

GIVEN POWER AND AUTHORITY

Jesus put us in a position to operate with both Power and Authority as we extend the Kingdom of Heaven in partnership with Him. He designed us for both. Unfortunately, most believers do not believe they have been given either. A great way to think about this is that Jesus has given us both the Gun and the Badge, authority and power together. Neither power nor authority work independently. If you waive your gun around without the authority to use it or even carry a weapon without the proper authority, you will end up in trouble. If you go in with just your badge and try to exercise your authority with only a badge and no gun (power), you will end up fighting from a position of weakness not being able to enforce the authority you say you have.

In Luke 9:1, Jesus gave the disciples power and authority, “And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all demons and to heal diseases.” Jesus delegated the power and authority given to Him. The Greek words are very interesting, Exousia = Authority and Dunamis = Power.

- Exousia - power (delegated), authority to do anything; permission, license.
- Dunamis - forceful power, not merely power capable of action, but, power in action. – The ability of God. Power to do anything.

He put the 12 and the 72 in the position of operating with everything He gave them. We see two immediate examples of results. Luke 10:17 - The seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name.” Luke 10:18-19 - And He said to them, “I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.” The key to the results is that they had to use what they had been given. Delegated power and authority works when we use it!

In Exodus 14 Moses’s staff was just a stick until it was extended over the Red Sea and the sea parted. In II Kings 12 Elijah’s coat was just a coat until it struck the water and it parted. You have to use what you have been given moving out of the realm of theory and move it into practice. We have to test what we have in our hands.

If this is true, then as believers we desperately need to change our view of spiritual warfare. Many Christians have developed a theology based on powerless experience that says when I do something for God I am going to get attacked and it is going to be hard. There is a belief that the devil is big and God is small. By agreeing with this thinking there is a continual empowerment of the torment from the enemy and I do not live in the truth of the power and authority I have already been given.

As believers, our view of spiritual warfare needs to shift. Colossians 2:15 – “Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.” The Enemy is disarmed. Some other translations describe Jesus’ victory over the enemy as: “Boldly

displayed them as his conquests" and "Made a bold display and example of them". Jesus starts out the great commission in Matthew 28:18 with "All power and authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." If Jesus has all power and authority everywhere (in heaven and on earth), then the enemy has none if Jesus has it all. It is interesting as Jesus commands his followers to disciple nations; he gives them all power and authority to do so. We see a shift here of commands. Commands under the old covenant require you to do something whereas commands under the new covenant empower you to do something. Jesus gives you what you need to fulfill the assignment.

It is all about our perspective and how we look at things. A great example of this concept is how I view basketball vs. how Michael Jordan does. I played basketball in college and at 6'6" was pretty good compared to most. However, Michael Jordan has a totally different perspective on basketball than I do, even though we played the same game (basketball). If I came up against a 7-footer I would be worried about getting shut down, getting my shot blocked and being defeated because he is so much bigger than me. Michael would have a totally different perspective. He would go up over the top of the 7-footer, dunk on him, some photographer would take a photo, turn the photo into a poster, the poster would be sold in stores everywhere, the 7-footer would now be "posterized", and Michael would now make thousands of dollars off of the sale of the poster dunking on the 7-foot opponent I was afraid of. Our view of spiritual warfare desperately needs to change because Jesus has "posterized" the enemy.

Paul emphasizes this point too in his letter to the Corinthians that it is not about man's ideas or strategies, but about who you are and what is available to you in partnership with Him. I Corinthians 3:20-23 – "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile. 21 Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours: 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come—all are yours. 23 And you are Christ's, and Christ is God's." If all things are mine, I should act like it.

You have to use what God has given you to enter into what He has made available to you. Authority functions according to your faith and faith connects what is potential to make it reality. It is this invasion into the impossible that connects you to your destiny. You will remember that God did not move the Promised Land through the Red Sea to the Israelites; they had to go get it. It is the testing of what you have in your hands with God that moves you out of the realm of theory and into the realm of practice. I have to shift from what I know, to what I have learned to walk in and what levels of power and authority can I carry?

So if all of this is true, that the earth has been put in my charge and I have been given power and authority over all things, then the world only has a message when the church is silent. Don't be quiet and let's "posterize" the enemy!