



**Educate
+ Engage**



APOSTOLIC
ID:



Identity
by Authority

OVERVIEW

Jesus Christ's authority causes us to be overcomers.

Scripture Passages:

Luke 4:31–37

And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power. And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

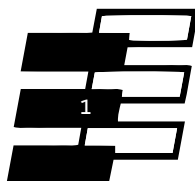
Luke 10:19

Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

EDUCATE

Landon was mowing the lawn before the sun started to beat down on him. He and his family lived along a state route, so he had to be careful when mowing near the road. He tried to stop the riding mower long enough to let the cars speed by, but that was taking forever. He had homework to do and dinner was almost ready. As the mower blew the fresh cut grass onto the pavement, another car flew by around 55 mph, but Landon accidentally ran over a rock, and that rock flew from beneath the mower deck, into the air, and right into the trunk of that speeding car.

He heard a screech and saw bright red brake lights. There was nowhere to hide. Even if he tried, he might get the mower up to 4 mph. Landon turned the riding mower off, sat there, and listened as the angry driver screamed at him and threatened to call his parents, the police, the FBI. When the driver with the freshly dented car finally pulled away, Landon never wanted to see that car again. He unceremoniously finished mowing and went inside for homework, dinner, and an Aspirin.



Right after Jesus turned thirty, He felt led by the Spirit of God to go into the wilderness. That's where He saw the devil's dented car parked in the desert driveway. Jesus knew He had to face an angry, frustrated devil, and He did so in the middle of nowhere. Satan wanted to stop God's promise from coming to pass. From his time as a worship leader in Heaven to his judgment in the Garden of Eden to the arid sandswept wilderness described in Luke 4, the devil tried time and again to usurp God's authority.

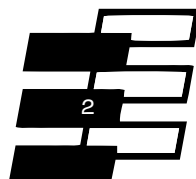
Jesus was there by divine appointment. He had fasted for forty days, so He was weak in body, but His Spirit was as strong as ever. The devil tried to make Jesus stumble by relying on His wonder working ability. Even when the devil insulted Jesus, he could not help but reveal Jesus Christ's undeniable power. The devil basically said: "If you are who you say you are, turn those brittle stones into fresh, warm bread, and eat." Jesus' response to temptation still resonates in every believer's life today: "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Luke 4:4). Satan quickly learned that the Word of God has authority over temptation.

Satan then tried to tempt Jesus spiritually. Big mistake! The devil tempted Jesus to worship him, but Jesus reminded the devil that only God is worthy of worship. Satan even tried to get Jesus to jump off the Temple, but Jesus defeated the devil with the Word of God once again. After those forty days and three temptations, Jesus returned to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit."

Jesus' private victory became His public demonstration of power.

News of Jesus began to spread all throughout the region. Although Israel experienced the presence of God in the Old Testament, this experience with Jesus was different, better. From the Book of Genesis all the way to the revealed majesty of God in Revelation, God proved Himself to be all-powerful. God even introduced Himself to Abraham as the Almighty God. (See Genesis 17:1.) God's identity gave Abraham faith to believe in God's promises, even though he and his sweet Sarah were well passed child rearing years.

God's promises to us often live long into the future. Hebrews 8:10 shows that the covenant God made with Israel was a foreshadowing of the power they would soon possess. God said He would put His laws into their mind and write them in their hearts. He would be a God to them, and they would be His people.



God established a covenant of interaction and ownership.

God never planned to be a distant, aloof power way up in the sky; He wanted to interact and empower His people with His love and authority. He knew He would one day enter the hearts of humanity by the Holy Ghost and give them supernatural authority and power.

Way back in the Old Testament, the Jews in Zechariah's day were excited about the prospect of authority and power. Their enemies were pushing them around, and they were tired of it. The Babylonians had already destroyed the Temple. A drought caused their crops to wither, and the economy was sinking in quicksand. Some of God's people were trying to figure out how to solve their own problems rather than following God's plan.

Against that bleak backdrop, God promised to use Zerubbabel to restore God's people back to righteousness and supervise the rebuilding of the Temple. But there was another problem: resources were scarce, and the remnant of God's people had no army or might. Even God's promise seemed blocked by their powerless plight.

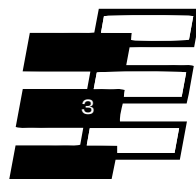
Discussion Questions: Have you ever felt like the Israelites in Zerubbabel's day felt? What did you do?

Zechariah stood up and declared: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, Says the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). That had to be a relief because Israel was in short supply of might and power. The word might in this verse refers to military might. Their prosperity would not result from their army's strength; they had none. Nor would it result from their own power because they didn't have any of that in stock, either. They did not have the natural resources to do what needed to be done. But God did. If they would trust the LORD of hosts, His Spirit would enable them to do what the most powerful army on earth could not.

Discussion Question: What has God done in your life that you could not do on your own?

Closing

Back to the New Testament, one unforgettable day, Jesus stopped and turned to His followers. He had a faraway look in His eye as if He knew these special moments of walking right by their side would not last forever. Then He counted seventy of them who had been following Him, split them into pairs, and surprised them when He promised: "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19).



Was Jesus really promising them that they would do the wonders He did? Would they be able to lay hands on the sick and see them recover and call into a full tomb and watch it empty? Would they be able to stare a demon-possessed man in the eye and watch every demon bow to the name of Jesus? That's exactly what Jesus promised His disciples then and promises us now. He promises we will be known as His by the authority He gives us.

ENGAGE

The next time someone needs prayer to be healed, to receive the Holy Ghost, or for any other miraculous need, trust that the Spirit of God inside you is able to work the miracle through your prayers. Step out in faith, step up to the altar, and pray for them in faith that God will work through you the same miracles He worked Himself. He has given us authority.

