

Love Your Friend to Faith

Becoming a Commissioned Christian

Participant's Handout

The purpose of this module is to:

Encourage Christians to witness in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Objectives :

- *To remind ourselves that witnessing is a divinely authorized activity.*
- *To draw upon God's power to become effective.*

A. Introduction

1. Jesus saw in His first followers what we experience now as His disciples.
2. Jesus knew their and our own fears, uncertainties, and hesitations.
3. Jesus prepared His disciples in the same way He wants to prepare us.
4. Jesus empowers us to witness.
5. Learn with me about how Jesus commissions personal witnesses.

B. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus' _____.

1. "Jesus himself stood among them" (v. 36).
 - a. Witnessing disciples _____ with them the personal presence of Jesus.
 - i. Jesus is in fact "God _____ us" (Matthew 1:23) and he promises to be with us to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).
 - ii. Jesus' presence _____ goes with us. ". . . For the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you or forsake you" (Deuteronomy 28:6).
 - b. Witnessing disciples hear Jesus speak _____ to them.
 - i. The peace Jesus speaks _____ our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7).
 - ii. The peace Jesus speaks transcends our _____ understanding (Philippians 4:7).
2. Jesus _____ to them (v. 38).
 - a. Jesus still _____.
 - i. The disciples were reassured by Jesus' _____.
 - ii. We are reassured because the Jesus who became flesh and blood for us still speaks to us _____.
 - b. Jesus continues to help us with our _____.
 - i. Jesus helps us even when we cannot put our fears into _____ (vv. 37, 41).
 - ii. Jesus tells us how to _____ our fears. While witnessing in Corinth, Paul was encouraged by these words from the Lord: "Do not be afraid, keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you" (Acts 18:9-10).
 - c. Jesus addresses our _____ (v. 38).
 - i. Jesus does not _____ us for doubting (v.38).
 - ii. Jesus quells our doubts with _____ (v.40).
 - d. Jesus deals with both our fears and our doubts by _____ Himself to us (vv. 39-43).

C. We are commissioned when Jesus _____ us.

1. "Then He opened their minds so they could understand the _____" (v. 45).

a. Before the crucifixion Jesus had _____ His disciples.

i. Jesus taught from Old Testament _____.

ii. Jesus taught using New Testament _____.

b. But Jesus' disciples did not _____ His teaching.

i. The disciples could not understand Jesus' teaching on their _____.

ii. The disciples still had doubts and fears and _____.

c. Learning requires _____.

i. Receptivity requires a _____ to listen.

ii. Receptivity requires a _____ to understand.

d. God opens our _____ (Luke 24:45; Matthew 11:4-5).

i. God opens the _____ (Luke 24:32). We understand that Jesus is the fulfillment of everything in the scriptures.

ii. God opens our _____ (Acts 16:14). We experience the presence of Jesus.

2. Jesus told them, "This is what is _____:" (v.46).

a. Jesus wanted His followers to _____ the scriptures (v.45).

b. Jesus' _____ mirrored the Scriptures.

c. Jesus' _____ opened the Scriptures.

3. Jesus _____ from the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms (v.44).

4. Scriptures _____ to Jesus (v.44).

a. Reading the Scriptures _____ our hearts to accept Jesus.

b. Jesus' prepares us to direct _____ to Jesus.

5. Jesus fulfilled the _____ of the Old Testament.

a. Through His _____ (Isaiah 53).

b. Through His _____ (Psalm 16:9-11).

c. Through His _____ (Isaiah 49:6).

d. Through His _____ (Joel 2:28-29).

D. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus' _____.

1. Jesus suffered, died, and _____ from the dead (v.46).

a. This truth is to be proclaimed _____ (v.47).

i. Jesus commissioned the disciples to be witnesses to all nations, beginning at _____.

ii. Jesus commissions us to be His witnesses everywhere, beginning with our own _____.

- b. _____ is to know about Jesus and what He did for us.
 - i. Jesus preached the Gospel to _____ the Jews and the Gentiles (Romans 1:16).
 - ii. We are to preach the Gospel without showing _____ (Acts 10:34-35).

2. Jesus wants us to repent in order to find _____ of sins.

- a. This message requires _____.
 - i. Jesus has _____ us to be His spokespersons.
 - ii. Jesus' _____ words before His ascension commission us to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8).
- b. "You are _____ of these things" (v.48).
 - i. The disciples were physically present to be _____ changed.
 - ii. We are witnesses of the _____ spiritual change.
 - iii. What Jesus did then He does _____ in us.
 - iv. Let's _____!

E. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus' _____.

1. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to His followers (v.49).

- a. The _____ comes because God promised and Jesus prayed.
 - i. Even in the Old Testament, God foretold the _____ of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29).
 - ii. God _____ change the promise of His Word (Numbers 23:19).
 - iii. Jesus _____ that all future believers would carry on a new ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 17:20).
- b. We _____ and welcome the Holy Spirit.
 - i. We wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit with joyful expectancy.
 - ii. We welcome the gift of the Holy Spirit with hearts that are prepared.

2. Jesus' Spirit provides _____ to witness (Acts 1:8).

- a. We do not _____ on our own.
 - i. Jesus' Spirit _____ before us (Ephesians 2:10).
 - ii. Jesus' Spirit _____ for us (Romans 8:26).
 - iii. Jesus' Spirit makes us _____ (Acts 4:29-31).
 - iv. Jesus' Spirit never _____ us (Matthew 28:20).
- b. We are not _____.
 - i. Jesus promised, "You will be _____ with power" (v.49).
 - ii. The Holy Spirit is an _____ source of power for witnessing disciples.
- c. We are to go everywhere to _____.

Small Group Exercise

Commissioned Christians have the power to witness available to them. But how would our witnessing power be impacted if we claimed the power Jesus has promised to us?

God is calling all of us to be witnesses to the people in our neighborhoods and workplaces. As you divide into church teams to take turns answering the following questions, focus on the specific people you know who need Jesus. Then consider how the Holy Spirit's preparation, intercession, and empowerment can make you a witnessing disciple to those specific people.

- Read Ephesians 2:10: *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* How has God prepared us in advance to do the good work of a witnessing disciple?

- Read Romans 8:26: *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."* How does the Holy Spirit help us to overcome any of our weaknesses in witnessing?

- Read Acts 4:29-30: *"Now, Lord consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God boldly."* How does the Holy Spirit embolden us a witnessing disciples?

Action Planning/Reporting

Everything that Jesus accomplished while He was on earth was made possible by the Holy Spirit. The key is Jesus' amazing life is summed up in Scripture: "Jesus returned to Galilee *in the power of the Spirit*, and news about him spread through the whole countryside" (Luke 4:14).

Similarly, the witnessing power of our church is only as powerful as the Spirit who directs each individual member. Therefore, we need to ask the following questions:

How can we encourage our church members to draw near to the Holy Spirit's work of preparation in their hearts?

How can we encourage our church members to utilize the Holy Spirit's intercession to help them in their witnessing weaknesses?

How can we encourage our church members to claim the Holy Spirit's power to embolden them as witnesses?