

## EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

- A. Introduction: We are talking about a prayer Paul prayed for Christians. Among other things, he prayed we would know the greatness of the power that's in us as sons and daughters of God. It's the same power that raised Christ from the dead, the Holy Spirit. Eph 1:19,20; Rom 8:13
1. The Holy Spirit has come to bring to pass what Jesus provided through the Cross. The Holy Spirit is the performer of the Godhead, the One who gives us the experience of what has been provided by God through redemption. Jer 1:12; Luke 1:35,45; etc.
    - a. The Holy Spirit has been sent to produce transformation in us which results in restoration to our created purpose.
      1. God's plan has always been to live with and in men and then express Himself through us.
      2. Gen 1:26--God created men and women in His image or to be His imagers. That's the idea in the original Hebrew language. We show Him to the world around us.
    - b. God's deliverance of the nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage is called redemption (Ex 6:6; Ex 15:13). It was an historical event — a real event that happened to real people. But it also pictures what God wants to do and has done through redemption.
      1. Ex 29:45,46--God delivered Israel so He could dwell among them — tabernacle in their midst (YLT); make my habitation in their midst (Rotherham).
      2. God instructed them to build a Tabernacle (later a Temple) according to exact specifications where He could dwell and manifest Himself in their midst.
    - c. The night before Jesus was crucified He told His disciples that, after He left them to return to Heaven, His Father would send the Holy Spirit. John 14:16,17
      1. Jesus told them the Holy Spirit had been with them (not a new concept to men familiar with the Tabernacle and Temple). But Jesus went further. He said the Holy Spirit will be in you.
  2. You will become the Temple of God. Temple comes from a Greek word meaning to dwell.
  2. Paul wanted Christians to know, believe, and live with the consciousness or awareness that we are indwelt by Almighty God Himself (I Cor 3:17; I Cor 6:19; II Cor 6:16). We're working on increasing our awareness of the power that's in us and becoming "God-inside minded".
- B. We've already explained in previous lessons that, according to the Bible, there are two distinct experiences with the Holy Ghost — being born of the Spirit and being baptized in the Spirit. John 20:22; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 8:5-8; 14-19; Acts 9:3-18; I Cor 14:18; Acts 10:30-48; Acts 19:1-7
1. Jesus' original disciples were born of the Spirit on resurrection day (John 20:22). Even though they were born of the Spirit, just before Jesus left them to return to Heaven, He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, before they went out to preach the gospel.
    - a. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8--Jesus said they would receive power when the Holy Ghost came on them.
      1. Power is the Greek word *dunamis* meaning miraculous, explosive power. We get the word dynamite from it. This word is used for the works of Jesus and miracles. Matt 11:20; Acts 2:22; 19:11; 10:38; etc.
      2. Jesus further said: You shall be witnesses of Me. A witness is one who can testify to the truth of what he has seen, heard, knows. In the Book of Acts we see that Jesus' disciples gave witness of the resurrection of Jesus with great power (*dunamis*). Acts 4:33
    - b. The imagery used to describe this second experience with the Holy Spirit includes: baptize (Acts 1:5, meaning to dip or immerse), endued (Luke 24:49, meaning to be clothed with power), filled (Acts 2:4, meaning to as much as can be held). The Holy Spirit wants to and ultimately will saturate every part of our being and transform and restore us to our created purpose.
  2. The next day Jesus went to the Cross to pay the price for sin. His sacrifice at the Cross satisfied the claims of justice against us for our sin, making it possible for our sins to be remitted (wiped away) when we acknowledge Jesus as Savior and Lord.

- a. This was a means to an end. God cannot overlook sin or indwell a sinner (Ex 23:7). We have to be justified or made as though we never sinned in order for Him to indwell us.
  1. Because Jesus paid the price for sin at the Cross, men and women can be cleansed of sin when they bow their knee to Him as Savior and Lord.
  2. Once we're cleansed God can indwell us and carry out the process of transformation that changes us from sinners to holy, righteous sons and daughters who are fully pleasing to Him.
- b. Rom 8:29,30--Our destiny is to be restored to our created purpose — sonship and conformity to the image of Christ. Jesus, in His humanity, is the pattern for God's family of sons and daughters.
  1. Rom 8:29,30--God calls us, justifies us (makes us as though we never sinned) and glorifies us. Glorification is the progressive work through which we are fully conformed to the image of Christ by the power of God (lessons for another day).
  2. Consider these thoughts in connection with our discussion of being aware of the power in us.
    - A. Awareness of the fact that God the Holy Ghost is now in you shows how effective the inward cleansing power of the new birth is. You are a fit dwelling place.
    - B. Awareness of the fact that God the Holy Ghost is in you gives assurance that a process of transformation is underway and it will be completed. This is a source of great hope.
    - C. Awareness of the fact that God the Holy Ghost is in you should bring a sense of responsibility that affects the way you live: I am the temple of God. Is this fitting behavior?
3. Here's the point for our present discussion. The Holy Spirit is in us to make us Christ-like in character and power, holiness and love. This power, the same power that raised Christ from the dead, the Holy Spirit, is in you to work in you to transform you, and through you, show Christ to the world.
  - a. John 13:34,35--The night before Jesus was crucified He commanded His followers to love each other with the same love wherewith He loved them. He said that through the way they express that love (or how they treat each other) people will know that they (we) are followers of Jesus.
    1. Rom 5:5--Paul wrote to men and women born of and baptized in the Spirit that "God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us" (Amp)
    2. The Greek word translated poured out (shed in the KJV) means to pour forth or bestow. This same word is used of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on people baptized in the Spirit. Acts 2:33; Acts 2:17,18; Acts 10:45
  - b. The love whereby we love others isn't a feeling or an emotion. It isn't natural human love. Humans are unable to love like Jesus loved. He laid down His life for His enemies. This love is supernatural. It's power from God to treat people the way Jesus treated and treats people — even those you don't like (lessons for another day).
4. In Phil 2:12,13 Paul admonished Christians to work out their salvation with the awareness that God is working in them. These verses deserve an entire lesson. But for now, consider these points.
  - a. Work out your salvation does not mean: work to earn or deserve salvation. We are saved by God's grace and not our efforts. The Greek word translated work means to work fully or accomplish. By implication it means to finish or fashion. The ultimate goal of salvation is to fully conform us to the image of Christ.
    1. We need to live with that awareness and do all we can to work toward that goal. But we are to do it with the consciousness that God is working in us to produce transformation in our mind, emotions, and body. The word translated worketh in v13 means to be active (*energeo*).
    2. v12,13--Work out — cultivate, carry out to the goal and fully complete...[not in your own strength] for it is God who is all the while effectually at work in you — energizing and creating in you the power and desire — both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight (Amp).
  - b. God works in us what is pleasing to Him. The very next statement is: v14,15--Do all things without complaining and arguing so that you may be lights (witnesses) of the reality of Jesus.

5. For many of us, this is our picture of relationship with God: He is outside and far away. I have to beg Him to come near me or get good enough for Him to come near.
    - a. The New Testament doesn't speak of God being on the outside of us and working on us. It speaks of Him being in us, working in and through us. Note this brief survey:
      1. Phil 1:6--God began a work in you which He will complete.
      2. Gal 4:19--Paul labored in prayer so that Christ would be formed in these people.
      3. Eph 3:16--Paul prayed that believers would be strengthened by God's Spirit in them.
      4. Eph 3:20--God works according to His power in us.
      5. Phil 2:13--God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.
      6. Heb 13:21--God works in us that which is well pleasing to Him.
    - b. In Eph 1:19 Paul prayed that Christians would know the greatness of God's power "in and for us who believe" (Amp). The word power is *dunamis* in the Greek. This same word is used in Eph 3:16, translated *might*, and again in Eph 3:20, translated *power*.
      1. Paul prayed in Eph 3:16 that Christians would be strengthened with might (power) by God's Spirit in them. Strengthened (*krataioo*) means to empower or be strengthened
      2. There's something (Someone) in us above the natural or supernatural. Instead of begging God to give us what we already have, we need to learn to thank Him for what He's done and what He wants to be and do in us. Thank you Lord, you're in me by your Spirit to strengthen me.
  6. At the end of Ephesians Paul wrote: Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Eph 6:10
    - a. Strong is *endunnamis* in the Greek. It's made up of two words: *en* or in and *dunamoo* (You can see the root word is *dunamis* or explosive power or strength).
      1. Together these two words picture inner strengthening or empowering, the supernatural power of God.
      2. We look for the spectacular and miss the supernatural. We beg God to make the problem go away and overlook the fact that He's in us to empower and strengthen us to deal with the situation as Jesus would.
    - b. Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Power is the Greek word *kratos*. It is a demonstrative power. Might is *ischuos* which means to have strength, ability, or force, both of body and mind. It conveys a picture of a very strong person.
      1. God raised Jesus by *kratos*. The second time power is used in Eph 1:19 the Greek word is *kratos*. Mighty is the Greek word *ischus*. The Greek for mighty power in 1:19 is literally "the power of His might", the same phrase used in Eph 6:10.
      2. We have in us the same power that raised Christ from the dead, the power that conquered death, hell, and the grave. We need to know it and live with a consciousness of Who and what is in us.
- C. How do we cooperate with the Holy Spirit in us as He works in us and through us to conform us to the image of Christ and show Jesus to the world around us?
1. We must know the greatness or magnitude of the power that is in us. It is the power that raised Christ from the dead. And we must become God inside minded. I John 4:4--Do you live with the awareness that the Greater One — the One Who is greater than all — is in you?
    - a. Jesus lived with the consciousness that the Father dwelled in Him to empower Him to do the works of His Father. John 14:10
      1. Doeth means to make or do, expressing action either as completed or continued. Jesus, in His humanity, was empowered by His Father.
      2. Acts 10:38--You may recall that at the beginning of His public ministry Jesus was anointed by His Father with the Holy Ghost and power (*dunamis*) to enable Him to perform miracles.
    - b. Peter and John lived with the consciousness that God was in them to work through them. When they came upon a lame man begging for money Peter's response was: I don't have silver or gold.

1. But I'll give you what I have. Then he healed the man by the power of God. Acts 3:6
    2. While Jesus was with them He authorized them to heal the sick and cast out devils as a foretaste of what was to come when the Holy Spirit was in them. He told them: Freely you've received, freely give. Matt 10:1,8
  - c. Paul, in the context of proclaiming the gospel as Jesus instructed him, said he was made a minister through God's grace by the working of His power (*dunamis*). Eph 3:7
    1. Col 1:29--He further stated that he labored according to God working mightily in him. Mightily is made up of two words we discussed earlier (*en dunamis*). Together these two words picture inner strengthening or empowering, the supernatural power of God.
  2. Paul is the man who declared himself to be more than a conqueror no matter what circumstance came his way. Rom 8:37
  2. We must become regular, systematic readers of the Bible. The Word of God is identified as the specific instrument the Holy Spirit uses to produce transformation in us. Eph 6:17
    - a. God's Word is supernatural and works in us like food. We don't have to understand how our body extracts iron from spinach, we simply have to eat it. Matt 4:4; I Thess 2:13; I Pet 2:2; etc.
      1. II Cor 3:18--And all of us, as with unveiled faces [because we] continue to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [ Who is] the Spirit. (Amp)
      2. John 6:63--All the words through which I have offered myself to you are meant to be channels of the spirit and of life to you, since in believing those words you would be brought into contact with the life in me. (Riggs Paraphrase)
    - b. God's Word functions as a mirror. It shows us what we are and what we are becoming. It gives us both correction and hope. We need to endeavor to do what it says to do. II Tim 3:16,17
  3. We must learn to pray in agreement with the Holy Spirit. That means several things.
    - a. One, He is the author of the Scriptures. Therefore, we need to learn to pray in line with the Word of God. As we pointed out earlier, instead of begging God to give us what He has already provided, we need to pray prayers of thanksgiving for what we already have. Eph 3:16; Col 1:11
    - b. We need to pray in other tongues. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray about issues in ourselves we don't see or don't know how to deal with, issues that keep us from acting like Jesus. Rom 8:26
- D. Conclusion: The Holy Spirit is in us to empower us to live and walk as Jesus walked. Let's learn to work in cooperation with Him. Lots more next week!