

Power

Sunday 26th January



Tissot, James, 1836-1902. Jesus Unrolls the Book in the Synagogue, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56774> [retrieved January 4, 2025].

Original source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn_Museum_-_Jesus_Unrolls_the_Book_in_the_Synagogue_\(J%C3%A9sus_dans_la_synagogue_d%C3%A9roule_le_livre\)](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn_Museum_-_Jesus_Unrolls_the_Book_in_the_Synagogue_(J%C3%A9sus_dans_la_synagogue_d%C3%A9roule_le_livre))

Scripture: Luke 4.14-21

Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

To reflect

In today's Gospel reading, at the beginning we're told that Jesus was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. At the start of the fourth chapter of Luke's Gospel (the previous section) we are told that Jesus was full of the power of the spirit as he went into the Wilderness and encountered the devil. This is because in Luke 3.21 Jesus was baptised and the Holy Spirit descended upon him as a dove.

The power of the spirit has protected and given Jesus wisdom to endure the temptations of the wilderness and in the section of the Gospel we hear today Jesus is teaching in the synagogue. The Holy Spirit is part of Jesus' teaching, identifying himself by the prophecy in Isaiah. The power of the Holy Spirit is giving Jesus the powers and abilities he has been given by being fully divine and fully human and by being God. Power in the New Testament often refers to the powers of God or to powers and abilities that God gives to people.

How do you think of the word power in the context of your Christian faith? Does reflecting on how the word power is used in the scriptures change how you see the word power – as an equipping word rather than having power over someone?

Collect for the Third Sunday of Epiphany

Almighty God,
by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service.
Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOtQY3q78Rf2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587>)

- 'More Love More Power' by Jude del Hierro, one version is by Vineyard Worship. The first verse is 'More love, more love, More power, more power, More of You in my life. More love, more love, More power, more power, More of You in my life.'
- 'Hark the Glad Sound, the Saviour Comes' (one version is by Exultate) this Advent Carol paraphrases the words from Isaiah that Jesus quotes in today's Gospel reading.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.