



Stay Alert to
the Spirit

Worship Resources

Week 1: Preparation
Theme Setting the Scene

Last update 02.09.2020

PRAYERS



Opening Prayer (Collect)

Lord Jesus Christ,
you were obedient to the Holy Spirit
in announcing the Way of the Kingdom of God.
Pour your Spirit upon us in these troubled times,
that we may hear your voice,
and be reshaped for your purposes today. Amen

Closing Prayer (Post Communion)

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people,
and kindle in us the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit, Lord, and we shall be created,
and you will renew the face of the earth. Amen

BIBLE



Psalm 137.1-6
Isaiah 57.14-21
Mark 1.1-12

NOTICES



We identify the five priorities of Jesus as:

People... Teaching... Team Building... Prayer... Prophetic Challenge

We offer JSP resources to encourage churches to listen afresh to what the Spirit is saying to the Church in this time of challenge, pain, loss, and change, using the five priorities suggested that sum up Jesus' ministry. The aim of Week One is to help us prepare ourselves for the coming weeks of listening and discovery.

Setting the Scene

What's been going on—what has happened to us? Adversity and pain is never welcome nor invited. It's only redeeming feature is a fresh opportunity for the Spirit of God to strip things back and redirect us.

John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministry in a land invaded and occupied by Roman forces imposing a different way of life. The situation created a new spiritual hunger in a wide range of people. John, from a priestly home, became the prophet who 'prepared the way' with a challenging message and invitation.

Our OT readings from Psalm 137 and Isaiah 57, reflect a time of loss and pain that stimulated a new spiritual hunger and thirst, and led to remarkable spiritual renewal and re-formation in those times.

Perhaps the present crisis can enable God's purposes to reverberate in our world, and create a hunger for ways much closer to the Way of his Kingdom. If we listen carefully—to our own

inner voice, and that of the people around us, we can begin to identify and respond to the voice of the Spirit.

We can apply these questions to ourselves and our local community:

- ▶ How are you coping with the loss and changes we're experiencing?
- ▶ What effect has the crisis had on your faith and spiritual life?
- ▶ What have you been discovering in these times. Are you keen that we learn from each other?
- ▶ Could this be a 'Kairos moment' that God wants to use for good?
- ▶ What would you like us to gain from *Stay Alert to the Spirit*?
- ▶ Describe how 'pressing on' instead of 'staying in the same place' might look like for us as a Church?
- ▶ What obstacles do you see that could prevent us going forward?



SHAPED PEOPLE