

Authority from Jesus

I have been considering how the disciples were able to heal the sick and drive out demons before they had received the Holy Spirit. The answer is simple: Jesus gave them his authority. When he sent them out in his name, he literally meant that they could act in the same way he could. Jesus said that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to him. He was sending his disciples out in exactly the same way the Father had sent him out.

We often see authority in the world as stopping us from doing things: speed cameras, tax men, governments. Many years ago when I was a school prefect, the school motto was "Find out what they are doing and stop them doing it." In the kingdom of God the authority that he gives us equips and enables us to do what needs to be done. It wasn't just Jesus' inner circle of 12 apostles either. Jesus chose a further 72 and sent them out in the same way.

Jesus appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. Mark 3:14-15

Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them the authority over evil spirits. Mark 6:7

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

Go! I am sending you [72] out ... to heal the sick. Luke 10:3a and 9a

The authority that Jesus gave then is the authority he gives us now—and he has given his Holy Spirit to all who believe in him do his work today.