

## 'Until it is completed'

### Notes on the Bible readings

- This passage from Luke gives us a real glimpse of the stress and struggle that Jesus went through, and the intense pressure he had to cope with. This is a rare occasion in the Gospels when Jesus shows his vulnerability.

- First, Jesus uses the imagery of fire with an allusion to its refining ability as a metaphor for judgement. Second, he uses the language of baptism; the image of going down into the water and rising to new life as a symbol of his own physical death and resurrection. He acknowledges that he must go through this in order to bring new life to all humanity.

- Yet Jesus does not dwell on his suffering, but quickly asserts his determination to 'complete' what his Father has called him to do (v.50). The Greek word *telos* is a very strong word which means 'the purpose is fulfilled'. Once completed, it cannot be undone. Jesus warns that he brings division rather than peace, as his disciples are obliged to make a choice to follow him and it can tear families apart.

- With such uncompromising faith in the face of adversity, Jesus brings freedom from sin and death for all who call upon his name. Although we encounter stress and division in our lives, we have that same Spirit within us, to stand firm in the face of such challenges and proclaim our freedom and confidence.

### Questions for reflection

- ▶ Can you think of a title for this image?
- ▶ How do you describe the stress and tensions of everyday life?
- ▶ How do you cope with division that exists in your life?



### A prayer of approach

*Faithful one, presider over heaven and earth,  
we approach your throne in humble adoration.  
May our praise and worship be pleasing to your ears.  
Amen.*

### A prayer for others

*Lord, you care about the weak and the needy.  
Be with the vulnerable,  
with those exploited by others for selfish gain;  
rescue them from the clutches of wicked, heartless people.  
We ask that your hand be with judges and all in authority within  
the legal system;  
may they work with integrity to defend those in need.  
We ask that your hand be upon the oppressed in society today.  
We pray for all those who are suffering stress and division in  
their lives – or rejection, condemnation and the heartbreak of  
broken family relationships – because of their commitment of  
faith.  
Lord, we pray for all those who as yet do not know you,  
and are walking around in darkness.  
Send faithful witnesses to shine your light into their lives.  
Lord, lead us.  
Show us how we can be effective witnesses for you.  
Amen.*

### A personal prayer

*Lord, help me to kindle the fire of the good news by discerning,  
interpreting and applying – without compromise – your word  
to my life.  
Amen.*

For reflection and comment linking this week's Bible reading to the news, current issues and events, go to [www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com) and click on PostScript.



### Live your faith

Each day, note any divisions in your personal life, in your community, in your church, and in the wider world. Use these notes as a prompt to prayer.