical ways that we can remember this day-by-day.
4. How often do you think about and really realize the fact that God is with you and that you have been empowered with the Holy Spirit to do His work? What can you do to remember and realize this everyday?

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, our ordinary encounters can be used in extraordinary ways (2 & 7-8)

Daily life can seem so incredibly mundane. Day after day passes, which seem to have no significance, but this situation in Acts 3 reminds us that even the seemingly mundane situations of life are ripe for God to work in amazing ways. This crippled man probably did not think anything special would happen that day because there was most likely nothing special that had occurred in the previous days, but when God's Spirit is at work and God's people are obedient, there is no limit to what can be done. This story teaches us that God works miraculously in the midst of the ordinary.

1. What are the ordinary parts of your day? In what ways can these ordinary occasions be used to love God and show God's love to others?
2. Do you have a story when you saw God work in the midst of the ordinary? Share that story with the group.
3. Take some time to pray as a group that God would use your ordinary days to advance the Kingdom of God.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, our focus can line up with God's focus: Faith in Jesus (3-5; 16)

The beggar could not enter the temple because of his physical defect, but he knew that it was the place to be if he was to make any money. He was an expert at spotting people that were likely to help him so his eyes were constantly searching for likely donors. He spotted Peter and John and saw something in them that told him they were likely to give him something. He asked them for help, but Peter's command to look at him was not the usual response. It surely caught him off guard, and he immediately looked up. When Peter led off with "I have no money," he may have been ready to move on to the next person, but he was definitely not ready for Peter's next words: "What I have I give to you...." Wow! The faith of Peter to speak the name of Jesus and to command him to stand-up was amazing. The faith of the beggar to believe him and to stand-up was

incredible! There was nothing the beggar had to do to qualify for this miracle. No new member class, no theological training, and no church vote to be held. All he had to do was to show his faith by standing up, and the rest was done by the Holy Spirit. God has given us the power to serve Him and to share Jesus. We sometimes just seem to have a problem "standing up." The Holy Spirit is already working in us and preparing us to serve. We just have to do it!

1. What do you think the general attitude was toward the beggar by the people that encountered him every day? What is your attitude toward people you see every day that are asking for help in one way or another?
2. Peter and John had no money to give, but they still met the need of the beggar in a huge way because they saw his need in his heart. They were receptive to the Holy Spirit and acted in faith. Have you acted in faith at some time in your life? Did the Holy Spirit lead you to do something? Did you follow through?
3. What if the beggar had not tried to stand-up because he believed he couldn't? Would he have still received the miracle? How do we miss out on blessings because we don't act on faith? Do what God has prepared and equipped us to do!

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, every encounter is an opportunity to share Jesus (6-16)

The man that was healed was stuck to Peter and John, and the word about what had happened to him was spreading fast among the people at the temple complex. In verse eleven, we see that all of the people who had heard about the miracle were running to see the man who was healed and the men who had healed him. When Peter saw this crowd of people gathering around, he realized this was more than just an opportunity for people to see a lame man who could now walk. This was an opportunity to tell these people about Jesus! Peter and John could have enjoyed a moment of fame as the men who made a lame man walk, but they didn't. Peter and John could have just thanked God for healing the man and stopped at that, but they didn't. Peter and John took the opportunity to tell the people what they really needed to hear. Peter and John told the people about Jesus, pointing them to the power of Jesus and the call for faith. Peter and John understood that since believers are empowered by the Holy Spirit, every encounter is an opportunity to share Jesus.

1. We all encounter opportunities to share Jesus everyday, but sometimes we are not "tuned in" to God's radio station so to speak. What are some opportunities that you may encounter daily if you listened to the Holy Spirit more closely?
2. How can you become more receptive to the leadership and power of the Holy Spirit as you go through the day?
3. Think of one person whom you cross paths with on a weekly, if not daily, basis. Pray that God would give you the opportunity to share Jesus with them, and then be ready for God to answer that prayer!
4. Are there things in your life (fear, business, shyness, misunderstanding of the Gospel, etc.) that are keeping you from sharing Jesus with those around you? Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to overpower these things in your life!