

FOLLOWING JESUS
A Disciple's Handbook

Lesson 3:
“Following Jesus in Empowering and Liberating”

Empowering and Liberating Introduction

Read Luke 4

After Jesus was baptized in water by John the Baptist and baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit by Father God, He immediately moved into the wilderness of Judea where He was tempted by the devil, but resisted and overcame him in every possible way. After that, He went up to His hometown of Nazareth where He announced that Isaiah's prophecy of an anointed and appointed Messiah coming to empower and liberate bound and broken mankind had been fulfilled in Him.

During this time, Jesus began His mission and ministry through the power of the Holy Spirit. This included preaching the good news of salvation, healing the sick and afflicted, and delivering those demonically harassed and oppressed. He preached that the kingdom, or royal rule of the God of heaven, had come to bring power to the powerless and liberty to those lost and locked up in a prison of pain and hopelessness. He came as the empowered liberator to set people free from the penalty and power of sin, and to send them on a mission of doing the same for everyone, everywhere.

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Empowering and Liberating Defined

Empowering must be something received and released. To be empowered one must be saved, baptized and filled by the power of the Holy Spirit through the person of Jesus. Having received the power of God—His supernatural strength to save and set free—one is sent to bring that same freedom into the lives of others. The word *empowering* in the New Testament has to do with Jesus sharing His divine ability to rescue, redeem and restore.

Likewise, *liberating* is something received and released. To be liberated means that one has been set free from the impact of sin and the influence of satanic forces. Having been liberated

by the truth of the gospel of grace in Christ Jesus and the transformational power of the Holy Spirit, one then brings that same liberation into the lives of others. Anointed by Jesus, the Liberator, one is then appointed to use His name and authority to set the captives free. (☐ Read Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18-19.) The word *liberating* in the Bible has to do with setting men free from the ravages of sin by the redemptive power of God in Christ Jesus.

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Empowering and Liberating in the Life of Jesus

Everywhere Jesus went, He brought divine power and liberty. The Apostle Peter, in his message to those in Cornelius' house, summed up Jesus' ministry as one of helping and healing people, setting them free from demonic influence by the power of God. (☐ Read Acts 10:38.) He was anointed for the ministry of empowering and liberating everyone who would receive Him and believe in Him. (☐ Read John 1:12-13.) As Jesus announced that the kingdom of God had come, miracles and manifestations of God's love and power broke in on the earthly scene and the human condition. (☐ Read Matthew 12:22-29.)

It was the mission of Jesus to manifest the Father's love and mercy in bringing people out of bondage and into the blessing of new birth. (☐ Read John 3:5-8, 12-17.) Every word Jesus spoke was attested to by the work of the Holy Spirit's power, authenticating His message and ministry, empowering and liberating people everywhere. (☐ Read Luke 7:22.)

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Empowering and Liberating in the Life of Jesus' Followers

What Jesus did in ministering fullness and freedom to all He encountered became a model for those who followed Him. He sent His twelve disciples out with delegated authority and divine power to bring spiritual life and liberty to the people of every city they entered. He commissioned them to declare and demonstrate the passion and power of the Father to all. (☐ Read Luke 9:1-6.) He then sent scores of other followers into other cities to prepare the way for

His coming by preaching the King and the kingdom, and healing and delivering all who had need. (☐ Read Luke 10:1-9.)

After Jesus' death and resurrection, He instructed His disciples to wait together in Jerusalem until they were clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit, anointing them to be authentic witnesses for Him. (☐ Read Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:46-49.) They did just that. On the Day of Pentecost they were marvelously filled to bring fullness and freedom to all. (☐ Read Acts 2:1-42.) What they received from heaven above, they released on earth below. The Anointed One, Jesus, had now empowered a liberating force of Anointed Ones who could freely give to others what had freely been given to them.

Throughout the Book of Acts, we see Jesus' disciples continuing to minister spiritual fullness and freedom. (☐ Read Acts 5:12-16; 8:4-7; 10:44-48; 16:25-34; 19:1-10.) Throughout the epistles, the Lord's disciples wrote to instruct and remind believers that this ministry of empowering and liberating that had impacted them was to be imparted to others. (☐ Read Romans 13:7-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Ephesians 6:10-20; 1 Peter 2:4-10.) What began on the day of Pentecost was to be shared with all people of every generation. (☐ Read Acts 2:38-39.)

Empowering and Liberating in Our Lives

As followers of Jesus and devoted disciples, we are called to receive the empowering and liberating work of the Holy Spirit and then to release the ministry of empowering and liberating into the lives of others. Because we are in Christ and Christ is in us, we can carry His fullness and freedom wherever we go. We are an anointed and appointed people who are to continue all that Jesus began to do and teach when He was on the earth. (☐ Read Acts 1:1-3.)

This means that as Jesus and His followers preached the gospel with truth and liberating power, we do the same. This means that as Jesus and His followers lived and worked by the power of Holy Spirit in everything with everyone, we do the same. This means that as Jesus and His followers dealt with demonic forces and set people free by His divine authority, we do the same. And this means that as Jesus and His followers lived daily as witnesses of the will of the Father to save and set free, we do the same. (☐ Read Acts 1:8.)

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MEMORIZE: *The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.* (Luke 4:18-19)

Use the following lines to write out the scripture to help you commit it to memory.

KEY TRUTH: It was the mission of Jesus to manifest the Father's love and mercy in bringing people out of bondage and into the blessing of new birth.

YOUR RESPONSE:

- If you have yet to be baptized and filled with the person and power of the Holy Spirit, seek someone to agree in prayer with you to fully receive Christ's empowering. If you have been baptized and filled, seek to walk in the Holy Spirit's power, releasing empowering to others every day.
- Ask the Spirit to reveal to you the areas in your life where you have been liberated and set free from sinful strongholds and areas where you have not.
- Seek someone to agree in prayer with you to fully receive Christ's liberating work. Then seek to release the liberating power of Christ into the lives of others.
- Confess daily that you have been anointed by the Anointed One to follow Him in empowering and liberating every life you touch.

WRITTEN RESPONSE: Lesson Review

Review each section from the lesson on the previous pages to fill in each blank below. This review will help to reinforce the truths from this lesson in your life.

1. _____ must be something _____ and _____.
2. To be _____ means that one has been set _____ from the _____ of sin and the _____ of satanic forces.
3. Every _____ Jesus spoke was _____ to by the _____ of the Holy Spirit's _____, authenticating His _____ and _____, _____ and _____ people everywhere .

4. What Jesus did in _____ and _____ to all He _____ became a _____ for those who _____ Him .

5. As _____ of Jesus and _____, we are called to _____ the _____ and _____ work of the Holy Spirit and then to _____ the ministry of _____ and _____ into the lives of _____.

WRITTEN RESPONSE: Life Reflection

Using the journaling section on the pages at the end of this lesson, write in your own words your responses to the following questions.

1. What have you learned and what has impacted you personally from this lesson?

2. In reading the scripture references in this lesson, what are you sensing and seeing the Holy Spirit highlighting and revealing to you that will enable you to better follow Jesus?

3. As a disciple and follower of Jesus, what steps of loving obedience do you need to take to see what you have learned in this lesson become ongoing practices and patterns in your life?