

Authority and Power

Scripture Reading: Luke 4:1-22

Our text shows us Christ beginning His earthly ministry. In Luke 3:21-22, Christ was baptized of John. Next, the Spirit descended upon Christ in bodily form like a dove and the Father spoke directly from heaven saying, *"You are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased."* It was a glorious appearance of the Triune God, all at one time! This important moment was followed by a time of great testing for Jesus. He would emerge from that testing showing great authority and power. To understand the authority and power in the believer's life, we should begin with our source: the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 4:1 – Dependence on God's Spirit & Direction from God's Spirit

Having been given a special anointing by the Heavenly Father, Jesus goes with the leadership of the Spirit into the wilderness. Matthew 4:1 tells us that He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness *"to be tempted of the Devil."* We like to think of God's authority and power in our lives as something that will take us from one mountain top experience to another. But the Spirit of God led the Son of God into desert experience – a time of testing – a time of spiritual warfare.

Luke 4:2-13 – Dealing with the Devil

We cannot discuss all three temptations in this lesson. We will focus on the second temptation in Luke 4:5-8. Verse five shows that this is a different kind of mountain top experience. The Devil wanted Jesus to believe that he (the Devil) had the authority and power to give to Jesus. The Devil wanted Jesus to worship him and depend on him. Sometimes the Devil can give a false mountain top experience with false glory. Christ answered him with Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:13) and told him that God alone has the authority and power and deserves our exclusive worship (Deuteronomy 6:4-6). Jesus will reign over all the earth – without any help from the Devil (Psalm 2:1-12).

Luke 4:14-22 – Declaring God's word graciously

Jesus came out of that wilderness experience victorious and full of power. He now would proceed to minister the word in His home country. As He worshiped with others, Jesus read the Scriptures from Isaiah 61:1-2a. He closed the book in the middle of verse two and declared the work of the Spirit in and through Himself. At first, they marveled at His gracious words. He spoke of preaching the gospel ("good news") to the poor, healing the brokenhearted, delivering the captives, giving sight to the blind, and liberty to the bruised.

Luke 4:23-29 – Declaring God’s word pointedly

But Jesus did not stop with the winsome words of grace. He continued to preach about sin and unbelief. He showed how God, in the past, had blessed Gentiles when the people of Israel were unfaithful. This brought rage and wrath from the people. They tried to kill Him. Compare John 8:30-59.

Luke 4:30-32 – Declaring God’s word with determination

Jesus simply walked past them and continued His ministry to others. People would be astonished at the way in which Jesus spoke with authority. He spoke as someone who had the right to speak without restraint. His teachings revealed personal strength / power.

Let’s reflect on the Spirit of God coming upon the Lord Jesus. Isaiah 11:1-2 describes it this way:

- The Spirit of the Lord
- The Spirit of wisdom
- The Spirit of understanding
- The Spirit of counsel
- The Spirit of might
- The Spirit of knowledge
- The Spirit of the fear of the Lord

Note that there are seven descriptions / titles of God’s Spirit. See Revelation 3:1; 4:5; 5:6.

Questions:

Do we operate with this kind of Spirit?

Do we comprehend the authority God has given us?

Do we seek the power of God in our lives?

Do we expect the power of God to work through us?