

Week Two

Conversations with God

LUKE 7–12

READ

Consider the impact of two little words:

Power and authority.

Even more, consider the relative impotence of each word without the other.

Suppose, for example, that you witness extremely poor parenting practices while at the grocery store. Nothing illegal is being done, but you're troubled by what you see. In that circumstance, you may have the *ability* (power) to step in, but you have zero *authority* to do so. Or suppose you are a police officer on a drug bust. Though you make appropriate preparations, in the middle of the bust your gun jams. Though you have complete *authority* to make the arrest, you now lack the *power* to detain the criminals.

Power without authority is futile. Authority without power is impotent. Together, however, power and authority are a mighty combination. With these two working in tandem, evil can be thwarted, wrongs can be made right, and good can prevail. Interestingly, these words *power* and *authority* are littered throughout the gospel of Luke in the description of Jesus' life and mission here on the earth.

With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out! (Luke 4:36)

The people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. (Luke 6:19)

The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. (Luke 5:24)

Now here's the kicker...

We learn in Luke that Jesus did not come only to exercise this power and authority over evil in the world himself, but that he also vested this power and authority in his disciples.

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. (Luke 9:1-2)

I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy. (Luke 10:19)

As you read Luke, notice the ways in which Jesus exercised his power and authority as he walked this earth, and watch for the ways in which he called his disciples to follow in his footsteps. Later in Luke, we learn that Jesus had a reputation among the people of being "*powerful in word and deed*" (Luke 24:19). As you read, consider what powerful words it was that Jesus spoke and what powerful deeds it was that Jesus performed. In your conversations with God this week, consider how Jesus might be asking you to powerfully speak and act with his authority to impact the world around you.

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MEMORIZE

This week's memory verses:

Luke 4:18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

John 20:2 "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

MEDITATE

Meditating is simply talking and listening to God. Your conversation with God will be inspired and informed by reading and memorizing Scripture, but your conversation should also be personalized. Carefully consider the passages, but don't *just* consider the passage. Talk and listen. Pour out your thoughts, concerns, frustrations, and joys. Or just sit in silence before God. Some talk best with God in a quiet room. Others prefer to talk with God while running or walking. Most importantly, engage God in a way that is authentic and personal.

Use the space below to record memorable thoughts or highlights from your Conversations with God to share with your Small Group or Running Partners.



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