

**Title: The Power of Gospel-Powered Proclamation**

**Text: Romans 16:25-27**

The New Year is fast approaching. And with the New Year comes many ideas for New Year's resolutions.

What is the power behind our New Year's Resolutions? Well, it is our RESOLVE!

In other words, our DETERMINATION.

But, to be honest, statistically, we don't do very well with our self-empowered Resolve and Determination.

1. **Initial Drop-off:** A significant proportion of people abandon their resolutions early on. About 23% quit within the first week, and only 36% managed to continue past the first month. <https://insideoutmastery.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/#:~:text=23,credible%20findings%20into%20this%20article>
2. **Year-End Success Rate:** Despite early enthusiasm, the success rate by the end of the year is quite low. A 2016 study found that of the 41% of Americans who make New Year's resolutions, only 9% feel they are successful in keeping them by the end of the year. <https://discoverhappyhabits.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/#:~:text=2024%20Statistics%202023%20Statistics%202022,are%20successful%20in%20keeping%20them>
3. **Specific Drop-off Point:** According to a study by Strava, which analyzed over 800 million user-logged activities, the day most people are likely to give up on their New Year's Resolution is January 19. <https://bestlifeonline.com/new-years-resolutions-ditch-date/#:~:text=Norcross%27%20study%20found%20that%2053,was%20that%20they%20plowed%20on>

So, if we aren't so great at changing ourselves, we don't have the strength. Is there any hope of change in our lives? For the believer, absolutely.

God has a potent way to change us. FAITH in His Word!

**Main Idea: As You Act on Faith in His Revealed Word, You Will Be Strengthened in the Lord!**

Let's look at two powerful components for this promised power to change...

The first is...

**1. The Promise of Power (vs. 25-26)**

**Romans 16:25-26 ESV**

*Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—*

God is the source of our strength. There are four ways in which God strengthens His Children.

**God Strengthens through Paul's Gospel** - Isn't it interesting that the Apostle was so deeply committed and entrenched in the gospel that he considered the gospel to be his? I wonder if this is the secret to being strengthened by God. I wonder if this is why Paul says this in the way he does. God strengthened Paul with the gospel, and in turn, Paul strengthened countless others with his gospel.

*What is the gospel?*

*Do you know the gospel so well that it has become yours?*

*What are you doing with the gospel?*

**God Strengthens through the preaching of Jesus Christ** - I had the privilege to speak with a missionary from London, England, the other day. He told me that England, once a bastion for the gospel, is now so post-Christian that it is almost pre-Christian. He said that while ministering there they were talking to some middle schoolers about the birth of Jesus Christ. One student ask the missionary, *"Why did God name him after a swear word?"*

Jesus Christ is no swear word. His name is rooted in the very hope of our deliverance from eternal Hell.

Jesus means "God Saves"

Christ means "Anointed one" / "King"

God gives ultimate strength through Jesus Christ.

Do you know what that is? Life.

This is why preaching Jesus Christ is so critical. Preaching Christ gives life!

**Acts 4:12 ESV**

*And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

Literally, salvation is in the name of Jesus. We are born-again when we hear the Word of God preached and respond to his call to salvation!

This was the mission of Jesus. It is what He preached!

**Mark 1:15 ESV**

*and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

And this is why Paul told Timothy to NEVER STOP PREACHING THE GOSPEL!

**2 Timothy 4:1-2 ESV**

*I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*

*Do you understand the power of Christ's Name?*

*Do you preach Christ in season and out of season?*

*Will you start?*

**God Strengthens through the long secret mystery** - What is this mystery? Well, it is no mystery to us! Look again at verse 26...

**Romans 16:26 ESV**

*but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—*

What does this mean? It means that while the ministry of the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, was a mystery to the Old Testament believers, He is no mystery to us, the New Testament Saints. In fact, He is the fulfillment of all promises found in the Old Testament.

**2 Corinthians 1:19–20 ESV**

*For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in him it is always Yes. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.*

Jesus confirms Paul's words when, after his resurrection, he meets with two disciples as they travel on the road to Emmaus.

**Luke 24:44–45 ESV**

*Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,*

This Christianity thing has been in God's mind from the beginning, but it wasn't until after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and the birth of the Church at Pentecost that the mystery was no longer mysterious.

Because hindsight is 20/20, we can look back into the Old Testament and see Jesus all over the place. [Gen 1:26-27](#)

**Genesis 1:26–27 ESV**

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

**Psalms 22:1 ESV**

*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?*

**Isaiah 53:4–5 ESV**

*Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.*

Are you strengthened by the fact that your salvation was planned from before the foundation of the earth? That it was not an afterthought? That God planned a way to rescue you through Christ. That although it was a mystery for a time, it is not a mystery today. That's what John says in [1 John 5:13](#).

**1 John 5:11–13 ESV**

*And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.*

Paul testifies in verse 16 that the prophetic writings are no longer held only to the Nation of Israel, but they are now shared with ALL nations. And praise God for this because this is so, you and I have the necessary understanding available to us to be rescued from our sin by our Savior.

You know, there are a lot of people in your life who still find the things of God a mystery. And they need someone to help them solve that mystery.

Would you be that person?

The last area of strength from God has a lot to do with our participation.

**God Strengthens through the obedience of faith** - Look again at verse 26...

**Romans 16:26 ESV**

*but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—*

Paul tells us that “according to the command of the eternal God...”

By the way, have you ever considered why the Eternal God can command us?

Because He was here before anyone or anything else, and he, therefore, is the Creator of all that is! And as Eternal Creator, He has authority over all, including you!

And this ties into the last part of verse 26 well.

God's desire for all nations is the obedience of faith.

Obedience - ὑπακοήν - “obedience” (*hupo*, “under,” *akouo*, “to hear”)

Faith - πίστewς - confidence in, trust.

**obedience of faith. It is God's will that this gospel go to all nations, so that all who are obedient because of their faith will be saved.** *The ESV Study Bible Chapter 16*

The NIV translates this verse this way.

**Romans 16:26 NIV84**

*but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him—*

So, the question I have for you is do you believe in Christ?

Do you want to know how much you believe in Christ? If you obey Him. Better stated, you desire to obey Him, and then you do. Not perfectly, but it is the overall tone and goal of your life.

Now you might ask, how does this strengthen you and me? Because as we exercise faith by obeying Him, our faith is actually strengthened because you will grow in your faith. Your heart will become more enflamed for Him and for Holiness.

These four ways in which you are strengthened by the Lord are powerful.

God Strengthens through Paul's Gospel

God Strengthens through the preaching of Jesus Christ

God Strengthens through the long secret mystery

God Strengthens through the obedience of faith

And the more we understand each one, the stronger we become in our walk with Him.

By the way, this is our responsibility to pursue. It's a command!

**Ephesians 6:10 ESV**

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.*

You and I are to pursue that which strengthens us in the Lord.

These verses clearly point out where we can find this strength. The Lord is the source of true strength.

**Romans 16:25 (ESV)**

*Now to him who is able to strengthen you...*

So, when we apply the four things Paul mentions in these verses, our strength as a Christian increases.

Friends, you must apply the information of the Word of God in order to be transformed.

**Information + Application = Transformation!**

*Our own Micah Gerakinis is an example of this. He spent the last several years learning about being a Medical Doctor. He did really well acquiring the information. But Micah would be the first to tell you that information alone does not a doctor make.*

*Let's be honest: no one wants surgery from a doctor who read a lot about surgery, but has not actually performed a surgery.*

*Micah, even though he is legitimately a doctor, is now applying the knowledge he has acquired in his residency to be transformed into a doctor.*

If you are in Christ, you are a Christian. And while you have been given a new heart and you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, you are still becoming a Christian. The renewal of your mind in the Scriptures is transforming you.

God promises that you can be strengthened. But in order for you to be strengthened, you must DO what His Word says.

For example. God's word says.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 ESV**

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

This is God's will for you. This is not a gray area. There are three things you are to do because God wants you to. Do you see these three things?

1. Rejoice Always

2. Never Stop in your Prayers.

3. Always be thankful.

This is the information. What happens when you do it consistently over time?

Transformation!

You will no longer complain about everything because you trust God, so you can rejoice - even in the toughest of circumstances.

You will be vigilant, fervent, and consistent in your prayer because you have seen God answer your prayer over and over.

You will always be thankful because you will grow to understand that all things DO work together for good to those who love the Lord. And because every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of lights of which there is no shadow of shifting.

Simply stated, when you apply this verse, you will never be the same! You'll be transformed into Christlikeness.

**Review** - As You Act on Faith in His Revealed Word, You Will Be Strengthened in the Lord!

- The Promise of Power

### **2. The Source of Power (vs. 27)**

**Romans 16:27 ESV**

*to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.*

If we are not careful, we can begin to think that we are in charge of our destiny. And while it is true that we are responsible, it is more profound that God is providentially in charge of all things.

God is the source of all things. Nothing was made that has been made that is apart from God. And we can rest in this truth.

There are two concepts I want you to notice in this passage as Paul closes out this amazing letter.

First...

**God is wise and can be trusted**

I want to remind you what Paul says about God. He says that he is *"the only wise God."*

Why is this significant?

If God is the only wise God and His wisdom is distilled in His Word, then we can read and trust His Word wholeheartedly because His Word comes from the mind of God.

There are many gods vying for our attention in this world. Gods that claim to be the epitome of wisdom and knowledge.

The God of money and resources -

The God of comfort and security -

The God of power and significance -

These and the myriad of gods like them offer their version of wisdom and knowledge, but they never are quite able to deliver on what they promise.

But the God of the Bible has been proved over and over.

His wisdom is sound and unimpeachable.

This is the beautiful truth the old hymn, *"Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus"* teaches.

*'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just to take Him at His word;  
Just to rest upon His promise;  
Just to know, Thus saith the Lord.*

*Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him,  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er,*

*Jesus, Jesus, Precious Jesus!  
O for grace to trust Him more.*

This is why Jesus challenges those in his famous sermon called the Sermon on the Mount to do what he says.

**Matthew 7:24–29 ESV**

*“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.” And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.*

His words had power and authority and therefore are FULL of wisdom and knowledge.

And you are wise to listen and do what He says!

Do you need to understand how to live in a way that pleases God? God’s word has answers for that.

Do you need wisdom on being a godly husband, wife, son, or daughter? God’s word has answers for that.

Do you need to get clarity on who you are? God’s Word specializes in that!

Even if you are wondering about your sexual orientation and gender questions – Your creator in His Word can help you!

But His Word isn’t just about your felt needs. The Word is really about HIM! It’s about HIS story, not yours. It’s about His glory, not our own. And God is wise and good enough to tell us this from His Word!

The promise of Power that we talked through in verses 25 and 26 are only possible by the wisdom God gives in those verses.

Whose wisdom do you cling to?

The latest self-help book **or** the wisdom of the ages from God found in His Holy Word.

God is wise and can be trusted.

**It is all about God’s eternal glory through Jesus**

I want you to notice another concept with me that we see in verse 27. Look at the verse.

**Romans 16:27 ESV**

*to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.*



How is God glorified?

Certainly, God receives glory through the creation around us.

**Psalm 19:1 ESV**

*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.*

This is called General Revelation. This means that as we observe the creation around us we should come to the conclusion that a tree, a bunny rabbit, a platypus couldn't have just appeared, there must be a creator behind all of this.

But General Revelation is not sufficient to save anyone's soul. This is why we need more. And God gave us more. He gave us Special Revelation.

What is Special Revelation? The better question should be, who is Special Revelation?

And the obvious answer is JESUS is God's Special revelation.

God revealed Himself through the person of Jesus Christ.

**Hebrews 1:1-2 ESV**

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.*

Jesus is God and He reveals God to humanity in a very special way.

**John 14:9 ESV**

*Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

If there is anything you want to know about God, study Jesus, the Special revelation of God.

This is why Paul says, *"to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever."*

God is glorified through Jesus Christ, the second person of the triune God Head.

How does God receive glory through Jesus Christ? So many ways. But let me give you one.

**John 17:1 ESV**

*When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you,*

What hour? The hour of His death.

The death of the Son brings great glory to the Father.

How does Jesus death bring glory to the Father? Seven ways...

**Manifestation of God's Attributes:** Jesus' sacrifice is seen as a manifestation of God's attributes – His love, mercy, justice, and holiness. The willingness of God to sacrifice His Son, and the willingness of the Son to obey, display these attributes in a powerful and visible way.

**Fulfillment of Divine Plan:** Jesus' death is viewed as the fulfillment of the divine plan for human salvation. This plan, foretold throughout the Old Testament, demonstrates God's sovereignty and wisdom, bringing glory to Him.

**Demonstration of Love and Grace:** The act of Jesus dying on the cross is seen as the ultimate demonstration of God's love and grace towards humanity. [John 3:16](#) famously states, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

**Victory over Sin and Death:** Through Jesus' death and resurrection, Christians believe that God achieved victory over sin and death, offering redemption to humanity. This victory glorifies God as it showcases His power and the fulfillment of His promises.

**Reconciliation and Relationship:** Jesus' death allows for the reconciliation of humanity to God, restoring the relationship that was broken by sin. This reconciliation brings glory to God as it achieves His desire for a relationship with His creation.

**Model of Obedience and Humility:** Jesus' willingness to die on the cross is seen as the ultimate act of obedience and humility, qualities greatly valued in Christian theology. This act glorifies God by illustrating the perfect obedience of Jesus to the Father's will.

**Foundation of the Church's Mission:** The message of Jesus' death and resurrection is central to the Christian faith and forms the foundation of the Church's mission in the world. The spreading of this message and the growth of the Church bring glory to God.

Friends, these truths on the death of Christ are just seven thoughts from one aspect of the Life of Christ. There are thousands of other ways his life brings Glory to the Father. And this glory or fame will be renowned for all eternity!

*This [verse 27] indicates that the wisdom of God is displayed supremely through Christ (cf. [Col. 2:3](#)). John A. Witmer, ), 502.*

### **Colossians 2:3 ESV**

*in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

*God is wise and can be trusted.*

*It is all about God's eternal glory through Jesus.*

And please do not rush by Paul's last point in his letter to the church in Rome...

### **It is true!**

This is what Amen means!

**ἀμήν = Truly "It is so"**

All the amazing theology that Paul has written throughout this letter even down to this last concept is true and should be regarded as such.

Why? Because Paul is writing the very word of God. Peter, in his own letter claims that Paul penned the Holy Scripture.

**2 Peter 3:15–16 ESV**

*And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

So, if Paul is used of God to write Scripture, and the letter of Romans is then Scripture, and if Scripture comes from God, who cannot lie, then the only reasonable response to this letter and even these last verses is...

**AMEN - Truly, it is so!**

And so, this brings us full circle to where we started this morning.

**Main idea - As You Act on Faith in His Revealed Word, You Will Be Strengthened in the Lord!**

It makes a whole bunch of sense to do what our Father in Heaven instructs to do in his infallible Word.

He promises to strengthen us, and he is the source of our strength!

*When God is our strength, it is strength indeed; when our strength is our own, it is only weakness. - Augustine of Hippo*

And so, we must take advantage of this power source that is at our disposal.

What do I mean?

We should all ask this question of ourselves.

What could I accomplish for the Lord in the time He has allotted me on this earth?

We each only have so much time and only what's done for Christ will last.

What will you accomplish for the Lord in your life?

Whatever it is, make it big! Do something that will leave a mark! Be unflappably audacious and optimistic because you have God backing you up!

Have the same mind as Phillips Brooks!

*O Lord, I do not pray for tasks equal to my strength: I ask for strength equal to my tasks. - Phillips Brooks*

By the way, this church corporately must be thinking these things as well. Now that we have a building we dare not rest and take our ease. Now the real work of ministry begins – together!

This is your homework. Prayerfully ask the Lord what it is He wants you to accomplish for His glory!

No New Year's Resolution can bring about this kind of power to change – only God can!

### **Conclusion**

Friends, we have spent a good amount of time in this letter. Frankly, I never thought I would have the privilege nor the wherewithal to preach through this letter in an expository fashion.

This sermon makes a total of 84 sermons for this series. And I can tell you honestly that I have but scratched the surface of the truth contained in this God-breathed letter.

I also will say that it is my hope and prayer that our time spent in this letter has been far more than informational. My prayer is that it has been and will continue to be transformational.

Remember...

**Information + Application = Transformation**

**Do what this letter says and you will never be the same!**

And so I leave you the way Paul ends his letter...

**AMEN! Truly! It Is So!**

### **Connection Group Reflection Questions**

1. How have you experienced God's promised power in your life when you've acted on faith in His Word? Can you share a specific instance where this was evident? (vs. 25-26)
2. In what ways do you seek to connect with the Source of Power – God Himself – in your daily life? How does this connection impact your faith and actions? (vs. 27)
3. Who are you praying for daily?
4. Who are you engaging with weekly?
5. Who are you sharing the gospel with monthly?