

Sunday, May 24, 2026 - Walking in the Power of the Gospel – Pastor John Henry Raskin

1. Your Identity in Christ

- You are God’s workmanship—His intentional creation and masterpiece
- You are a new creation, not a repaired version of your old self
- You are righteous before God through Christ and indwelt by His Spirit

☞ *The Christian life begins with knowing who you are.*

2. The Power Within You

- The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you
- This is not symbolic—it is resurrection power for daily living
- You are not called to rely on your own strength, but on the Holy Spirit

☞ *You are not fighting alone—God’s power is already at work in you.*

3. The Purpose of the Gospel

- You are saved by grace through faith—not by works
- But you are saved for good works, prepared beforehand by God

☞ *Grace doesn’t produce passivity—it produces a transformed life.*

4. Walking in the Spirit (Daily Practice)

- Choose daily dependence: “I will not live this day in my own strength.”
- Exercise your will to follow the Spirit moment by moment
- Invite Christ to fully dwell and lead your life

☞ *Walking in power is a daily, intentional decision.*

5. Marks of a Gospel-Powered Life

A life truly transformed by the gospel shows:

- Growing hatred of sin (not just its consequences)
- Love for God’s Word as nourishment, not obligation
- Love for other believers and desire for community
- Concern for the lost and sharing the gospel
- Generosity and mercy toward the poor

☞ *The gospel produces visible fruit.*

6. Warnings to Take Seriously

Beware of forms of Christianity that lack power:

- Reducing faith to behavior or moral improvement
- Keeping faith private and invisible
- Having an outward appearance of religion but rejecting its transforming power

☞ *A powerless gospel is not the true gospel.*

7. The Ongoing Call

- The gospel is not just how you start—it is how you live every day
- Return continually to:
 - The cross (your forgiveness)
 - The empty tomb (your new life)
 - The Holy Spirit (your daily power)

☞ *Live in the gospel, not just from it.*

8. Encouragement & Hope

- God will finish the work He started in you
- We live in the tension of “now, but not yet”
- Therefore Walk:
 - Humbly
 - Dependently
 - Confidently in Christ’s finished work

Examine your life: Are you walking in the power of the gospel—or just the appearance of it?

☞ *Choose today to walk in the power of the Spirit and live the life God prepared for you*

UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL PART 5 of 5

WALKING IN THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today we have arrived at the grand finale of our series “Understanding the Gospel”.

Over the past four weeks we have been on a journey to understand the amazing truth that is the Good News.

We contemplated God’s Character... Holy, righteous and beyond our ability to comprehend in His loyal love for His creation, mankind.

We observed the uncrossable canyon that separates us in our natural, sinful nature from a Holy God who yearns for relationship, not just with His chosen people, who rejected Him, but with all people for all time who would choose Him.

We have seen the incredible love of God that became flesh in the person of His begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who took our worst so that we could be united with Him through His life, death and resurrection.

We saw that our position in Christ because of what Jesus did is righteousness before God.

We have explored the incredible reality of how p righteousness in us causes us to become entirely new creations by the power of the Holy Spirit released in all who put their faith in Christ.

Today we will learn that because that power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us through the Spirit, we are truly “born again” and have the ability to become the people that God originally created us to be.

People like Jesus. Living a life led by the Holy Spirit, intentionally walking out the perfect will of God and being conformed into His image.

That's what we are going to explore today.

If the gospel is true, if all these things have actually happened, if we are truly new creations — then what does that look like on a Tuesday afternoon?

What does it look like when the mortgage is overdue, when the diagnosis is grim, when the marriage is strained, when the temptation is strong?

The gospel does not merely rescue us from the past.

It empowers us for the rest of our lives that follow that glorious moment when we acknowledged that we needed a savior and first proclaimed, “I believe”.

We're going to begin with this scripture that is undoubtedly familiar to those of you who have been friends of Abundant Life church for any period of time.

Ephesians 2:10 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

The word Paul uses here for workmanship —poiema— is where we get our English word "poem." We are God's poem. His crafted composition. His masterpiece in progress.

And lest we rush past the context: this declaration comes immediately after Paul's passage about grace and faith.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

And it is then that Paul says...

(Back to Ephesians 2:10 on the overhead)

Ephesians 2:10 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Grace does not produce passive Christianity. Grace produces active, Spirit-empowered, God-glorifying living.

Notice the double weight of this verse.

First, you were created in Christ Jesus.

The creation IN Christ Jesus is the reborn you. The new person whose spirit is alive and connected to God's Holy Spirit.

The word "created" (Greek: ktisthentes) is the language of new creation in Genesis. It is the same creative act that brought the cosmos into being out of nothing.

Regeneration is not a renovation of the old self. It is a new creation. And this new creation is not purposeless.

It is oriented toward works that God "prepared beforehand" works that were designed and appointed before the foundation of the world, fitted to each believer in their specific time, place, and calling.

God, in eternity past, knew not only that you would receive and be made new in Christ, but that you would walk in specific works He has laid out for you to do.

Your Monday morning matters to the eternal God. Your acts of service, your words of witness, your deeds of mercy — these are not incidental to salvation.

They are the Gospel's intended fruit and expression.

To walk in the power of the gospel, we must begin here: with a right understanding of our identity.

You are not a merely a forgiven sinner clinging to the promise of heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:17 — Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

You are a new creation, a son or daughter of the Most High God, indwelt by His Spirit, appointed for a life of purposeful, heaven-authored good works.

We should walk like it.

If we are not walking in the power of the Gospel, it may be because we are quick to forget Who it is Who lives inside us.

The same Holy Spirit, the divine third Person of the Trinity Who reached into the sealed tomb on that resurrection morning and animated the dead body of Jesus Christ by His power now dwells within every believer.

This is not metaphor. This is not inspirational poetry.

Paul states it as plain theological fact in Romans 8.

Romans 8:11 - But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

What does this mean for the life of the believer?

It means that the power available to you is the power of resurrection life itself.

Not mere moral improvement. Not motivational encouragement. Resurrection power.

The power that overturned death, broke the dominion of sin, and inaugurated the age to come now animates your daily discipleship.

And yet... many of us live as though the tomb were still sealed.

Why do some of us act as though we are struggling alone against temptation, against fear, against the seemingly impossible declarations of Scripture that say we can do this.

I maintain it is because we allow it.

Right after the bold declaration of Verse 8:11. Paul confronts this question with urgency in verses 12 and 13:

Romans 8:12-13 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.

Walking in the power of the gospel means walking in conscious, daily, dependent communion with the Holy Spirit.

It means presenting each morning as an acknowledgment: I will not live this day by my own strength.

I will depend on the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead.

That Spirit is yours. Draw on Him. It is a will issue.

We have talked about the reason that God gave mankind free will.

I maintain that it was not for the reason of causing man to fall into sin but rather to give us the opportunity to choose freely.

Because of free will, we are able not only to love God and to choose Him as our Lord and Savior, awakening our spirit...

but because our spirit is now awakened and ABLE to hear from His Spirit, we are also able to make moment by moment choices to follow His Spirit and walk out these good works prepared beforehand with the awareness of the Mind of Christ that is His Spirit.

Paul prays for the Ephesians that they would receive this awareness and strength that is available to them when he prays...

Ephesians 3: 16-17a - 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

Paul is not praying a shallow prayer here.

He is not asking that the Ephesians would feel a little better about themselves or muster a bit more resolve.

He is praying that they would be strengthened with power... the Greek word [Kra-tah-ee-OH-thay-nye](#) is to be made mighty —through His Spirit in the inner person.

This is a prayer for comprehensive, deep, root-level strength.

And the measure of this strength? "According to the riches of His glory."

Not according to our deserving.

Not according to our effort.

According to the inexhaustible, fathomless wealth of God's own glory.

This is the grammar of grace operating in the life of the believer.

The goal of this inner strengthening is that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

The word for "dwell" katoikeō kah-toy-KAY-o means to settle in, to take up permanent residence, to make a home.

Paul is praying that Christ would not merely visit the believer's heart occasionally but that He would be fully at home there... enthroned in every room, not merely a guest in the parlor.

In other words that He would become the Pilot of the ship of your life... not helping you do your will but charting the course of your life day by day and giving you the strength to walk it out.

Walking in the power of the gospel requires this kind of inner intention. This act of WILL.

It requires that we come before God in prayer and ask Him... with the very confidence this text invites — to strengthen us in the inner man.

Not for the sake of impressive outward performance, but so that Christ may be at home in us, and so that His love and power may be seen in the world through us.

If indeed Christ dwells in us then we will allow ourselves to be conformed into His image by this daily, willful walking out of the good works God has prepared beforehand.

But the Gospels also provide us with a warning.

Later in the Apostle Paul's ministry, he addresses a rather long list of spiritual shortcomings that may be found in people who identify as Christians.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 NLT - You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. 2 For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. 3 They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. 4 They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. 5 They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

Here, Paul is describing people who possess the outward form of Christianity—the language, the liturgy, the moral framework—but who have emptied it of its explosive, life-altering force.

This is not a description of unbelievers outside the church. It is a description of people within the covenant community who have domesticated the gospel—who have reduced it to a system of behavior modification, a set of ethical guidelines, or a cultural inheritance to be maintained rather than a living power to be experienced.

Paul's counsel to Timothy is stark: "Avoid such people".

The implication is that proximity to a powerless religion that is not rooted in the power of the Gospel is itself spiritually dangerous.

That is why Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves.

2 Corinthians 13:5 - Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

What are the practical marks that distinguish a genuinely gospel-powered life from one that merely has the appearance of godliness?

The New Testament is not reticent on this point. We might summarize several key indicators:

Growing hatred of sin, not merely its consequences.

The person who has tasted the grace of God in Christ finds that sin increasingly becomes bitter—not merely uncomfortable.

This is what David means when he cries, "I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned"

The gospel creates God-directed penitence, not merely self-directed regret.

A person who is operating under the power of the Spirit will pray for the will to overcome temptation and will invariably receive it!

Love for God's Word as food, not merely duty.

The Psalmist's celebrated cry, "Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day", is not the language of legal compulsion but spiritual appetite.

The Spirit who regenerates also creates hunger for the Word by which He works.

A life that has no appetite for Scripture should prompt serious self-examination.

Love for the people of God.

John writes with striking simplicity: "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14).

The person who is at peace with isolation from the body of Christ—who does not hunger for gathered worship, who has no need of the accountability and encouragement of fellow believers—is living without one of the clearest evidences of regeneration.

Gospel power produces community.

A deepening concern for the lost.

The one who has understood that they were dead in sin and brought to life by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone cannot remain indifferent to the spiritual condition of those around them.

The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20) is not an instruction for a professional class of missionaries but the marching orders of a community that has been seized by the gospel and cannot be silent about it.

Generosity and mercy toward the poor and vulnerable.

Jesus, the law and the prophets are agreed: the mark of a people who know God is their care for the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger (Deut. 10:18–19; Isa. 1:17; Mic. 6:8).

James pointedly asks: "If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?" (Jas. 2:15–16).

Gospel power produces gospel generosity.

Conversely, two specific ways in which gospel power is denied include:

Reducing the Christian life to ethical performance.

When the gospel is primarily understood as a call to be a better person rather than a proclamation of what God has done in Christ, it loses its power.

The motivation is wrong; the standard is wrong; the energy is wrong. Only the form remains.

Privatizing faith to the point of invisibility.

The gospel is not only a private transaction between the soul and God. It is a world-shaping power that should infuse the whole life of the believer and should always be evident in our work, relationships, economics, even our leisure.

One of the greatest witnesses of the power of the Gospel is how we endure suffering, and ultimately how we accept dying.

A faith that makes no claims on these domains, that is carefully confined only to Sunday morning, is a faith that has denied its own power.

I know that some of you may find this message convicting...

However, for those who are concerned that they are not walking in the power of the Gospel... There is a simple solution.

The solution to a powerless form of religion is not more religion but a greater submission to the gospel itself.

This is the great burden of the entire series.

The gospel is not merely the door through which we enter the Christian life—it is the atmosphere we breathe throughout it. It is not merely the foundation of our justification before God. It is the fuel of our sanctification, the spring of our worship, the wellspring of our love for others, and the hope that sustains us in suffering.

Avoid the danger of a Christianity that is merely inherited, merely cultural, merely habitual.

Come again to the cross where the price of your redemption was fully paid.

Come again to the empty tomb where the power of your new life was publicly declared.

Come again to the Holy Spirit who has been given as the first fruits and guarantee of your inheritance.

Come boldly before the Throne of Grace for direction.

We live in a unique moment in redemptive history.

The kingdom of God has already been inaugurated in the first coming of Christ; it awaits its consummation at His return.

We are citizens of a kingdom that is real but not yet fully visible, partakers of an age to come that has broken into the present.

In this tension of “now, but not yet”, the gospel-powered life is lived out.

This means we must live with both confidence and humility.

Confident, because the decisive battle has already been won at Calvary and the empty tomb.

Confident that your justification is complete; your adoption is irrevocable; your union with Christ is unbreakable.

But also humble, because the war is not yet over.

We still carry the old nature; we still feel the pull of sin; we still groan with all creation under the weight of a not-yet-redeemed world.

The sanctified life is a progressive, imperfect, often stumbling advance toward a conformity to Christ that will be finally completed only at the resurrection.

Here is the Apostle Paul's final word on the Gospel empowered walking life:

Philippians 1:6 — "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

You will not ultimately be denied the glory for which you were created, redeemed, and sanctified.

But you are not there yet.

Walk, therefore... walk humbly, walk dependently, walk in the power of a gospel that is, even now, the power of God unto salvation and make it your heart's desire to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.

As we close this series, I hope that we have strengthened your understanding of the Gospel, and what we can do to spread the Good News of salvation by living in the power of it.

Paul's prayer to his beloved Church at Ephesus is now my prayer for you.

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.