

Luke 9:1-9
June 9, 2019

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

What is the difference between having power vs having authority? [Let people engage]

Power is the force or ability to do something; **authority** is the right to use that power. It is one thing for a person to have power over demonic forces and power to heal, but quite another thing to be able to confer this power on others. Jesus has that power and authority...In the Great Commission, Jesus said, “All **authority** has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Mt 28:18-19). “You shall receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses” (Acts 1:8). Relying on His authority and power, we tell people about the saving grace to be found at the cross of Jesus Christ.

Transition: Luke records the first instance of the disciples going out under Jesus’ command to preach the gospel. Up till now, they had watched Him do it, but now Jesus has come to the end of his great Galilean ministry. He is now sending them out to proclaim the **kingdom of God**. **We would be mistaken if we took these verses as normative for all believers or even for all those who are called to preach.** It was a unique situation and Jesus gave unique instructions which He later modified (**Lk 22:35-36**). *But even so, there are some principles here that we can apply as we seek to proclaim the good news of Christ as He has commanded us to do.*

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

9 When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³ He told them: “Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. ⁵ If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them.” ⁶ So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.

⁷ Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed, because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, ⁸ others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. ⁹ But Herod said, “I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?” And he tried to see him.

9:1 When Jesus called the Twelve together. See comments on 6:13; cf. also 8:1.

He gave them power and authority. “Authority” (see comments on 5:24) is found in Mark, but “power” is not. Both terms are found in Luke 4:36, where again Mark has only “authority.” Luke typically emphasized Jesus’ “power.” See comments on 4:14; cf. also Acts 1:8; 10:38. The use of the aorist tense for the verb “gave” should not be pressed to mean “once for all.” On the contrary, Luke 9:40 suggests that this endowment of power and authority was only for the duration of this particular mission, as suggested by 24:49 and Acts 1:8.

To drive out all demons. As elsewhere, Luke preferred this term to “evil spirits” (literally *unclean spirits*) found in Mark 6:7. See comments on 4:33.

And to cure (heal) diseases. This Lukan addition places the healing aspect of the disciples’ ministry on an equal footing with exorcism and preaching. Here he clearly distinguished between demon possession and illness. See comments on 4:40. [**Heal** (cure)(2323)(*therapeuo* from *therapon* = an attendant, servant) means primarily to care for, to wait upon, minister to.]

9:2 And he sent them out. The verb is *apostellō*, from which “apostle” comes (see comments on 6:13). In his abbreviated account Luke omitted “two by two” (Mark 6:7). This fact may have been so well known that he did not think it needed to be stated, but its omission also gives a greater sense of the Twelve as a unified body.

To preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. The disciples had a threefold task: preaching, healing, and exorcising. The first two are mentioned in Luke 9:11, but not the third. Jesus’ healing and preaching ministry was even more important for Luke than the exorcising of demons. For “kingdom of God” see comments on 4:43; Introduction 8 (2).

9:3 Take nothing for the journey. The Twelve were to travel without equipment. This may have been due to the brevity of their mission or to Jesus’ desire to have them avoid the appearance of preaching for profit. It may also have been in order to require them to trust in God alone to supply their needs (cf. 12:22–31). **Jesus is not issuing a call to poverty, but a call to urgency.** The disciples of Jesus were (and are) to travel light and be quick about their business of proclaiming the Kingdom of God while today is still called today because the night cometh when no man can work! Are you busy about your Master's business?

No staff. Such a staff could be used either as a walking stick or for protection against bandits. It was also a characteristic trademark of the “wandering” Cynic preachers of that day. Luke may have been thinking that the disciples should consciously avoid resembling them. This differs from “except a staff” in Mark 6:8. No satisfactory solution of this apparent conflict has been forthcoming as of yet.

No bag. This refers to a “knapsack” for carrying provisions. **This prohibition is against going about begging. In all this the lord is going to teach the disciples that He can care for them even when He is not with them. This is one way to teach Christ centered dependency.** [X-REF 2 Cor 3:4-6]

No extra tunic. The “tunic” was the garment worn under the outer “cloak” (cf. Luke 6:29). The idea is of carrying a spare tunic, not of wearing two.

9:4 Whatever house you enter, stay. Those ministering in Jesus’ name should not use their ministry for personal gain and seek better housing if it becomes available later (cf. 10:7). The implications of this, while clear and forever applicable, are all too often ignored. **[Whatever house they happened to be invited to stay in, the apostles were to stay there until they left that city. That would distinguish them from traveling false teachers, who moved from house to house collecting money from everyone they could.]**

9:5 If people do not welcome you. The verb “welcome” is also used in 8:13, which speaks of those who “receive” or welcome God’s word, as well as in the parallel passage in 10:8, 10. Elsewhere it is used of receiving Jesus himself (9:48, 53) or receiving God’s kingdom (18:17). Here it refers to the acceptance or rejection of the apostles as the equivalent of receiving or

rejecting the good news they preached and, by implication, the Bringer of that good news, Jesus. [Rejection of the Gospel of Jesus is to be expected for in the Parable of the Soils Jesus taught that only one heart "soil" (Lk 8:15-note) was good and honest and would hear the Gospel "seed" and "hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance."]

Shake the dust off your feet. Compare 10:11; Acts 13:51. This symbolic act severs all relationship with the town, leaving it in a state of condemnation to await the final judgment (cf. Luke 10:12–15). [What is NOT being said - It is not that we are to turn away from those who reject the gospel at first hearing or even after several hearings. Had that practice been followed, many believers would not be in the kingdom today. Jesus was not speaking of those who are slow to understand or believe but of those who, after hearing a clear testimony of the gospel and seeing dramatic and irrefutable signs of confirmation, continue to resist and oppose it. When a person's mind is firmly set against God, we should turn our efforts to others.]

As a testimony against them. This condemnation is directed not against individuals and families but against villages (9:6). Compare 10:10–11.

9:6 Preaching the gospel (euaggelizo/ euangelizo from eu = good, well + aggéllō = proclaim, tell; English = evangelize) and healing people everywhere. [No exceptions. No partially. This reminds us of Jesus' commission in Mark 16:15 "'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."'] Mark 6:12 reads "preached that people should repent," which is another aspect of the gospel message. See comments on 3:18 and 5:27–32— "The Lukan Message". Luke omitted the reference to exorcisms found in his source (Mark 6:13), indicating that for him preaching and healing were more important. The term "everywhere" should not be pressed to include the surrounding Gentile area. The mission to the Gentiles would take place in Luke-Acts only after the resurrection. Nonetheless, this mission during Jesus' ministry foreshadows the future Gentile mission. [Euaggelizo/ euangelizo in the NT with rare exception refers especially to the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of God and of salvation obtained through Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection.]

9:7 Herod the tetrarch. See comments on 3:1, 19. Luke used Herod's correct title of tetrarch, whereas both Mark 6:25 and Matt 14:9 refer to him less precisely as a "king."

Heard. This was due in part to the Twelve's preaching (Luke 9:6).

All that was going on. Luke is more comprehensive than Mark, including the exorcisms, preaching, and healing referred to in the previous section. Compare 24:18. [This refers to Jesus' disciples going throughout the land of Israel carrying out miraculous deeds (Lk 9:6, Mt 14:2 "miraculous powers"). In short, their work was phenomenal for the message and ministry of Jesus and His apostles reached even into the highest levels in the government.]

John the Baptist had been raised from the dead. In the Markan account Herod's treatment of John the Baptist is dealt with at considerable length (6:17–29). Luke had already reported (3:19–20) that Herod had imprisoned him and now succinctly informed his readers of John's death by referring to the rumor of his resurrection (9:9). Yet since Jesus and John the Baptist were contemporaries (cf. 7:18–35), how could such a belief arise? No clear analogy exists in which a person was thought to have been resurrected and reincarnated into another person. Possibly what is envisioned here is that the "spirit" of John the Baptist had passed on to Jesus in much the same way as Elijah's spirit came to rest upon Elisha in 2 Kgs 2:1–15. [Some people were convinced that Jesus was John the Baptist restored to life. This may seem somewhat odd, since Scripture nowhere ascribes any miracles to the Baptist. In any event this would be troubling to Herod who had

murdered John. He surely had a guilty conscience! It appears that Herod himself held this view. See Mark 6:16]

9:8 Others that Elijah had appeared. For the popular view that Elijah would return in the last days, compare Luke 1:17; Mal 4:5; Mark 9:11–13. Whether an actual reappearance of the historical Elijah was meant or the assumption of Elijah’s role in fulfillment of Mal 4:5 is uncertain. In Mark 9:11–13 Jesus interpreted Elijah’s coming in the latter way.

One of the prophets of long ago. Does this refer to a prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15) or like Jeremiah (Matt 16:14)? The reference is ambiguous (cf. John 6:14).

Had come back to life. The term “come back to life” (*anistanai*) is used to describe Jesus’ resurrection in Luke 16:31; 18:33; 24:7, 46; Acts 2:24, so that it is best understood as a reference to resurrection than metaphorically as “appearing in the scene.”

9:9 Who, then, is this? Compare 5:21; 7:20, 49; 9:18–20; 20:2; 22:67–71; 23:3, 9.

I beheaded John. The implication is that in Herod’s mind John the Baptist could not have risen from the dead and that Jesus was somewhat different.

And he tried to see him. This foreshadows 13:31 and 23:6–12 and is not due to Herod’s “faith.” At best this may reflect Herod’s curiosity and desire to see a miracle (23:8), but perhaps it refers more ominously to a desire to get rid of Jesus (13:31).

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What did you most like about this passage? What resonated with you? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you least like about this passage? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you find in this passage that you didn’t understand? [Let people engage]

Q: What do we learn about Jesus in this passage? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

Q: How are we to live in light of this text?

- Take off all your envies, jealousies, unforgiveness, selfishness and fears." We can't be effective in our ministry to share the gospel if we are entangled with unforgiveness, envies, etc.
- Let's ask ourselves if we're considering buying, building or doing something that might potentially end up as a heavy burden and hamstring God's work of ministry in our lives?
- Christians must center their affections on Christ, not on the temporal things of this earth. Material riches lose their value when compared to the riches of glory.
- By joining Jesus, we learn a way of life that does not acquire things or amass possessions but responds to God and develops relationships. We invest our energy in people.
- We're not using this power and authority to advance the kingdom of God. We're too complacent, comfortable. It's time to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit every day.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Vol. 1, pp. 204-205). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Luke 9

It was an exasperating evening. I was studying and writing, and the phone was ringing every half hour. Had the calls been from friends, I would have enjoyed taking a break and chatting, but they came from people wanting to sell me everything from dance tickets to investments. By the time I got to bed that night, I had just about decided to get an unlisted number and start protecting my privacy.

At 11 o'clock, a man phoned who was contemplating committing suicide; and with the Lord's help, I was able to encourage him to get a new grip on life. When I hung up, I gave thanks that I did not have an unlisted number. As I lay down to go back to sleep, I thought of the Lord Jesus and the kind of schedule He must have had. He was available to all kinds of people at all times, and He did not turn anyone away. He probably would not have had an unlisted number.

In this chapter, Dr. Luke described the busy life of the compassionate Son of man as He performed four ministries.

Sending (Luke 9:1–11)

The commission (vv. 1–6). The Twelve had been ordained some months before (Luke 6:13–16) and had been traveling with Jesus as His helpers. Now He was going to send them out in pairs (Mark 6:7) to have their own ministry and to put into practice what they had learned. This was their “solo flight.”

But before He sent them out, He gave them the equipment needed to get the job done, as well as the instructions to follow. The parallel passage in Matthew 10 reveals that the Twelve were sent only to the people of Israel (Matt. 10:5–6). Luke does not mention this since he wrote primarily for the Gentiles and emphasized the worldwide outreach of the Gospel.

Power is the ability to accomplish a task, and *authority* is the right to do it, and Jesus gave both to His Apostles. They were able to cast out demons and heal the sick, but the most important ministry He gave them was that of preaching the Gospel. The word *preach* in Luke 9:6 describes a herald proclaiming a message from the king, and in Luke 9:6 it means “to preach the Good News.” They were heralds of the Good News!

The Apostles' ability to heal was a special gift that authenticated their ministry (see Rom. 15:18–19; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:1–4). Miracles were one evidence that the Lord had sent them and was working through them (Mark 16:20). Today we test a person's ministry by the truth of the Word of God (1 John 2:18–29; 4:1–6). Miracles alone are not proof that a person is truly sent of God, for Satan can enable his false ministers to do amazing things (Matt. 24:24; 2 Cor. 11:13–15; 2 Thes. 2:9–10).

Jesus told the Apostles what to take on their journey, with an emphasis on urgency and simplicity. They were not to take a “begging bag” along but were to trust God to open up homes for their hospitality. Matthew 10:11–15 tells how they were to select these homes. If they were refused, they should shake off the dust from their feet, a familiar act performed by orthodox Jews whenever they left Gentile territory (see Luke 10:10–11; Acts 13:51).

The confusion (vv. 7–9). When the disciples left, Jesus also departed and ministered for a time in Galilee (Matt. 11:1); and together they attracted a great deal of attention. In fact, their work was even discussed in the highest levels of government! Herod Antipas (Luke 3:1) was a son of Herod the Great and the man who had John the Baptist killed (Matt. 14:1–12; Luke 3:19–20).

Who was this miracle worker? John the Baptist had done no miracles (John 10:41), but that might change if he were raised from the dead. The Jews expected Elijah to come, so perhaps the prophecy was being fulfilled (see Mal. 4:5; Matt. 11:10–14; 17:11–13; Luke 1:17). Herod's conscience was no doubt convicting him, and he was wondering if perhaps God had sent John back to judge him.

Herod kept trying to see Jesus; but Jesus, unlike some modern “religious celebrities,” did not make it a point to go out of His way to mingle with the high and mighty. Jesus called the evil king a “fox” and was not intimidated by his threats (Luke 13:31–32). When Herod and Jesus did finally meet, the king hoped to see a miracle, but the Son of God did nothing and said nothing to him. Evil King Herod had silenced God's voice to him (Luke 23:6–12).

Martin, J. A. (1985). Isaiah. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 228)

1. THE SENDING OF THE TWELVE (9:1–6) (Matt. 10:5–15; Mark 6:7–13).

9:1–6. Jesus gave **the Twelve** two assignments on the mission to which He sent them. They were **to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick**. They were able to carry out that mission because Jesus **gave them power** (*dynamis*, “spiritual ability”; cf. 4:14, 36; 5:17; 6:19; 8:46) **and authority** (*exousia*, “the right to exercise the power”) over the demonic realm and the physical realm of **diseases**. Jesus had just shown His power over both of these realms (8:26–56). Their healing ministry was to authenticate their preaching ministry. The fact that the Twelve healed in Jesus' authority and power showed that He was the Messiah who could bring in the kingdom. Therefore, it was necessary that people believe the Twelve. People would evidence their belief in the Twelve—and thus in the Messiah—by showing hospitality to these men who were ministering in Jesus' authority.

This helps explain Jesus' rather strange instructions (9:3–5) concerning a method of their ministry. The mission was not to be long—they came back to report to Jesus (v. 10). Why were the Twelve not to take supplies or **money** with them? This was because of the brevity of their mission and also because people's reactions to them would indicate whether or not the nation was accepting Jesus' claim as the Messiah. People who believed the message and the messianic healings would be glad to share with the Twelve. People who did not believe would be judged (vv. 4–5). If a **town** rejected the Twelve the latter were to **shake the town's dust off their feet**. When Jews returned home from a Gentile country, they would shake the dust off their feet to signify their breaking ties with the Gentiles. In this way the Twelve signified that certain Jewish townspeople were like Gentiles who would not listen or believe. Jesus was thus giving the entire area opportunity to believe His message and mission. Luke stated that the Twelve **went ... everywhere**, presumably everywhere in the Galilean region rather than everywhere in the nation.

2. HEROD'S QUERY ABOUT JESUS (9:7–9) (Matt. 14:1–2; Mark 6:14–29).

9:7–9. As the Twelve went through the villages and towns, their ministry attracted much attention. Even **Herod** who was responsible for the region of Galilee as **tetrarch** (cf. 3:1), **heard**

about their ministry but did not understand it. Herod, who apparently did not believe in resurrection, knew that Jesus could not be **John** the Baptist for he had previously killed John. **Others** were saying **that** Jesus might be **Elijah** or another of **the** Old Testament **prophets** raised from the dead. Luke's point in the account seems to be that everyone, even in the highest levels of government, was talking about the ministry of Jesus and the Twelve.

Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (p. 1530). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

9:1 A distinction is here made between demonic possession and physical disease. The ancients were not as naive in these matters as many critics allege.

9:3 For different accounts of this event, see note on Mk 6:8–9.

Stein, R. H. (1992). *Luke* (Vol. 24, pp. 266-271). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers. [Scripture text with commentary integrated above.]

Context

Jesus' selection of the twelve apostles (6:13, *apostoloi*) was partially fulfilled when he sent them out (*apostellō*) to preach and heal. Having been taught by Jesus, armed with their knowledge of the "secrets" of God's kingdom, they went out to proclaim the message of the kingdom and its Lord. The Twelve's mission served as an apprenticeship for their ultimate mission (24:45–49). As they proclaimed the acts ("miracle stories" and "stories about Jesus") and teachings of Jesus, these oral traditions became firmly rooted in the apostles' minds, solidifying into memorable units their hearers could more readily "receive." These would then be the traditions delivered to them by the "eyewitnesses and servants of the word" (1:2). The importance of this mission for the later transmission of the Gospel traditions cannot be overestimated. During this period they recounted time and time again "the things that have been fulfilled among us" (1:1), things they had seen Jesus do and heard him say and which he had explained to them (8:10). The mission also provided time for the disciples to reflect and discuss, "Who is this" (8:25) who teaches and does such things? Such questions would naturally have arisen not just among themselves but from their audiences as well. No doubt they would frequently be asked, "Just who exactly is this Jesus of whom you speak?" Jesus may in fact have intended for these experiences to assist his disciples in answering the question he asks in 9:18.

The Twelve were to proceed unencumbered by possessions (9:3), depending instead upon God's providence and their fellow Jews' hospitality (9:4). This would enable them to concentrate on their appointed task without being distracted by a concern for provisions or other baggage. These instructions, in contrast to those found in 22:35–38, appear to have been meant for a particular place and time in Jesus' ministry, and they rely heavily upon the practice of Jewish hospitality. The rest of Jesus' instructions would apply both to this mission and to the greater one that awaited them. The relationship between this account and its parallel in 10:1–12 will be discussed at that point. Luke omitted several things from the parallel account in Mark 6:6b–13. He did not refer to sandals or going out by twos. Whereas Mark's account permitted carrying a staff, Luke forbade it. The most important theological comments found in the Lukan account, however, involve the additions of "power" and "to heal the sick" in Luke 9:1 and "preach[ing] the kingdom of God and ... heal[ing] the sick" in 9:2.

This passage can be broken down into the following subdivisions: (1) the disciples were given power and authority over demons and sickness; (2) they were told to preach God's kingdom and to heal; (3) the rules of travel were given that prohibit taking provisions; (4) the rules of lodging were given requiring that they be satisfied with the first offer of hospitality; (5) the disciples were instructed to sever symbolically all relations with those who rejected their message; and (6) they are described as having fulfilled their commission.

The Lukan Message

The historicity of this episode and the role that it plays in the future transmission of the Gospel materials are extremely important for any discussion of the history of tradition (*Traditionsgeschichte*). Since our purpose is to focus on what Luke sought to convey to his readers, however, this other important issue must be set aside. For Luke the Twelve's "first missionary journey" was a rehearsal for their future mission as witnesses to Jesus throughout the world (Luke 24:46–48; Acts 1:8). That mission would involve preaching (1) the word (Acts 8:4; 15:35—the word of the Lord); (2) Jesus as the Christ (5:42); (3) the kingdom of God (8:12); (4) the good news (Acts 8:25, 40; 14:7, 21; 16:10); (5) Jesus (8:35); (6) peace (10:36); (7) the Lord Jesus (11:20); (8) the promise (13:32); and (9) Jesus and the resurrection (17:18). It also would involve healing (3:1–10; 5:16; 9:17–19, 36–41 [a resuscitation from the dead]; 14:8–10; 19:12–16; 28:3–6) and exorcisms (5:16; 8:7; 16:16–18; 19:12). The first two (preaching and healing) were more important for Luke than the last (exorcisms).

Not all the specifics given in Luke 9:3–5 would apply directly to the situation after Pentecost, where lengthier missions would be the rule (Acts 13:1f.). This is evident from Luke 22:35–36. Much of what is said in these verses, however, will be applicable later. In Acts the disciples also would experience both acceptance and rejection of their preaching (Luke 9:5), and there too their preaching was not to be for personal gain (cf. Acts 8:18–23). They would go out depending upon God's grace and the hospitality of others (Acts 16:15, 34; 17:5; 18:3).

Still another Lukan emphasis is found in his addition of the term "power" in 9:1. See comments on 1:17 and 4:14. Luke understood the "authority" to drive out demons and heal as due to the Spirit's empowering. This clearly foreshadows that future empowerment the Father (24:49) and the Son promised (Acts 1:8), which would come at Pentecost and equip the Twelve and the entire church to be Jesus' witnesses.

Context

This section reintroduces the question raised in 8:25 (cf. also 5:21; 7:20, 49) concerning Jesus' identification and begins a section in which this is the main theme. It also provides an interlude for the Twelve's mission to take place. This "story about Jesus" focuses the readers' attention on the question, "Who is Jesus?" That it was a ruler, the tetrarch of Galilee (3:1), who raised the question lends it even greater importance. Later it would be asked again by the high priest (22:67) and the Roman governor (23:3).

Luke modified the tradition about John the Baptist, recounting it in more "orderly" fashion in 3:19–20 and omitting the story of his imprisonment and martyrdom (cf. Mark 6:17–29). The significant changes include (1) Luke's reference to Herod as tetrarch rather than as king (cf. Mark 6:14); (2) "all that was going on" instead of Mark's "miraculous powers are at work in him" (6:14); (3) the formulation of Herod's puzzlement with the question, "Who, then, is this I hear such things about?"; and (4) mentioning that Herod was anxious to meet Jesus.

The Lukan Message

Whereas the literary function of this passage is to provide an interlude for the disciples' mission and to foreshadow the future meeting of Jesus and Herod (23:6–12), its theological emphasis is Christological. Once again, the question is raised, this time by Herod the tetrarch, of who Jesus is. He is explicitly linked with the great: John the Baptist, Elijah, one of the OT prophets. The same possibilities will be raised again shortly in 9:19, and there the answer will at last be given. Jesus is greater still! He is “The Christ of God.”

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (Lk 9:1–9). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

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