

Living with Power

Ephesians 1:16-21

16. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints
17. Do not cease to give thanks for you making mention of you in my prayers:
18. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,
19. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of your calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
20. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power
21. Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places

In the message translation it reads

16. That's why, when I heard of the solid trust you have in the Master Jesus and your outpouring of love to all the Christians,
17. I couldn't stop thanking God for you – every time I prayed, I'd think of you and give thanks.
18. But I do more than think. I ask – ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory – to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally,
19. Your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is He is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for Christians,
20. Oh, the utter extravagance of His work in us who trust Him – endless energy, boundless strength.
21. All this energy issues from Christ: God raised Him from the dead and set Him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe.

I was wondering about this passage of scripture and asking some questions this week as I was driving along. I find that so satisfying to talk with God and ask questions. It's so liberating. I am sure some people must look at me when I am at the traffic lights and think he is on the phone to someone.

Some of the questions I asked were

Why did Paul write this passage? Why did he need to write this passage? What makes it special?

One thing I understand is that when a person comes to Christ and gives their life to Him He comes and abides in their heart. He changes their location by taking them out of one kingdom and placing them in another. He gives them true reason. We have Jesus. Jesus said 'I am the light of the world'. Thus when we receive Jesus we receive light.

So if we have Jesus, who is 'enlightenment personified' **why then would we need to have Paul pray that the eyes of our understanding would be enlightened?** It almost doesn't make sense. Here we are with Jesus and Paul is seemingly asking for more of that enlightenment. Or is he?

Whenever we read the bible the Holy Spirit wants to talk with us and give us specific understanding for our worlds our lives. **He wants to enlighten** us so that our world **gets bigger, our life gets more satisfaction and our relationships more enjoyable.**

The Holy Spirit is always guiding us into all truth. He guides us into truths or understandings so that we have life. Every time He speaks to us we receive power. We receive hope we receive life. As He speaks to us something on the inside of goes **'YESSSS' that's it.** Something comes alive.

The Holy Spirit is here today waiting to go to whomever wills. **At the House we love the work of the Spirit of God.** We desire Him to talk, walk and live with us. We just love the work of the Spirit. Without it we would be nothing.

Every Christian needs to walk in spirit. To do this we need to be able to discern the work of the Spirit in our lives and the lives of those around us. Discernment is vital for a Christian.

The Message says "to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally".

Whenever we meet someone we can discern what sort of person we are meeting. God has given us an ability to discern the spirit of a person. Not from a negative viewpoint but from the point of being able to help them.

Light dispels darkness.

Discerning of Spirits is a spiritual gift. 1 Corinthians 12 The enemy's prime goal is to stop or to block, hinder or even hide, camouflage the presence of God from a believer. If he is able to somehow make it seem like the presence of God is not around the believer can lose hope.

His work is to get you to believe that God's presence is not here now.

What stops discernment? Anything stops discernment is a distraction.

1. Distractions
 - a. A distraction is anything which removes your focus from where it should be.
 - b. There are many distractions in the world. Some good and some not so good.
 - c. What may be a distraction for one person may not be a distraction for another.
 - d. Distractions have the sole intention of making you rusty in discernment.
 - e. Common distractions include
 - i. Alcohol, drugs, food, sport, friendships
 - ii. The use is not abstinence but restraint, learning when to say yes and when to say no
2. Lack/Loss of relationship
 - a. You've stopped attending church or giving your tithe
3. Focus on self

I believe that every Christian has the ability to flow in all the gifts of the Spirit. Every single one is available to all Christians. God wants us to flow in them naturally. Not out of compulsion or because you have to but because you want to.

You want the Holy Spirit to flow in your life. You want to see God moving and helping your friends. You want to see the Spirit of God making your life the life it should be.

So what does the enemy want to distract us from. It must be good. It must bring us freedom, life, joy. It brings us all these things when we are not distracted and we are able to discern.

1. We have a calling – ‘the hope of His calling’

A calling. Something which guides us. Something much bigger than us. Something that gives us direction.

We don't walk around lost or ashamed because we know that our calling is sure. We know where we are going. Not only in the future but also now. What we do has meaning! What we say who we relate to has meaning! This gives us great hope.

When Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego walked into the furnace they did it knowing full well the consequence but being entirely convinced that God was their answer.

Recently on TV a movie played called ‘Touching the Void’ about two mountain climbers and their amazing fight for survival beyond all expectations. The will to live is so powerful. But I want to say to you the ‘will to be alive’ is more powerful.

People are all the time looking for answers to their world and why this or why that? **They lack a calling. A reason.** People want to be alive. **They just don't want to be living they want to live life with passion and purpose.**

When we know Christ we can live life with passion and purpose. We have a reason.

How do we do that as Christians?

- a. We get involved in a local church- this involves attendance regularly and looking for something to do in the local church. Right now we are looking for people who would love to serve on the door. People who would love to just greet people and see that as their ministry. It's an important ministry of encouragement.
- b. Change your thinking from ‘How much can I give the church to how can I give more?’
- c. Invite people along to church events.

2. We have a promise – ‘the riches of His glorious inheritance’

We have a promise. **That promise is made by the only true promise keeper in all history.** God. He said he would do it and has continued to fulfill His promises and statements.

Have you ever know someone who always does what they said they would do? It so easy to trust them because they are full on integrity.

Promises aren't meant to be broken. God made a promise when Noah was around and to this day He has continued to uphold that promise and make sure that the whole world would never again be covered with water by a flood. When God says He is going to do something He does.

He made a promise that He would provide a sacrifice so that we would not have to pay a price we were unable to pay. He sent Jesus, His own son into the world so that we could live free. Free from the burden of sin and its guilt. He made a promise and kept it.

He did that for you.

Some of you have promises from God that have yet to come to pass. They will happen. God will fulfill His word. It will happen.

How do we know better the promises of God?

- a. Spend time regularly outside of church with Him. In the bible and worship
- b. Get on with your life – God will bring it to pass at the right time.
- c. Remind yourself of specific promises of God regularly.

3. We have a power – ‘the exceeding greatness of His power’

We have the power. Phil 4:13 says **I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me**. He has given us a power and it's not just a normal power but its exceeding. It's more than we ever need. He has given us a power to step out of our comfort zones and do things we would have never even dreamed of doing.

We have a power. An amazing power. He resides in us. There is an add on TV at the moment for batteries and we see the energizer man doing far much than the Duracell bunny. This is quite interesting as only ten years ago the Duracell bunny was the bunny that could out run, out last, out flash any other battery.

Man is always looking for power. He wants more and more of it. But true power doesn't come from within its comes from the outside. It comes from knowing Christ.

When we step out to do something our world's get shaped by our actions. **Everything we do comes under pressure from our presence.** We shape our lives by our thoughts, actions and beliefs. Paul wants us to be reminded that we have such an awesome power within us that we can do all things.

We are a people of power, we are a people of praise. Was an old song from the eighties. We are a people of power. You have that power resident within you. That power is Christ.

How do we recognize that power?

1. Let go of the past and embrace the now.
2. Be bold the power is within you
3. Loose the self consciousness and just do it.

There is so much that God wants to communicate to us whenever we read the word of God. I would encourage you to ask Him to speak to you as you read His word.

We have a power, we have a promise and we have a purpose.