

ENCOUNTER



— SCHOOL OF MINISTRY —

Understanding The Purpose of Power

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Class 2 - Session 2
Q1. Identity and Transformation

“Drawing from the riches of our Catholic identity, We teach, equip, and activate disciples to demonstrate the love of God through the power of the Holy Spirit in their sphere of influence.”

Objection 1:

4 'An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah.' Then he left them and went away.

-Matthew 16:4

29 “Moving on from there Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, went up on the mountain, and sat down there. 30 Great crowds came to him, having with them the lame, the blind, the deformed, the mute, and many others. **They placed them at his feet, and he cured them.**

(cont.)

31 The crowds were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the deformed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind able to see, and **they glorified the God of Israel.**" *-Matthew 15:29-31*

1 The Pharisees and Sadducees came and, to test him, asked him to show them a sign from heaven. **2** He said to them in reply, “In the evening you say, ‘Tomorrow will be fair, for the sky is red’; **3** and, in the morning, ‘Today will be stormy, for the sky is red and threatening.’ You know how to judge the appearance of the sky, *(cont.)*”

but you cannot judge the signs of the times. ⁴ An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah.' Then he left them and went away."

-Matthew 16: 1-4

Who is Jesus actually rebuking?

- The Pharisees, not the disciples.

What is Jesus actually rebuking?

- Their intention of testing
- Signs for the sake of control
- Miracles on demand
- Power displayed without a redemptive purpose

“The working of miracles is ascribed to faith for two reasons. First, because it is directed to **the confirmation of faith**, secondly, because it proceeds from God's omnipotence on which faith relies. *(cont.)*

Nevertheless, just as besides the grace of faith, the grace of the word is necessary that people may be instructed in the faith, so too is **the grace of miracles necessary that people may be confirmed in their faith.**" - *St. Thomas Aquinas, II, II Q178 Art 1*

Objection 2:

22 Many will say to me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name? 23 Then I will declare to them solemnly, “I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers.” -*Matthew 7:22-23*

Objection 3:

We Must Choose Between Purity or Power.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit - *Eph 4:30*

Do not quench the Holy Spirit - *1 Thes 5:19*

1. Knowing the Power of God with the Scripture prevents deception.

29 “Jesus said to them in reply, “You are deceived because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God.”

-Matthew 22:29

2. Entire communities come to faith through demonstrations of power and God's power becomes the foundation of faith.

3 “I came to you in weakness and fear and much trembling, 4 and my message and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of spirit and power, 5 so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.” -1 Corinthians 2:3-5

3. Signs, wonders and miracles confirm Jesus' claims about who he is.

2 “He came to Jesus at night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him.” -*John 3:2*

37 “If I do not perform my Father’s works,
do not believe me; 38 but if I perform
them, even if you do not believe me,
believe the works, so that you may realize
and understand that the Father is in me
and I am in the Father.” - *John 10:37-38*

4. God's power brings communities to the obedience of faith.

18 “For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to lead the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum I have finished preaching the gospel of Christ.” -*Romans 15:18-19*

5. Power exposes sin and leads to a decision.

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, “Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.” -*Luke 5:8*

24 If I had not done works among them that no one else ever did, they would not have sin; but as it is, they have seen and hated both me and my Father. -*John 15:24*

6. Signs, wonders and miracles are a solution to converting worldly cities of sin

20 “Then he began to reproach the towns where most of his miracles had been done, since they had not repented. “Woe to you, Chorazin! 21 Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, **they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes...***(cont.)*

23 For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. **24** But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for **you.**" - *Matthew 11:20-21, 23-24*

7. Demonstrations of God's power are the most frequent reason for people glorifying Jesus in the Gospel.

See Handout

Activation:

Blessing What God Blesses - Receive
and increase power for supernatural
ministry

Homework

1. **Read:** Study the Gospel of Mark and identify every occasion of power demonstrated - healing in both large crowds and individual, deliverance from evil spirits, miracles, prophetic revelation, etc. How many instances do you find?
2. **Journal:** Write a one page paper about how you would respond to someone who is confused about the importance of the Church's responsibility to demonstrate God's power in the world.
3. **Supplemental Reading:** *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, Chapter 3