

# BATTLE



EMPOWERED BY FAITH



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**WEEK 5**  
**Pressing On and Persevering**  
By: Dr. John Freeland

**PRESSING ON  
AND  
PERSEVERING**

“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

(Ephesians 3:20-21)

## INTRODUCTION

Our enemy will never stop while the war still rages, so don't let down your guard. Keep on your armor: the Belt of Truth, the Breastplate of Righteousness, Feet fitted with the Readiness of the Gospel of Peace, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation and the Sword of the Spirit —and — pray in the Spirit on all occasions (Ephesians 6:13-18). This is all good and necessary, but this armor is not all we need. We must also embrace God's limitless power and hope while we persevere, renew our strength through prayer, find strength in community and remain focused on the ultimate prize, Jesus.

We can ask God for anything, and we should expect great things from Him. At the same time, we should remember God may not do exactly what we want in the way and time we want. Jesus said, "Seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt 6:33). If we are pursuing God's kingdom and his righteousness, we will want what God wants. Everything God wants for us has a Kingdom purpose. What we want for ourselves and for those we love should also have a Kingdom purpose. When we align ourselves with the Kingdom purposes of God, we will come to understand God's

love for us and His limitless power. To press on and persevere is to grow in the strength and knowledge of God and, more importantly, grow in relationship with Him.





**DAY 1 | WEEK 5**  
**God is Able to Do Immeasurably**  
By: Dr. John Freeland

“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask  
or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us”  
(Ephesians 3:20)



## GOD IS ABLE TO DO IMMEASURABLY DAY 1 | WEEK 5

In Ephesians 3:20 we are confronted with the immeasurable power of God. When we look at different Bible translations and the Greek definition itself, we find nuanced translations. The Greek word is *huperekperissou*. It means “more than ever, far beyond.” It is translated in various ways: “Far more abundantly beyond” (NASB and LSB), “immeasurably more” (NIV), “infinitely more” (NLT), “superabundantly, far over and above” (AMP), “far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams!” (MESG), and “exceedingly abundantly” (KJV). We could keep going, but let me give you the John Freeland translation, “you got no idea how much God can and will do for you!”

This phrase, “able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,” highlights our own limitations. It should make us feel silly to think about the times we wanted Him to do something in a particular way or at a particular time as though we knew what was best. We should be embarrassed by the number of times we thought God wouldn’t, or worse, couldn’t meet our need. When confronted with this phrase, we cannot help but realize God’s ability to work on our behalf is so far beyond

us we can’t even imagine what He can and will do.

Some have made the mistake of thinking God is limited by our prayers. This leads us down a dangerous path. Believing God is limited by our prayers leads us to believe that when the prayer is not answered in the way we imagined that there must have been something wrong with the prayer, or even worse, something wrong with the pray-er.

God can do infinitely more than we can ever imagine. Creation is a good example. No one was there to intercede for creation, yet God did a pretty good job. God’s ability to exceed human understanding demonstrates His sovereignty and omnipotence. We can trust His ability to accomplish the extraordinary. But God’s ability isn’t about us. It is about the church and more importantly, His Kingdom. That God is “able to do immeasurably more” also means He can do immeasurably more through us than we ask or imagine. This is the only way we as the body of Christ can fulfill our mission in the world. It is God’s power working within us that allows us to accomplish incredible things for His kingdom. This is what gives pressing on and persevering meaning.

God is never idle, inactive, or dead. God always hears our prayers. He even knows our thoughts and needs before we ask them. God is limitless in ways we don't even know about and can't imagine. There are many things we don't know about God and nothing He doesn't know about us. God is infinitely more than we will ever know this side of heaven. God is superabundant!

### **Examples of God's Immeasurable Work**

What if there was an unabridged and complete history of God's work? John summed up his gospel like this: "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written" (John 21:25). Think about Creation again. In Genesis 1, God spoke the world into existence. "And God said, 'Let there be...'" and it was. This is a testament of His immeasurable power and creativity. In Exodus 14, God miraculously parted the Red Sea, allowing the Israelites to escape from the pursuing Egyptian army. In Joshua 6, God delivered the fortress city of Jericho into their hands. In Luke 1, the Virgin Mary conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit, showcasing God's ability to accomplish the miraculous. In Matthew 28, Jesus rose from the dead, conquering sin and death and demonstrating God's ultimate power over all things. In Acts 9, Saul encountered the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus and was transformed from a persecutor of Christians to a fervent apostle.

But God didn't cease his work with the final pages of the Bible. There are a multitude of unexplainable healings and recoveries from serious illnesses and injuries that defy medical explanation; some of them can be found at [www.Mtbethel.org/prayer](http://www.Mtbethel.org/prayer). Millions of people have experienced radical transformation after encountering God's love and grace. The spread of Christianity to remote and unreached areas of the world, often against great odds, demonstrates God's ability to work through His people to fulfill His purposes. Throughout history, there have been periods of spiritual revival where communities or even entire nations experienced a profound awakening to God's presence and power, leading to societal transformation. The list could go on and on because God is "able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine." We press on and persevere because God is "able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine."

**Questions for further reflection:**

1. When you think of the phrase “able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine” how does that influence your faithfulness in prayer?

2. In what ways have you limited God and how does that affect your faith in His ability to do immeasurable more?

3. The immeasurably more of God has been demonstrated time and again in history. In what ways have you seen the immeasurable more of God and how did that affect your walk with Jesus?

**DAY 2 | WEEK 5**  
**God is Able To Do Immeasurably  
More Than We Ask or Imagine**  
By: Dr. John Freeland

“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask  
or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us”  
(Ephesians 3:20)

# GOD IS ABLE TO DO IMMEASURABLY MORE THAN WE ASK OR IMAGINE

## DAY 2 | WEEK 5

As a kid, I could create a pretty impressive Christmas list and I still can. Most of us can dream big. The human imagination is impressive, still Paul says, “God is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.” Add to this Jesus’s statement in Matthew 19:26, “With God all things are possible,” and we begin to get a picture of how magnificent God really is. Our tendency is to imagine things that have more to do with the flesh than with the Spirit. Andrew Murray put it this way, “Our faith in God’s ability to exceed our expectations grows as we yield to His sovereignty.”

Ephesians 3:20-21 emphasizes God’s infinite power. When we face challenges, we can’t help but underestimate God’s ability to work in our lives because “God is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.” The key for us is to figure out how to embrace God’s limitless power. To do this we will have to step outside our comfort zones and trust Him to accomplish what is to us completely impossible. Why does it seem impossible to us? Because we can’t imagine the capability, creativity, and compassion of God. But through faith we open ourselves up to extraordinary possibilities beyond what we can ask or imagine.

### **Immeasurably More in Times of Difficulty**

Typically, we hate our own weakness. Years ago, HR directors took “weaknesses” out of performance reviews in favor of the less offensive “areas for growth.” An “area for growth” is more palpable than acknowledging a personal weakness. Paul, on the other hand, celebrates his weaknesses when he quoted Jesus’ words to him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

When it comes to pressing on and preserving in times of trouble our weaknesses show up quickly. That may be one of the things we hate about difficulties. You could even argue it is our weaknesses that make difficulties so difficult. When we are up to the task, a difficulty is more of a challenge than a difficulty. “God is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine” is to say God will take your difficulty and reduce it to a challenge, but you must trust Him to do so. No problem is too big for God, nor is there a problem so small it escapes His attention and His care, but you must trust Him. In times of trouble, know that God is more abundantly able than you can imagine.

Paul could boast in his weakness because he knew the great hope found in trusting the immeasurable power and ability of God. Paul could boast in his weaknesses because he “overflowed with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13). Paul could boast in his weaknesses because he understood that true hope is not wishful thinking, but a confident expectation rooted in the character and promises of God. This hope if we will lay hold of it, strengthens, nourishes, and sustains the soul. True hope is rooted in God’s faithfulness and promises. When adversity threatens to overwhelm us, focusing on the hope of the brighter future of God’s promises fuels our perseverance and keeps us moving forward. We can cling to the promise of an abundant life in Christ (John 10:10) if we will trade the pursuit of more for a life worth pursuing. In that life, a life worth pursuing in Christ, pressing on, and persevering is possible.

### **Stepping Out in Faith**

We want to play it safe, but sometimes God wants us to shoot for the moon. Playing it safe is our attempt to balance faith and trust. We want to have faith in God, but we don’t fully trust Him. We forget, or don’t realize, how He delights in surprising us with His goodness. A.W. Tozer said, “As we approach God in faith, believing in His limitless power, we open ourselves to the extraordinary.” When we doubt, we focus far too much on the problem or the obstacle and miss the extraordinary. Faith looks well beyond to the Immeasurable More of God.

God’s power is limitless, and we can access it through faith. This access is not like plugging up your electric car to a quick charge station. That is far too simple. When our prayers and desires are grounded in faith, God’s power flows. We don’t get to determine how that power flows. We don’t get to determine when and to whom or where His power flows. We simply get to plug in and trust that God knows what He is doing and is highly invested in the outcome for our good. By faith we keep our eyes on Jesus and wait for God to knock our socks off. Tozer put it this way, “Hope is not the absence of difficulty but the presence of God in the midst of it.” With God present in our time of difficulty pressing on and preserving becomes a joy and a blessing.

**Questions for further reflection:**

1. What is your response to the one who says, “God might handle your difficulties, but He hasn’t laid a hand on mine.”?

2. What Scriptures would you share with the person in question 1?

3. Think about a time when you knew God was present with you during difficulty. What would you say if you were sharing this with someone who was struggling in their faith?

**DAY 3 | WEEK 5**  
**God's Power Is At Work Within Us**  
By: Dr. John Freeland

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask  
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## GOD'S POWER IS AT WORK WITHIN US

### DAY 3 | WEEK 5

#### **The Holy Spirit - Our Divine Helper**

Did you know the power that rose Jesus from the dead lives in you? (Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 6:19) The Holy Spirit lives in us and empowers us for victorious living. This Holy Spirit is the same Holy Spirit Jesus promised us in John chapters 14-16 and Luke 11. This Holy Spirit is the same Holy Spirit that fell on the disciples on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. The Holy Spirit is so important in the life of the believer that Jesus said it was better for Him to leave so the Holy Spirit could come. "It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7). "Advocate" is an English translation of the Greek word "Parakletos." It is translated as "Helper," "Counselor," "Advocate" and "Friend." This gives us a good idea of the type of relationship our Parakletos is offering us.

The Holy Spirit isn't just sitting on the sofa of your heart, feet up, eating popcorn while watching the movie you call 'Life.' He is working in us, and He is working in immeasurable ways with immeasurable power. Unfortunately, sometimes it is a tug-a-war as the Holy Spirit works on some past hurt or past sin while we fight Him for it. A battle may even rage in

our hearts as the Holy Spirit works with us to rid us of ungodliness while we struggle to hold on to it. We don't know what we are doing. We've just become so attached to that worldly part of ourselves we don't want to see it go even knowing how detrimental it is for us and how much we need it to go.

#### **The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit isn't working in us just to change us to be more like Him, although He most certainly is doing that. The Holy Spirit works within us to create in us the same mind, heart and attitude of Christ (Phillipians 2:5). In the process, the Holy Spirit creates within us Christ-centered desires, so we will want what God wants and will do what God would do. We must do our part too, and that part is to surrender, to submit to the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. This is what it means to press on. Pressing on is not only about getting through adversity. Pressing on is about growing amid adversity.

The Holy Spirit dwells in us not to just clean up the dwelling. He dwells in us to help us clean up other dwellings. C.S. Lewis said, "The Holy Spirit within us empowers us to love extravagantly, forgive freely and serve selflessly,

reflecting the character of Christ to the world.” The Holy Spirit within us instills power to do all those things. The more we surrender, the more the Holy Spirit can transform our thinking and our doing.

As a believer in Jesus, reflect on the profound truth that God’s power is not only around you but also within you, enabling you to accomplish far beyond what you can ask or imagine. Embrace God’s power at work within you by surrendering to the Holy Spirit’s leading. Allowing His power to manifest in your life for His glory and the advancement of His kingdom. Accept the fact that you aren’t perfect, and you probably never will be, but God still has a mission for you — His mission. Accept the fact that God’s power is not only at work in you, but also through you. Accept the fact that adversity is part of living in this fallen world. But decide today to press on and persevere for the sake of your spiritual growth and the spiritual growth of those you love.

Whatever you think you can do for God, forget it and accept that it is the Holy Spirit who empowers you to live out God’s purposes well beyond your own abilities. The key is you must surrender. Surrendering to the Lordship of Christ is vital in the life of every believer. When we surrender, the Holy Spirit can do amazing things in us and through us with supernatural abilities that are beyond our wildest imaginations.

It is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers that enables them to walk in obedience and fulfill the purposes for which they were created. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit serves as a constant reminder of God’s power and presence in the lives of believers, empowering them to live victoriously. The empowering presence of the Holy Spirit within us equips us for every good work. Through yielding to the Holy Spirit, God works in us to bring about transformation, enabling us to fulfill His purposes and live out His will in our daily lives. The presence of the Holy Spirit serves as a tangible reminder of God’s power at work within us, empowering us to press on and persevere in our journey of faith.

**Questions for further reflection:**

1. If the Holy Spirit were to show you something He wanted to heal in you, what would it be?

2. When it comes to loving extravagantly, forgiving freely, and serving selflessly which one are you really good at? With which one do you need the most help?

3. God's power is not only at work in you, but also through you. Reflect on a time you knew God's power was working through you.

**DAY 4 | WEEK 5**  
**To Him Be Glory In Christ Jesus**  
By: Dr. John Freeland

“To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen”  
(Ephesians 3:21)

## TO HIM BE GLORY IN CHRIST JESUS DAY 4 | WEEK 5

### **Worshiping God in Spirit and Truth**

Jesus turned the world upside down for the woman at the well in John 4. There are many things about this passage to prove this point but most appropriate to our discussion is her heritage. Jesus was a Jew, and she was a Samaritan. As such they were mortal enemies. Jesus was supposed to hate her and look down on her. Instead, He treated her with respect. One thing that must have rocked her back on her heels was when He said, “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth” (verse 24). Every Jew and every Samaritan knew they were supposed to give and bring Glory to God. Jesus just unlocked the door to “To God be the Glory.”

Something happens when the church gathers to worship. The heavens open, angels sing and the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms shake (Ephesians 6:12). If these evil forces had hearts, fear would grip them. Through worship, the glory of God falls, lives are changed, hell is pushed back, and the presence of God becomes palpable. Worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth is a welcome mat for the presence of God in ways that are “immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.”

True worship is not beautiful music or pithy sermons. True worship is the act of genuine surrender to the immeasurable greatness of God, and that brings God glory. Worship in Spirit and in Truth can take place anywhere. It can take place in a car in a parking lot. It can take place in a coffee shop or a gas station. Granted, the people there may become very uncomfortable when worship in Spirit and in Truth breaks out, but that’s their problem.

The Church is the body of Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. The church is empowered for service and community, but it is especially empowered for worship. The trouble is we surrender so little of ourselves in worship we miss the power God gives us for worship. There is power in worship and that power is much needed when it comes time to press on and persevere. It’s not about the recharging of batteries or the refreshing of the spirit, because that makes worship about us. It is the coming of the Glory of God, and no darkness or evil can stand when the Glory of God falls.

## **Christian Community**

Christian community provides a source of support, encouragement, and accountability. This communal aspect of faith, where believers can draw strength from one another as they journey together in following Christ, is vital in pressing on and persevering. The importance of mutual support, encouragement, and accountability within the Body of Christ where believers can draw strength from one another as they journey together in faith cannot be overestimated. This is the church being the church among the church. This kind of community can't keep it to themselves. They have to go out On Mission 365 days a year.

Christian community provides encouragement, accountability, and a shared sense of purpose (see Hebrews 10:24-25). The Christian life is full of battles. A life worth pursuing in Christ Jesus is not easy. In Christian community there is strength to face the worst of these battles and not just survive but grow and even thrive. In the church we join to persevere and to live On Mission.

When you live life in a war zone, community is not optional. There is simply no other way to press on and persevere than to do it together with like-minded, same-hearted people. Clement of Alexandria put it this way, "The bond of Christian fellowship is stronger than any earthly tie, for it is rooted in the love of God and the unity of the Spirit."

It has been said that "church is not a museum for saints, but a hospital for sinners." That's cute, but the problem with that saying is it shines a bad light on saints and museums! Church is a bunch of sinners coming together hoping to become saints. Church is people, not property or geography. We come together in shared brokenness of varying degrees and origins, but brokenness none-the-less. God can do something with that brokenness. The idea that "church" is supposed to be sparkly and comfortable is a travesty. Broken hearts are healed through the church, and that can get messy. Weary souls find rest through the church, and that's not always pretty. People of faith grow in faith and preparedness, and that can get chaotic.

Hebrews 10:24-25 emphasizes the importance of fellowship with other believers. We are not meant to press on and persevere alone. Other believers who share our faith and beliefs provide encouragement, accountability, support, and a sense of belonging. Together, we can face the battle with greater resilience, share triumphs, and hold each other accountable as we pursue a life worth pursuing in Jesus Christ.

**Questions for further reflection:**

1. What helps you worship in Spirit and in Truth?

2. What things interfere with your worship? What can you do to address those issues so you feel more freedom in worship?

3. How has being part of the community of believers at Mt Bethel helped you be more faithful in your pursuit of God? What ways can you live more fully into the fellowship of believers at MBC?

**DAY 5 | WEEK 5**  
**Throughout All Generations, Forever and Ever!**  
By: Dr. John Freeland

“To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen”  
(Ephesians 3:21)



## THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS, FOREVER AND EVER! DAY 5 | WEEK 5

### **God's Eternal Nature and Unchanging Character**

“Throughout all generations” means all generations, not just future generations. Paul is speaking of all generations from Adam and Eve through eternity. That’s how long the Glory of God will last; for ever and ever, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. God’s Glory is rooted in His character and nature which does not change. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). N.T. Wright said, “God’s Glory spans the ages, from eternity past to eternity future, without diminishment or decay.”

“Throughout all generations” includes your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. This is a great promise. This is your legacy. As you press on and persevere today you establish a pattern of faith, an example, for your future generations to follow. We can press on and persevere because God is from everlasting to everlasting. We can press on and persevere because we know God does not change. God’s unchanging nature gives us hope. We know where the finish line is, eternity.

### **The Perpetual Worship of Heaven**

Yesterday we talked about worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth. Eternity will be a great big worship party. In heaven there will only be one type of worship, Worship in Spirit and in Truth. We will be so focused on God, so enamored with the Glory of God and so engaged with the Spirit of God all we will care about is giving God more glory, more honor, and more worship. John the Revelator understood this when he wrote, “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive Glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being” (Revelation 4:11).

Imagine the sights, sounds, and smells. The smell of the heavenly banquet will waft everywhere (please tell me there will be fried chicken). The prayers of the saints and martyrs will flow like incense throughout the throne room (Revelation 5:8). The beautiful sound of praise and worship will echo throughout heaven as the voices of saints and angels blend in the most beautiful harmony. Joyful shouts of thanksgiving will fill the air. The “three-fold Holy” will pour forth in loud refrain, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His Glory” (Isiah 6:3). “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God, the Almighty,

Who was and Who is and Who is to come” (Revelation 4:8).

The transcendent majesty, holiness and sovereignty of God will break forth from His fiery throne which is high and lifted up. The train of His robe will fill the temple. The twenty-four elders will surround the throne in worship with the four living creatures. The seraphim will call to one another, back and forth in unceasing praise and continual worship, proclaiming the holiness of God. The whole temple will shake at their voices, and the throne room will fill with smoke and thunder and lightning. The sight of the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world standing at the Father’s right hand will overwhelm our souls (Revelation 13:8). There we will see the nail prints in His hands and feet and the gash of the spear in His side. In this atmosphere we will give praise and glory to God like we never thought possible. Our spirits will burst with so much praise and worship we will surprise ourselves and potentially wonder, “Where was this when I was on earth?”

We don’t have all the facts about heaven. We don’t know exactly what it will be like, but we can be pretty sure we won’t be worried about the past. Our past mistakes and past sin will be forever gone. “Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14).

Forget your past mistakes. Forget your past sin. Jesus dealt with them on the cross and left them in the grave. Focus on the prize of an eternal life praising and worshipping God.

Keep your focus on the eternal reward. No matter how difficult the challenges we face in this temporary world, they are hardly a blip on the radar of eternity. Set your sights on the ultimate prize of eternal intimacy with God. Find the strength to persevere through any trial knowing that nothing can separate us from God’s love. Keep a proper perspective during difficult times. Fix your eyes on Jesus. Live here and now in communion with God. Put your hope in Jesus. Press on toward the goal, because a great and glorious day is coming.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:1).

**Questions for further reflection:**

1. When you hear the description of worship in heaven what kind of action do you feel is appropriate for you?

2. Are you holding onto past mistakes, sins, or pain? Ask God to give you the power to let go so He can take them away.

*Thank God for your loved ones who have gone ahead of you to heaven for they are most certainly singing His praises and giving Him all the glory.*







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## OUR MISSION

To lead people to trade the pursuit of more for a life worth pursuing in Jesus Christ.



Mt. Bethel Church  
4385 Lower Roswell Road, Marietta, GA  
770.971.2880

Visit us at: [mtbethel.org](https://mtbethel.org)

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