

The Mystery of Power and Authority



Season 2 Episode 8

INTRODUCTION:

Exodus 24

- The 70 elders of Israel were at the base of the same mountain that Moses had ascended to meet with God.
- In essence, they were seeing the river flowing out from the throne of God.
- They saw God. Then, just a few days later, they helped build a golden calf.
- They had a power encounter with God himself, yet they still built a golden calf with that memory still fresh in their head. How can you explain this?

Power

- Power from God is a gift.
 - We don't do anything to deserve it when it comes.
 - We don't earn it through good works or righteousness.
 - It's a gift delivered by a sovereign God using His Holy Spirit.
- It's the manifestation of God's love for us that suddenly appears from the invisible realm into the visible realm.
- Power is temporary.
 - It's like a fleeting vapor that appears for a moment, lingers, and then is gone without a trace.
- The Kingdom of God cannot function without it.

Authority

- In the Bible, authority is often translated power, but they aren't the same.
- In the New Testament, power and authority are two different Greek words, but they frequently get translated as if they were one.

TALKING POINTS: Teaching Session 1

Luke 4

- A group gathered in a home and Jesus delivered an incredible teaching.
 - The Bible says that many of the leaders there had illnesses and there was power there to heal them.
 - It doesn't say any of the leaders were healed—except for a young man that was let down from the roof. He was healed.
- Luke 4:32 says "And they were astonished at his teaching, for His word was with authority."
- Luke 4:36 later says, "Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, 'What a word this is, for with authority and power, He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.'"

Contrasting power and authority.

- The two words in the Greek are *dunamis* and *exousia*.
- *Dunamis* is power—it's the root word we get dynamite from. It's an explosive presence of God.
- *Exousia* is something different entirely—it's the power of rule of government that can command submission.
- Many times the Bible translated *exousia* as power, when it should have been translated as authority.
- *Dunamis*—the explosive power to change physical reality verses *exousia*—a governmental entitlement, the highest authority possible that can exert rule of law and dominance.
- Jesus had power *and* authority.

TALKING POINTS: Teaching Session 2

During Jesus' three years of ministry on earth He modeled the Kingdom.

- The Bible calls him the King of kings.
- We in western society don't have a clear picture of what a King is.
 - America was founded by people trying to escape the rule of an earthly king who was trying to impose his religion on them.
- The Biblical culture of ancient Kings: Kings conquered through power, but they ruled through authority.
- The scepter that the ancient kings held in his hand was a symbol of authority, not power.

- We see this same principle modeled for us in Scripture.
- Psalm 23 says “your rod and your staff, they comfort me?”
 - First off, the rod is the picture of power—it’s what a shepherd used to beat off wolves, lions and bears.
 - The staff was authority. It was what the shepherd used to steady his walk and to lean on when the road got rocky.
 - The rod and the staff—power and authority.
 - The writer of this Psalm is speaking from the perspective of the sheep.
 - » “It’s comforting to know that in your hands God are both power and authority.

How does power play out in Scripture?

- Power is what produces healings and miracles.
- Power is what caused the loaves and fishes to multiply.
- Power opens deaf ears and blind eyes.
- Power impacts the visible world.
- Power is when a finger or organ that didn’t exist before, appears.

Authority is the force that removes demons from a person.

- Authority is what causes the evil spiritual beings to start squirming when you approach—it’s not power doing that—its authority.
- In the crowded room in Luke chapter 4 there was power there to heal, but it was the authority with which Jesus spoke that commanded demons to leave a person.

Often, these two forces work in tandem.

- Power affects the visible realm and authority impacts the visible and invisible realm.

When Jesus cast out demons—He did it by His authority.

- In Matthew 8:29 the demons said to Jesus, “Have you come to judge us before our appointed time?”
 - The word judge points to this issue of authority.
 - Jesus had authority to cast out the demon.

Acts 1:8

- Jesus tells His disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait—and the Holy Spirit will come and they will receive power.
 - Is that *dunamis* power or *exousia* power?
 - Think about what happened when the Holy Spirit came.
 - It was tongues of fire, it was a mighty wind, it was men and women speaking in different languages—it was creative.
 - It was *Dunamis* power—creative and affecting the visible realm.

Luke 10:19

- Jesus says “I have given you the power to trample snakes and scorpions and to destroy the enemy’s power. Nothing will hurt you.”
- Jesus gave the disciples *exousia*—authority.
- “I have given you the *exousia* to trample snakes and scorpions and to destroy the enemy’s *dunamis*. Nothing will hurt you.”
 - *Exousia* is greater than *dunamis*.
 - The authority that Jesus gave the disciples was able to trample the power of the enemy.
 - The enemy rules by power, not by authority.
 - » That doesn’t mean you stop asking for power, you just want to seek after authority as well.

TALKING POINTS: Teaching Session 3

“Your Kingdom come, Your will be done,”

- What you are actually saying is, “let your *exousia* come and let the aftermath of that *exousia* be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.”
- Advancing God’s Kingdom takes power and authority.

Which is the greater force, power or authority?

- Power seems to get all the attention, it’s bold, it’s brash.
- Authority is actually the greater force.
 - You don’t have to yell to make a demon come out of somebody.
 - That doesn’t mean that you can’t be passionate, it just means it’s not a visible, physical force doing the work.
 - It’s your relationship with He who has all authority on Heaven and Earth.

Salvation

- Salvation is a gift.
- Salvation is a byproduct of power.
- Salvation is the miracle that every believer has experienced—even if they don't see it as such.
- Salvation is a sudden, miraculous impregnation of your dormant spirit with the very Spirit of God. The result is you are a new creation!
- The *dunamis* of salvation affects the visible realm—namely you.
- Salvation is a gift that comes with a measure of positional authority as a spiritual son of God.
 - You have the authority to come to the Father because of your acceptance of His Son.
 - But you don't receive the measure of authority required to cast out every demon you come in contact with.

Mark 4

- When Jesus rebuked the winds and the waves in Mark 4, the disciples remarked, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?".
- They said the winds and sea obeyed Him.
- Obedience is an issue of authority.
 - Jesus didn't use power to make the seas calm, He used authority.
 - » The demonic forces around the Sea of Galilee wanted to drown Jesus and all the disciples.
 - » Some storms are caused by the power of the demonic realm. But the authority of Jesus trumps the power of evil.
 - » *Exousia* defeats *dunamis*.

Power and authority are two distinct spiritual forces.

- We've spent—really since the turn of the 19th century—the better part of 100 years asking God for more power and we've seen temporary displays of that power.
- Authority, unlike power, has longevity.
- Authority is something you carry without even asking for it.
- It's a by-product of relationship. Relationship with He Who has all authority on Heaven and earth—Jesus. The deeper that relationship, the greater your authority .

CONCLUSION:

God longs to give you the desires of your heart. He's waiting for you to step into all He's created you to be. Even the ground under your feet is groaning for you to exercise your authority on earth. That authority can only come through a relationship with Jesus. The relationship with our creator is not so different than our relationships with each other. At its root, it's only as good as the time we invest into it. It's only as strong as the trust we build through trials and tests. It's forged not in times of joy and splendor, but in times of adversity and trouble. This is why the Kingdom of Heaven must suffer violence. This is why the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter. This is why to follow Jesus is to carry our cross daily. What does that mean to you? What does your cross look like?

What are you willing to lose to carry the level of authority that causes demons to shriek and run for cover? What in your life would you change to have the kind of authority that could tell a tornado approaching your family's home to "be still" and then see it immediately disappear into the clouds? Because that's what Jesus did. And He said greater things than these we would do.

I want you to know this. These are the last days. If the times of Jesus were called the last days, then these may indeed be the last hours. God has saved the very best of every bloodline to be alive right now. He didn't choose you for this time to hide in your prayer closet and wait for His return. He chose you to do the work of the Father until He returned. That means up until the very moment he returns. You may think you're insignificant. You may think God could never use you. But God will move Heaven and earth to get you to where He wants you when you are obedient to Him. In fact, He will even send his angels to intervene in your life, if that's what it takes.