

The Power of the Spirit May 22, 2022

Ephesians 1:19-23 (NLT) I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else not only in this world but also in the world to come.²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church.²³ And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

Paul wanted the believers to understand and grasp the incredible greatness of God's power that affects the Christian. The power by which we have been saved and the power by which we are called live out the life and ministry given to us is not just any power.

The word power (dunamis) refers to a spiritually dynamic living force. Specifically, miraculous power.

What happened to us at the new birth was miraculous! God took a heart bound by sin and darkness and changed it into a heart free from sin and filled with new life.

The Holy Spirit, who is the source of the miraculous power, moved upon us and made us a new creation.

Titus 3:4-7 (NLT) When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love,⁵ he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.⁶ He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior.⁷ Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.

The Holy Spirit did a miracle in us! He raised us from spiritual death and brought us into right relationship with God because of the work of Jesus.

Ephesians 2:1-5 (NLT) Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins.² You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.³ All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.⁴ But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much,⁵ that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)⁶ For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.

You and I are now seated in heavenly places together with Christ!

This describes our spiritual, not our physical experience. He will yet raise us physically, but spiritually He has already raised us to a new type of life.

Colossians 3:1-2 (NLT) Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. ² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

We are no longer dead in our sins, unable to live for God, we have been made alive as a result of the gracious work of Christ being applied to our lives by the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit.

But it doesn't stop at the new birth or a change of heart! We are part of something more!

The Holy Spirit has connected us to the body of Christ. The Church.

1 Corinthians 12: 13 (AMP) For by one [Holy] Spirit we were all baptized into one body, [spiritually transformed—united together] whether Jews or Greeks (Gentiles), slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one [Holy] Spirit [since the same Holy Spirit fills each life].

What Jesus did for us is applied to our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead and in the same way has brought us to new life and made us a part of the body of Christ.

Ephesians 1:19-23 (NLT) This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³ And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

A man who was once a carpenter in Nazareth, who was arrested, falsely accused and beaten. A man who the Romans mocked placing a royal robe on his back and crown of thrones upon His head is now, as He was before His incarnation, seated at the place of honor at the right hand of the Father, far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else not only in this world but also in the world to come.

But what He did wasn't for Himself it was for the benefit of the church, His body.

Ephesians 1:22-23 (NKJV) And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

(VOICE) God has placed all things beneath His feet and anointed Him as the head over all things for His church. ²³ This church is His body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

(GW) God has put everything under the control of Christ. He has made Christ the head of everything for the good of the church. ²³ The church is Christ's body and completes him as he fills everything in every way.

Jesus is the head of the church.

Ephesians 4:15 (NLT) Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

Ephesians 5:23b (NLT) Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church.

Colossians 1:18 (NLT) Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So, he is first in everything.

Why is this important to understand and grasp?

Because the head and the body are connected.

Christ's dominion over the universe is for the benefit of believers: God 'gave him to be head over everything to the church'.

The church has authority and power to overcome all opposition because her leader and head is Lord over all.

Ephesians 1:21-22 (NLT) Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church.

Headship doesn't speak simply to the terms of just authority, but in terms of vital union. Jesus and the church are one; she is the body and He is the head. Most certainly he has authority and rules all things; but more than that he imparts to the church His power through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

The same divine power is available to us now, and is indispensable for us in order to live lives that are pleasing to God.

Romans 8:12-14 (NLT) Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. ¹³ For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

This same divine power is also available to us to do what he has called us to do.

Acts 1:8 (NLT) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The early church was birthed in an upper room when the Holy Spirit came upon them and empowered them to do the work of Christ upon the earth. The Kingdom of God was expanding through the church.

Let’s look at one example of many of how this power was manifested.

In Acts 3 we find a story of Peter and John ministering to a man who born lame and was brought to the temple gate to beg for money.

Peter pauses and takes the man by the hand and says to him, “I don’t have any silver or gold for you. But I’ll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, get up and walk!”

Immediately the man jumps up and after take taking a few dozen steps, turns to Peter and John and leaps on then in full embrace. The people around them are totally amazed at what happened so much so that they begin to gather around Peter and John.

Acts 3:12 (NLT) Peter saw his opportunity and addressed the crowd. “People of Israel,” he said, “what is so surprising about this? And why stare at us as though we had made this man walk by our own power or godliness?”

- Peter understood that the power that flowed through him and healed this man had nothing to do with how godly he was but with how good and merciful God is.
- He also understood that the that he didn’t make this man well, the Holy Spirit power made him well, he was just the conduit.
- More importantly he understood that this demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit to heal this man had an end-goal, to share the gospel with those around him.

Peter and the early church flowed in the same kind of power that Jesus operated in during His ministry.

Acts 10:38 (NLT) And you know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

May we come to a greater understanding and grasp the incredible greatness of God’s power that affects us as Christians. The power by which we have been saved and the power by which we are called live out the life and ministry given to us is not just any power.

The Holy Spirit is the source of the miraculous working power that is working in us and through us. May we walk in greater knowledge and understanding and stay connected to Him as the power source to live the life of holiness and minister in His power to those who need to hear and experience the power of the gospel.

Jesus is the head of the church and we are His body, Let's live like it!!