

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
Nate Hilgenkamp  
Series: Ephesians  
April 7, 2024

The Power of God  
Ephesians 3:14-21

**<sup>14</sup> For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. <sup>16</sup> I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup> may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup> and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. <sup>20</sup> 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, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.**

Well, a couple weeks ago up here, I told you that a couple of years ago I used to drive this Ford F-250 diesel truck, and this thing was massive. It was an absolute beast of a truck, and I didn't drive it for very long. One of the main reasons was because I didn't really have a use for it. But secondly was because we kept having a lot of mechanical issues arise with it. Again, it was a 2002, really old truck, had a bunch of issues. Like this one, one day my wife and I, we'd just gone to a wedding here in Waco and we were driving home and as we're driving home, I pushed my foot down on the accelerator and nothing happened. And I was like, "That's weird. It seems like there's a problem," but I'm like, "Okay, I'm just going to try again". So, I pushed my foot down on the accelerator and the truck doesn't respond at all. We just keep slowly rolling down the road. And I was like, "Okay, this is an issue." So, I look up at the dashboard and my fuel tank says I've still got half a gallon left. But it seems like I'm out of gas. So, I'm like, "I don't really know what to do here, but if we can get some gas, we need to go find some gas." So, I look up and on the left side of the road is a gas station. The issue was I'm on the right side of the road, and I can't slow down or stop. I can't get in the middle turn lane and stop and wait for all the cars to pass through. I felt like I was in Fast and Furious, and I just had to swerve through the cars that were driving this way to get from this side to the other side. And then I felt like I was in a movie again, because once I got to the other side, I like slowly rolled to the gas pump and just stopped. Like it was really exhilarating, and got out of the truck, filled it up with diesel, turned it on and away we were, away we went, and we were fine. Took it in a couple of days later to a truck shop to get it looked at, and they said that my gas gauge was off. My fuel gauge was off. So, while I was actually empty, it told me that I still had half a tank left. Which is a problem. And it's a problem no matter the car you drive, whether you drive a Ford F-250 or a Ford Pinto, if you think that you have gas in your tank, but in reality, you're empty, you're going to end up on the side of the road.

So, think about this truck. Like this truck had all the power in the world. Like it had one of the biggest engines ever made. It's a Ford F-250. It's got a ton of horsepower, but since there was nothing *in* it, there was not power *to* it. And I start there this morning because if you're not careful, if we're not careful, this is what it will look like in our life, not just with you in your vehicle, but you are driving your life, because we have a bad gauge on how much fuel is in our tank. I think oftentimes we can go, "I'm good. I'm doing great. I'm doing fine. Life is good." And you're just rolling down the road thinking your gas tank is full. Meanwhile, a temptation pops up in your life and you have to look down in your soul to find some strength to overcome that temptation. But as you look down in your soul, you realize, "I've been driving on empty, and I don't have the power that it takes to overcome this temptation." So, you fall into sin and as you're on the side of the road you're going, "How in the world did I get here?" It's because you were driving on empty, but you thought you were full. Or what can happen is we can just be overconfident. You can think you're a strong, powerful person. You can be like, "I'm the F-250 of human beings." And you just keep going and going and going. And you don't need to stop and fill up because you've got a whole lot of power. So, you keep going and going and going and going until you burn yourself out and you're on the side of the road going, "How in the world did I get here?" It's because you were driving on empty when you thought you were full.

So, this morning, what we want to talk about is the need to be filled with power. And then we're going to look at where to find that power. So, we're going to look at the need to be filled with power, and then secondly, we're going to look at where to find that power. We're going to do that by continuing on in our sermon series on the book of Ephesians. And we're going to be in Ephesians chapter three this morning, looking at verses 14 through 21. Specifically, this passage is a prayer from Paul for the church in Ephesus. As we read this prayer, we're going to see three things. We're going to see that power comes from God's presence, power comes from God's love, and then finally power comes for God's glory. That's where we're going. Let's just start by reading in Ephesians chapter three, verse 14, Paul writes this:

**"For this reason, I bow my knees before the father."** Now this reason that he's calling back to is the fact that God has brought both Jew and Gentile into God's family. He's brought them into God's family. He's building them up to be a beautiful church in which the spirit of God would dwell. And since both Jew and Gentile are now part of God's family, Paul wants to pray for them. So, he says, **"For this reason, I bow my knees before the father from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, [both Jew and Gentile]."** And then he says, **"I pray that out of his glorious riches, he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"**.

Now, if you remember, if you've been sticking with us through this sermon series, this is actually the second prayer that Paul has written down in the book of Ephesians. We already taught the previous one. And in that previous one, Paul prays for the church in Ephesus, and he prays that they would know God, that they know the hope they have in God, that they know the value they have in God, and that they know the power they have in God. Now he writes down another prayer for the church in Ephesus. And he says, **"I pray that you may be strengthened with power through the Spirit in your inner being"**.

Now I find these two prayers really interesting. Because as we've mentioned before, Paul is writing this while he's in prison. And as he's in chains, he writes down these two prayers for the church in Ephesus. I find it interesting that within these prayers, he doesn't go, "God, I pray that the church in Ephesus would never be in chains like I am." He doesn't pray, "Lord, I pray that you'd make them happy, healthy, and wealthy." You see, he's not praying for external circumstances. He's praying about internal realities. He's not praying that external things would change. He's praying that internal things would change, because he realizes that what you have on the inside is far more important than whatever's going on the outside.

And this is convicting for me, because as I was looking at my prayers and lining them up with Paul's prayers, I think they're different because I can tend to pray in a way that looks a little bit something like this. I've got two daughters and they're still really little, six months and three years. And I can just envision their future. Like I think about their future a lot. I daydream about their future a lot and which leads me to a lot of prayer. And one of the things that I pray for them is I pray something like this, "Lord, I pray that they would never date a guy who doesn't know Jesus." Which is, I think is a good prayer. I think it's a fine prayer. If you've got daughters or sons just pray that they don't get in a dating relationship with someone who doesn't love Jesus. But think about that prayer, and then think about Paul's prayer here. Because think about this, if they were filled with strength and power through the Spirit in their inner being, are they going to date a guy who doesn't know Jesus? No! Like dating a guy who doesn't know Jesus is just like the symptom of a deeper spiritual issue. The issue isn't, I hope that doesn't happen. The issue is, no, I pray that they're strengthened with power through the Spirit in their inner being. Because when they have inner spiritual power, the rest of the stuff just takes care of itself, which is why Paul says here, he realizes that we need to prioritize internal spiritual power. Now, how do we get that power? Well, to start it's tied to the presence of God. Paul writes this, verses 16 and 17, he says, **"I prayed that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith."**

And when Christ dwells in your heart, we are strengthened by the power of the Spirit. This is point number one. First thing we can learn is power comes from his presence.

1) *Power comes from His presence.*

Now, Paul is writing to Christians here. Like these are believers in Jesus. So why does he pray that Christ would dwell in their hearts? You ever thought about that? If they're believers in Jesus, like Jesus has already come into their hearts. Why is he praying that Christ would dwell in their hearts? It seems like he's praying for something that's already happening. What's important to note is that word for "dwell" here, it can be translated as "to settle down." He's praying that Christ would settle down in their hearts. So, what that means is he's praying and he's saying, "I pray that Christ wouldn't just be in your heart, but that He'd feel at home in your heart." And the greater at-homeness He feels, the more power you will experience in your life. He's praying, "I pray that God isn't just in your heart, but he dwells in your heart, that He settles down in your heart, because He feels at home in your heart."

In other words, he's praying that something like this doesn't happen in their hearts. Here's an example. A few years ago, I went to the Baylor and University of Texas football game in Austin. It was the year after all of the Baylor football scandal stuff went down and because of that, that's one of the reasons why I did not have very much fun at that game. We lost by one, which wasn't fun, but that wasn't the main reason why I didn't like my time there. I didn't like my time there because all the people in burnt orange were not very happy to see someone in green and gold, and they made that very clear. This is not a shot at UT people, like I know that can happen with visitors coming to Waco as well, which is not great. But all I'm saying is when I was there, it was very obvious that nobody wanted me there. Even though I had every right to be there. Like I had a ticket to the game, and I paid for that ticket. And since I paid for that ticket, they welcomed me into the stadium. And since I paid for a ticket, I had a right to be seated in that stadium. But while I was seated in that stadium, everyone around me made it very clear that I was not wanted there, that I was not honored there, and that I was not appreciated there. Therefore, I did not feel at home there.

Christian, follower of Jesus, if that's you, that means that you have accepted Jesus into your heart. Jesus is in your heart because He paid to be there. He paid with his shed blood on the cross to have a ticket to enter into your heart. And because of that, He is seated on the throne of your heart. But for some of us, we have made it very clear to Him, that He is not wanted there, He is not honored there, and He is not appreciated there. So, He does not feel at home there. Because in your life, it's like Jesus is cheering for one thing and you keep cheering for another thing. He's saying, "Hey, walk this way, walk this way, walk this way." And you keep walking another way. And you keep smoking what you want, drinking what you want, saying what you want, doing what you want, thinking what you want, watching what you want, listening to what you want, and forgiving who you want. And as a result of it, Jesus is going, "I may be in your heart, but I'm not at home in your heart. So why would I give you my full power when I don't have your full obedience?"

And this is what Paul is praying for the church in Ephesus. He's going, "I pray that Christ wouldn't just be in your heart, but that He dwell there. That He would step into your heart, and He'd go, "Oh, I feel at home. It's like we want the same things." You see where He dwells, is where His power will be. And we see this over and over again in Scripture, that God takes average, ordinary, everyday people, and He allows them to do extraordinary things. Like they surrender their hearts over to Him. They allow their hearts to be shaped and molded by God, so that God comes and dwells within their hearts. And as a result of Him dwelling there, He empowers them to do amazing things. Think about Joseph. Joseph, he was able to interpret Pharaoh's dreams and as a result of it, saved a nation from famine. Joshua, he was able to make the sun stand still. Esther made sure that the Jews weren't slaughtered. Elijah called down fire from heaven. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown into the fire, but did not burn up. David defeated a giant named Goliath. Mary had a virgin birth. Peter walked on water. Ananias restored Paul's sight. Paul brought a young man named Eutychus back to life. All those things happen, and we say we believe all those things happened, and yet the soundtrack in our mind is, "Oh, I will always struggle with pornography." "Oh, I'll never be able to forgive my mom." "Oh, I'll never find healing from what was done to me." "Oh, I'm always going to have a temper." "I'm never going to eat right." Friends, that way of thinking is a hot load of garbage. Because we have a God who made the sun stand still. You think he's looking at your temper going, "I don't know

what to do with that. That's a little bit too much for me to do." We believe, and we have seen God do powerful things in and through people. And when you realize that, when the power of God comes in your life, it allows you to do things that you cannot otherwise do.

Which is why I love what John Elmore shared last week on Easter. If you were here with us, he shared that he's been 18 years sober, and he said that whenever he shares that with people, typically they'll go, "Man, way to go. That's awesome. I'm so proud of you!" And he'll go, "Oh no, you don't understand. You don't get it. I tried to get sober for years and couldn't. It was only when I started relying on God's strength each and every day that I finally received the power to see freedom from this addiction." And when you understand that when the power of God comes into your life, it'll change your life. You become like obsessed with making your heart a home for Jesus. Like you so deeply want your heart to just be an incubator for the presence of God because you realize that where His presence is where the power is. This is point number one. The first thing we can learn from this prayer is that power comes from his presence.

Let's keep reading, continuing on in verse 17, Paul writes this, **"And I pray that you being rooted and established in love may have power together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."**

There's so many things I love about that passage in particular. One of them is he says, "I pray that you'd be able to grasp this love that is wide and long and high and deep." How in the world are you possibly going to grasp something that large? That's like me telling you, "Hey, go grab hold of the Rocky Mountains. Like, just go over to Colorado and get your arms around the Rocky Mountain range." Can you imagine sitting at the foot of a mountain going, "Okay, I'm just going to grab hold of this thing." It would look and feel ridiculous. In the same way, if you were going to get in front of God's love for you, and you try to get your arms around something that's wide and long and high and deep, like it would look crazy because you can't do it. Which is why Paul prays here, he prays that you may know this love that surpasses knowledge. Crazy phrase. He's like, "I pray that you know this love that surpasses your ability to know it". Like you can't know it in your brain on your own. You can't grasp it on your own. The Holy Spirit has to allow you to experience it and to receive it. This is not of your doing, but of the Spirit's doing.

And then he also writes here that "I pray that you'd be rooted in this love." Which is important because here in Texas right now, everything seems green. If you came and looked at my lawn, you'd be like, "Man, he knows what he's doing. He's got a green lawn. It looks awesome!" And I know better, because I would invite you to come back to my house in August, and most of it will be dead because a lot of it is just weeds. And as soon as the temperature starts heating up, that which does not have deep roots will die. In the same way, in your life, you will not be able to thrive when the heat gets turned up unless you have deep roots in something that can sustain you. And Paul writes here that something that can sustain you and can bring you power is God's love for you. This is point number two. Second thing we can learn, power comes from His love.

2) *Power comes from His love.*

So, Paul writes that this love is wide and long and high and deep. What does that mean? Let's just take some time here and let's sink our roots deep into each one of those things. The first is his love is wide. This means that God loves the world. He has a wide love for a lot of different types of people. Scripture says that he loved a King named David and a prostitute named Rahab. The Scripture tells us that Jesus called a crooked tax collector named Matthew and a religious leader named Saul, which is why Revelation says that whenever we get to heaven, there's going to be people of every tribe, tongue, and nation because God's love for us is wide.

It's also long. What does that mean? Let me explain what that means. By showing you a picture that the longer I've been around, the less impressive this picture becomes. Check out this picture. It's a picture of our wedding day and I know what you're thinking, "How did she get him?" I know. [laughs] You know, whenever I got married, like it was one of those, it was probably the best day of my life. And I just remember going, "We did it! We got married!" Man, the longer I've been married, the more I realize a lot of people get married. [laughs] Yeah. Not everyone stays married. I was listening to a Christian lawyer one time, and he said, "As people come in my office and ask to get a divorce." And he'll say, "Hey, we can talk about that. Let me ask you a couple of questions. Hey, whenever you got married what vows did you say? Did you like do the traditional vows?" And they'll say, "Yeah." And he'll say, "So you said you'll stick with her through better or worse?" And it's, "Yeah." And then he'll say, "So is this right now, is this worse than the worst that you promised you'd stick with her through?" And oftentimes they'll say, "I don't care what I said. I just care what I feel." See, a lot of people get married. Not everyone stays married.

Let me show you something that I find really impressive, more impressive than my picture of my wedding day. It is a picture of Arnie and Jan Hilgenkamp, my grandparents. They got married at 27 and 24 years old, and they stayed married for 61 years until my grandmother went to be with Jesus. That's impressive. Another picture. These are my other grandparents, Lyle and Artis Schumacher. They got married at 25 and 24 and still are married for 65 years. That's impressive. See, falling in love is not impressive. Staying in love is. And if you're impressed with a love that lasts for 65 years, let me tell you about another one. Because there is another one that we already talked about that Paul wrote in Ephesians chapter one. Look at what it says! The Bible excites me, it may not you, but I pray it does. Ephesians chapter one, [verse 4], **"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his please and will—"**

Friend, God has loved you since the creation of the world. That was a long time ago. Furthermore, Jeremiah 31:3 says that Lord loves us with an everlasting love. He has loved you from all of eternity, and he will love you for all of eternity. Talk about a lengthy love. Talk about an impressive love. Although He could and should leave you and leave me. He's promised that He won't because He has loved us, He is loving us, and He will love us. He's got a long love.

So, while he has a wide love, a long love, he also has a high love. What does that mean? Looking at different commentaries, I believe this is what it means by Him having a high love. I believe it's in regard to what He does with us. He raises us up, because while we were dead in our sins, look at what Paul says in Ephesians chapter two [verse six]. Again, we just preached this recently,

**“And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.”** His love is high in that He doesn't leave us in our lowly state, but He picks us up, cleans us off, and raises us up to be with Him and be like Him.

So, Jesus has a wide love, a long love, a high love, and a deep love. What does it mean to have a deep love? That means that there is no depth your Savior would not plunge in order to show you His love for you. Philippians chapter two says that “although he was equal with God, he considered equality with God as not to be used to his own advantage, rather, he made himself nothing taking on the form of a human and being made in human likeness he actually became a servant and then he humbled himself even more to death, even death on a cross.” And Jesus went as low as he could go to forgive the deepest depths of your sins. And He went low so that he might raise you up.

So, Jesus has a wide love, a long love, a high love, and a deep love for you. He has a love for you that burns brightly It's a powerful love that desires to strengthen you, and warm you, and bring you power. Which is why Paul writes here, “I pray that you'd be rooted in this love that has the ability to sustain you.” And yet oftentimes what happens in our life is what we're going to see happen tomorrow. Because tomorrow we've got the sun, which just burns incredibly brightly. It burns so strongly that we feel its warmth from thousands and thousands of miles away. We see its light from thousands and thousands of miles away. That's how powerful it is. But tomorrow, what we're about to see is a floating rock just like hovers right in front of it and blocks us from seeing the sun. It will keep us from seeing its light. It will keep us from feeling the effects of the sun. And may I just add, and I have learned that this is a minority opinion, but I don't understand what the big deal is. So, it was dark last night, no one seemed to care. And yet some of you traveled from half the globe away to see this thing, which is great. Glad you're excited. I don't really care but come to our eclipse party! [laughs] That's what's going to happen tomorrow.

For some of you, that's what's happened nearly every single day of your life. There is this force that burns so brightly for you, so strongly for you that it has the ability to warm you and strengthen you and sustain you. Like God's love for you is that powerful. But for many of us, God's love for you has been eclipsed by your love for something else. And you take your love for something else, and you just place it in front of that. Whether it's your love of money, your love of sports, your love of acceptance, your love of sex, your love of food, whatever it is, you're like, “No, I'm going to focus on that instead of Christ's love for me.” And then you wonder why you're weak. It's because you're soaking in something that gives off no strength. It gives off no power, which is why Paul writes here. He's just praying. He's going, “I pray that you get all that stuff out of the way. And that you dig your roots deeply into the one thing that can actually bring you life. That you wouldn't focus on your love for other things, but instead you'd focus on Christ's love for you.” Because point number two, power comes from His love.

Now Paul closes his prayer by saying this [Ephesians 3:20-21], **“Now 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.”**

What's your number one prayer request in your life right now? What's the thing that you keep asking God for, you keep praying for? Maybe for you, it's that your baby would fall asleep and stay asleep. I've been there. Maybe for you, it's that you'd be able to afford rent this month. Maybe for you, it's that your dad would find freedom from alcoholism. What's that thing for you that you keep praying for? And then let me ask you another question. Just be honest what's your initial reaction with this? Do you believe He can do it? I don't know about you, but I think oftentimes for me after reading this text, I think oftentimes for me, I will spend time in prayer and I'll say, "Amen" and I just imagined God in heaven going, "Oh, that's it? That's all? You just want me to bless the food to your body? Like you want me to tell the food what it's already going to do? That's what you're going to ask me for? Like I will do it, but is that all you're going to ask me to do? Don't you know I can do immeasurably more than all you ask or imagine?" I think that even your craziest prayer request, like your biggest prayer request, it doesn't even show up on the scale of how much Jesus can do for you, because He can do immeasurably more than all you ask or imagine. And He can have His power at work in your life.

But why would He do that? Why would He do immeasurably more? Why would his power be at work in your life? It says it right here in this text, verses 20 and 21. **"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."** Point number three, power comes for his glory.

### 3) *Power comes for His glory.*

He will do more than we can ask or imagine. And He will bring power in your life, but why? He does it is for His glory. And I just want you to know that this text is taking place right here at Harris Creek. God's power is at work within you guys. And as a result, God is receiving glory. Let me give you a couple of examples. I could be up here all day giving you some, but here's four. Recently, there's a couple here at Harris Creek who couldn't afford a car and needed a car. And another couple here at Harris Creek heard about that, and they felt prompted from God to donate, to give their car to that couple. Now the issue with that car was, is that it needed like a couple thousands of dollars' worth of maintenance. And they're like, "Okay, we don't want to give them a bad gift." So, another couple heard about this, and they go, "Oh, we got it. We'll pay for all the maintenance issues." Now, here's something else you need to know. I know both of those couples. I know the couple that gave the car and the couple that paid for the maintenance on that car. You need to know this. Both of those families are not super wealthy. They're just super obedient. Because they felt that God inside of them, the Holy Spirit inside of them, was prompting them to be generous, was prompting them to say, "Yes. As the power of God was working in their life, they're like, "Okay, let's be generous." And as they were generous, God received the glory.

Another example of something that's going on here at Harris Creek is somewhat recently a member here, her name's Kelly Davidson, and she felt the prompting of God to start a chapter of the ministry Together for Good here in Waco. If you don't know about that ministry, what Together for Good does is it pairs a family within the church to an at-risk family. These families have kids that if something doesn't change, they're likely headed to the foster care system. So, Together for Good pairs these families together so that these families from the church take care



of these kids for a few days during the week. So, these families, typically single moms, can get a job, can get back up on their feet, so that these kids don't have to go into the foster care system. And specifically, here at Harris Creek, I know there's been multiple families, two that I know of Kobe and Casey Spears and Trenton and Whitney Horner have said, "Yes, we want to host these kids." Meanwhile, they each have multiple kids of their own. Like they've all got a lot of things going on in their family. But now what happens multiple days a week is their kids will be sitting at their table and they will be feeding their kids, but they'll also be feeding someone else's kids. And I'm just so convinced, that's the type of work that Jesus would be doing if Jesus were here today. And I'm just so convinced that's the type of work that Jesus *is* doing because Jesus *is* here today in you guys. And as you feel Him in your Spirit, He's prompting you to say yes to host these kids in your home. And as you're doing that, as you respond with a "yes," you know what happens? God gets the glory.

Thirdly, another story. We have some of the best food here in Texas, right here in Waco. One of the reasons is because there's a barbecue restaurant called Hellberg Barbecue, which is fantastic. And if you don't know, the Hallberg's are members here at Harris Creek. I bet you know this, because it was a really big deal, but a few months ago they woke up, drove to their store and saw it totally engulfed in flames. And they're looking at their barbecue store, this dream of theirs, and it was destroyed. They're looking at their provision and it was gone. They're looking at the provision for their employees and it's burning up. And because Hellberg Barbecues is really well known, as one of the best barbecue restaurants in the state, media outlets from all over the state desired to talk to the Hallberg's to hear what happened. I talked to Phil recently after that happened, and he said that after one of his interviews aired, he was really disappointed. And I was like, "Man what happened? Why were you bummed out?" And he said, "At the end of the interview, I started talking about how even in the midst of this, man, God has been so good. God's people have showed up in miraculous ways. Like we still have hope because our hope wasn't in this building." And he said that at the end of the interview and the news outlet cut that off. So, it didn't actually get posted. And I said, "Oh man, it's so disappointing." And he said, "It actually changed my perspective on these interviews because now whenever I'm interviewed, I want to mention as early as possible and as often as possible, how good God has been and how faithful his church has been." And man, I love that! In the worst moment of their life, one of the worst, I don't know their whole life story. That would be so deeply painful, but even in the midst of the flames, the power of God is still at work in their spirit. And they're declaring the good news about who their God is. And even there, God's getting the glory.

Let me tell you one other story. We've got a member here, her name is Charlene Hitchcock, and she's a teacher here. And she was at work like every other day, normal day. And while she's at work, she gets called into the main office. And as she walks into the main office, she's greeted with a sight she wasn't expecting to see. And it was three officers who were there, and they said, "Charlene, we just responded to a call at the house where your son was and there was a robbery and a shooting, and your son didn't make it." Can you imagine? I can't imagine how painful and just how much anger I would feel. And Charlene said that after that, as she was processing that, she was like, "Man, Lord, I can forgive a lot of things. I can't forgive the murder of my son." But then God just started working in her heart. She said the Holy Spirit was at work in her heart and she started feeling something that she didn't expect to feel. She felt empathy towards her son's murderer. And then she said, "I started forgiving my son's murderer." The thing that she said

cannot possibly happen, happened because the power of God was at work in her life. And as she was forgiving her son's murderer, you know what happened? God received glory.

And I could tell you story after story of things like this happening in our body, because we are a body full of believers in Jesus. And if you are a believer in Jesus, the power of God is at work in your life. Now, why is it at work in your life? It is so that people outside the church could look at people inside the church and go, "How do you live like that?" And so, we can say, "It's by the power of God for the glory of God." And so, in summary, point number one, power comes from His presence. Point number two, power comes from His love. Point number three, power comes for His glory.

Now, going back to that opening story of my truck. Gas stations were actually a really anxious place for me while I was driving that truck. Because as I mentioned, it was a diesel truck, so it could only run on diesel. And I learned that I was very used to not grabbing the diesel nozzle. So, I would park this truck, and I would just immediately do what I've done for years and years and years. I'd grab the black unleaded gas nozzle and I'd start putting it in the truck, which is a problem. Because if you put unleaded gas in a diesel engine truck, it will ruin that truck. It will cause tremendous problems because that truck was meant to run on one thing. Whenever I'd go to the gas station, what should have been a routine thing, I went really, really slow. I'd look at the two nozzles and I'd go, "Okay, that one says unleaded gas. And this one says diesel and that one's black, this one's green. Okay. I'm grabbing the green one. Okay. I'm hitting the diesel button. Okay, now I'm taking this green one and I'm filling my truck up with diesel." Like I had to go slow in filling up my truck, because I was so used to doing something else. But I knew that if I filled it up with something else, it would break it. Just because it was empty didn't mean I could just put anything in it and be fine.

In the same way, every single day of your life, you need to be filled up. You can't just be filled up at 11 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Every single day of your life, you need to be filled up. Here's what you need to know. You are going to be prone to reach for that thing that your flesh wants, that you're used to reaching for. And you're going to want to reach for comfort, or food, or sex, or approval, or money, or whatever that thing is for you. You're going to want to reach for that thing another. Another difference between diesel and gas, that type of fuel is a whole lot cheaper. And while you're used to reaching for it, I just want you to know if you fill yourself up with that thing, it's going to break you down because you were not meant to run on those things. You were meant to run on one thing and one thing alone, and that's the Spirit of God inside your heart, strengthening your bones and giving power to your life. So, every single day, whenever you decide to fill yourself up, go, "I know I want to reach for this, but I know I was made to run on this. I was meant to run on the Spirit of God, run on the strength of God, and to run on the power of God. That's what I was made for." And when you realize that, you start to make some decisions. You start to go, "I'm going to spend all my days pursuing the presence of God. I'm going to spend all my days planted in the love of God." And as we do, we're going to get to see the glory of God as He works in and through our life. Let me pray that we would.

Well, Father, for this reason, I kneel before You, the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of Your glorious riches, You may strengthen us

with power through Your Spirit in our inner being, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. And I pray that we, being rooted and established in love, may have power together with all the Lord's holy people to know how wide and long and high and deep is this love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge, that we may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. And 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 this church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen.