



Part 4: Service

When people abuse their authority the results are catastrophic. Power and influence are forces that can be used to steer people in powerfully positive ways, or extremely destructive ones. Jesus shows us a different way to gain and use our influence. He shows us what real authority looks like.

Scripture: Exodus 9:8-12, Matthew 18:1-6

Bottom Line: True freedom doesn't come from being in complete control; it comes from engaging our faith in God, who is ultimately in control.

Discussion Questions

1. Who are the people that you have authority of in your life (Ex: kids, coworkers, etc.)? If someone polled them, what do you think they would say about the influence that you have in their life? Do you think it would be positive or negative?
2. One of the things most people believe about God is that He is powerful. What images or connotations come to mind when you think about God as a powerful being?
3. Read Matthew 18:1-6. What does Jesus teach the disciples about trying to gain power? What characteristics of children do you think Jesus is trying to have his disciples adopt? What are the thoughts and feelings that you would associate with that kind of childlike approach to life? Try to summarize what Jesus is teaching in these verses into 1 sentence, in your own words. Are there other passages in the Bible that you can think of that help to fill out what Jesus is teaching on people seeking power/authority/influence?
4. Have you ever had someone in your life make big sacrifices for you? How does that change the way you relate to that person? Have you given them more influence in your life? Share with the group a bit about who those people are for you and how they got to have that position in your life?
5. Read Philippians 2:1-11. Discuss the way that Jesus is described in this passage. Are there aspects of this that really stand out to you? Why is this such a powerful portrait of how God operates? How should these verses inform our thinking about how God works?

Moving Forward

Perhaps God is nudging you to sacrificially care for specific people in your life. Are there practical ways that you can humble yourself, and become a servant to people around you? Try to be as specific as possible and ask your group to pray for you as you seek to live this out.