



WEEK 11 - Power

Praise to God for today:

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

O our God, you are the God who will judge this world. For we confess, Lord, that we are powerless against this great tide that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you. We thank you that you say to us, "Do not be afraid and do not be discouraged at this great tide," for the battle is not ours but yours, O God. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in

the heavenly places. Fight our battles for us, Holy Spirit.

Prayer for the service:

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

Help us stand firm, hold our position, and see the salvation of the Lord on our behalf.' Again, You say, "Do not be afraid and do not be discouraged. Tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you."

1 2 Timothy 2:21

Holy Spirit, in the gentleness of Your ways, cleanse us from what is dishonorable, make us a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to You, O Lord, ready for every good work.

Prayer for the persecuted church:

- We pray for First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas. We pray for the families of those killed and wounded, but we are speechless. We pray for the church. We pray for the community. We pray for Pastor Frank Pomeroy as he leads and comforts his

congregation in the midst of his own grief. We pray for the shooter's family.

- May they trust You for Your comfort, Your promises, and Your guidance.
- We pray for the gospel of Jesus Christ to be magnified in this tragedy.
- We embrace in spirit the members of First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs. We identify with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Prayer for a local church:

Ryan Sharp and Impact Church - May they ascribe to You glory and strength. Let them ascribe to You the glory due Your Name, worshipping You in the splendor of holiness. For You are their God and they are the sheep of Your pasture. Be with them today, Holy Spirit.

Closing:

2 Timothy 1:7-8

God, we are thankful that you did not give us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and a sound mind. Therefore, we do not have to be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, but I pray we may share in suffering for the gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Intro: The impact of Wesley's message

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

God has promised that He would work through us by the power of His Spirit and yet how many know nothing of His presence and His power? An experience that God has promised to all His children.

First, let's look at what God wants to do in us by the power of the Person of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 3:20-21

20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think,

That right there should give us pause — far more abundantly? This is saying that God will astound us by answering above and beyond what we had even hoped for in our prayers. Now, how does He accomplish this thing that is far more abundant than whatever we asked for or even thought of?

according to the power at work within us,

The power at work within us is the Person of the Holy Spirit. And what is the result of God doing far more abundantly than what we asked or thought? He is glorified.

21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus

God wants to do beyond all that you ask or think through the power of the Spirit within you that He might be glorified.

21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

He is glorified throughout all generations in this same way. So, the methods have not changed.

“The church... has been trying to attract people to herself for fifty years and more, putting on popular programs, dramas, music, this that and the other, trying to entice people, especially the young people, but they do not come. Of course not. They never will until... they see a manifestation of it, and, so, we pray, descend, come down, rend the heavens that these adversaries may know thy

name. Nothing will make them listen but that. We have tried everything else, have we not?" (MLJ)

What Lloyd-Jones is contending here for is a manifestation of the power of the Spirit.

D.L. Moody, who lived from 1837-1899, said basically the same thing: "A great many people are thinking that we need new methods... that we need new organs, that we need new choirs, and all these new things. That is not what the church of God needs today. Rather, we need the old power that the apostles had; that is what we lack, and if we have that in our churches, there will be new life."

What's going to attract people is the Holy Spirit in us. That's what going to keep visitors coming back once they come.

So, if God promises to do far more abundantly than we ask or think and He does so by working through the power of the Holy Spirit in us... what's the holdup?

Secondly, we're going to look at the holdup, which has been more than hinted at in the quotes from Lloyd-Jones and Moody.

You do not have because you do not ask. And we often do not ask because we do not believe. We're not convinced prayer will help. We have no faith He will answer us.

"What should I pray for?" asks somebody? My dear friend, there is no limit to what you should pray for, no limit at all. (MLJ)

Shame on us for our puny prayers, for putting our limits to God's illimitable power! (MLJ)

To answer the question, "What's the holdup?" let's look at a prayer in 2 Chronicles that highlights a right dependence upon the Holy Spirit for accomplishing God's purposes.

2 Chronicles 20:12-15

12 O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

It has been said that should the Holy Spirit suddenly be taken out of this world, 95 percent of what we are doing in our churches would continue. That expresses the holdup. We're not dependent upon the Holy Spirit.

"We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

We look to you, Holy Spirit, because you are gentle like a dove.

We look to you, Holy Spirit, because you guide us to the truth.

We look to you, Holy Spirit, because you empower us to take action.

13 Meanwhile all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

They trusted God with everything in their lives.

14 And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly.

15 And he said, "Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the Lord to you, 'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.

Dependence upon the Holy Spirit is vital.

Dependence upon the Holy Spirit is necessary.

Dependence upon the Holy Spirit is the only way the church can accomplish what she has been called to accomplish.

Paul says the same thing in this way:

Ephesians 6:12

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood,

People are not the problem. People are not the enemy. People are why we are here. As soon as you are antagonistic toward a person, you have forgotten your calling. You have stopped depending upon the Holy Spirit.

And more than likely you are in an argument with the person because you are trusting in your argument.

but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

You can't fight a spiritual battle with carnal weapons.

Now, what do I mean by carnal weapons? Arguments are great tools. I believe in sound reasoning and good arguments. But to depend upon an argument, however good, to make someone change their mind about Christ — you can't win a spiritual war that

way. It's like trying to argue a dead man to life.

I'm not saying to throw good arguments out the window. I'm saying, "Realize where the change comes from."

2 Chronicles 20:16-17

16 Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, east of the wilderness of Jeruel. 17 You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you."

This sounds counterintuitive. It's like saying, "The battle is God's, so do nothing. But go down. Do nothing, but go out against them."

In other words, have an argument, but don't trust in the argument.

The point he is making here is that we are dependent upon the power of the Holy Spirit to win any spiritual battle.

But in a battle you have to advance. You have to be willing to go out. You have to go

out against them knowing who will win the war. Not you, but the Lord.

But to win a spiritual battle you have to be willing to fight.

Then, you have to be trained to fight.

Just gathering a bunch of men together doesn't make an army. They have to go to basic training to learn how to fight. In other words, they have to be prepared.

2 Timothy 2:21

21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

• Preparatory work

- 1. Personal Revival - love God**
- 2. Relational Revival - love your neighbor**
- 3. Missional Revival - Great Commission (why we're here)**
- 4. Structural Renewal - change systems and programs**

5. Cultural Revival - that's when you have awakening

This is the preparatory work that God must do to make us vessels for honorable use, to make us usable, in other words.

That's why one of the recurring verses throughout this series has been:

James 4:8

8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

That is the guaranteed promise. So, what is the holdup?

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

How do I know that God is going to listen to me and to give me my petition? Here is the answer — he is ready to meet certain people. (MLJ)

James 4:8

8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

“It is the Spirit alone that can mortify sin; he is promised to do it, and all other means without him are empty and vain. How shall he, then, mortify sin that has not the Spirit? A man may easier see without eyes, speak without a tongue, than truly mortify one sin without the Spirit.” (John Owen)

The Holy Spirit wants to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts.

Romans 8:13

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

And when the Holy Spirit is working in our lives, He makes us different people.

So, God wants to do beyond all that you ask or think through the power of the Spirit in you that He might be glorified.

What holds you back?

2 Timothy 1:7–8

⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,

So, finally, let's breakdown the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

2 Timothy 1:7–8

⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear

So fear is not of the Holy Spirit.

What are you most afraid of in life? What do you fear losing the most? What keeps you up at night? When you're fearful it's because whatever you're afraid of seems bigger than God to you. We should know that's a lie. But, what do we do? We give in to how we feel rather than standing on the truth.

“We know not which most to wonder at, the faithfulness of God or the unbelief of his people. He keeps his promise a thousand times, and yet the next trial makes us doubt him.” (Spurgeon)

What's the truth of the matter? What kind of Spirit did God give us?

but of power and love and self-control.

⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord,

It seems even the early Christians had a tendency to be afraid of sharing the gospel. They needed to be reminded of the power of the Person in them.

nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,

There is only one way to face a hostile world. “For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”

Paul tells us to “share in suffering for the gospel.” There is only one way to share in suffering for the gospel and that is by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Micah 3:8

⁸ But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the Lord, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.

The Holy Spirit enables us to proclaim the truth of the gospel with power.

- **Most powerful moments in my life**

Matthew 28:18–20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Acts 1:8

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The power of the Holy Spirit is given specifically for the proclamation of the gospel.

Acts 4:33

³³ And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Now how do we receive the power of the Holy Spirit?

Galatians 3:2-3

² Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Ephesians 3:20-21

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

**“Turn and receive this Lord; he has given himself. Stop trusting yourself, and have him.”
And in having Him, you will have the Spirit who gives life.**