

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

THE SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE AND POWER

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Excerpt from Today's First Reading and Today's Gospel

The Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God. Among men, who knows what pertains to the man except his spirit that is within? Similarly, no one knows what pertains to God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand the things freely given us by God. And we speak about them not with words taught by human wisdom, but with words taught by the Spirit, describing spiritual realities in spiritual terms.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:10-13

Jesus taught them on the sabbath, and they were astonished at his teaching because he spoke with authority. In the synagogue there was a man with the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out in a loud voice, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" Jesus rebuked him and said, "Be quiet! Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down in front of them and came

out of him without doing him any harm. They were all amazed and said to one another, "What is there about his word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." And news of him spread everywhere in the surrounding region.

LUKE 4:31-37

Reflection

Throughout the Gospels and the Epistles we encounter the Spirit of God/Spirit of Jesus as they are manifested in the teaching and healing ministries of the disciples and the fledgling communities. This abiding Spirit imbues the disciples' faith with convincing wisdom and a miraculous power to bring healing to so many suffering from illness and spiritual afflictions. Moreover, the narratives in the Pauline Epistles make clear that this anointing in the Spirit is not an affirmation of spiritual superiority, or an authority based on status or magical capacity. Paul asserts vigorously that the Spirit of God he received was welcomed with humility, not vanity. When he speaks to the people of the 'things of God,' he speaks **'with words taught by the Spirit, describing spiritual realities in spiritual terms.'** Simply put, the prophetic voice of the true disciple is not an embellishment added to a public persona or role. The Spirit is a life-transforming 'new birth' into the fullness of God's emerging grace through the inspired life and ministry of Jesus. This transformation is the first miracle of Spirit, and the vital indwelling of the God **'in whom we live and move and have our being'** (Acts 17:28).

When Jesus speaks to the community in Capernaum, he is not a 'stranger from out of town.' The city is the scene of prior ministry and healing. When he teaches in their synagogue, **'they were astonished at his teaching because he spoke with authority.'** Then he drives out a demonic spirit from a man in the synagogue, manifesting the authority of the Spirit to work with power in the many circumstances of human life. These simple revelations of the Spirit in Capernaum provide a glimpse of the new world that will emerge as Christians begin to walk the new path they receive as the family of the Resurrected One. Jesus continues as the very life of those who choose to follow his path. This life is the Spirit that vivifies and inspires his family every day throughout history.



Jesus Teaches

For Pondering

- Have you had experiences in your life where you felt your words and actions unfolded in the power of God's Spirit?
 - What does it mean to you to say that the Spirit is the heart of the life of Christian churches?
 - How might you inspire others to embrace the freedom of Spirit that dwells at the heart of their lives of faith?
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