

## For Thine is the Power 2

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### The Manifestation of The Power

We thank the Lord for all the young people who are attending with us this year. I understand the high school department is over 100. So you be sure to remember to pray for the workers who are working with the children this year. Then we also have many young people here this afternoon and of course many who are young in spirit.

We want to read some portion of the scriptures today beginning with Acts chapter 1 verses 3 – 8 *‘to whom also He presented himself living, after He had suffered, with many proofs; being seen by them during forty days, and speaking of the things which concern the kingdom of God; and, being assembled with [them], commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father, which [said he] ye have heard of me. For John indeed baptized with water, but \*ye\* shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit after now not many days. They therefore, being come together, asked him saying, Lord, is it at this time that thou restorest the kingdom to Israel? And He said to them, It is not yours to know times or seasons, which the Father has placed in his own authority; but ye will receive power, the Holy Spirit having come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’*

Then we turn to Luke 24: 44 – 49 *‘And He said to them, These [are] the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all that is written concerning me in the law of Moses and prophets and psalms must be fulfilled. Then He opened their understanding to understand the scriptures, and said to them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from among the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations beginning at Jerusalem. And \*ye\* are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but do ye remain in the city till ye be clothed with power from on high.’*

We want to turn to the last few verses in the gospel according to Matthew, chapter 28, verses 18 – 20, *‘And Jesus coming up spoke to them, saying, All power has been given me in heaven and upon earth. Go [therefore] and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have enjoined you. And behold, \*I\* am with you all the days, until the completion of the age.’*

Then we turn to I Corinthians chapter 1: 22 – 24, ‘*Since Jews indeed ask for signs, and Greeks seek wisdom; but \*we\* preach Christ crucified, to Jews an offence, and to nations foolishness; but to those that [are] called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ God’s power and God’s wisdom. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*’ And then in chapter 2: 1 – 5, ‘*And \*I\*, when I came to you, brethren, came not in excellency of word, or wisdom, announcing to you the testimony of God. For I did not judge [it well] to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and \*him\* crucified. And \*I\* was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling; and my word and my preaching, not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of [the] Spirit and of power; that your faith might not stand in men’s wisdom, but in God’s power.*’

Let us have a word of prayer.

*Our Father, we thank You that we could gather together this afternoon in the name of the Lord Jesus. We want to learn more of His kingdom, power and glory. We believe the promise that the Spirit has come to lead us into the reality of all these things. We ask that the Holy Spirit will anoint us as we hear and as we speak. Do open the eyes of our heart with a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge and understanding of our Lord Jesus. We pray all these things in Jesus precious name. Amen.*

### The Hiding of God’s Power

Our God rules over everything. His is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. When He has fully accomplished all of His plans all will see that He rules. Mankind lives upon this earth, subject to the kingdoms of this world. Most men walk through their whole lives never realizing there is a kingdom of God over them. But God by His mercy touches the earth with His kingdom that we may know of Him. Just as Jacob ran away from home and lay down with an uncertain future, and then the heavens open and a ladder came down from heaven. Jacob awoke and said ‘this is fearful for God is in this place and I know it not’. Is that not our testimony too? We were walking in the kingdoms of this world, when God by His mercy showed us the Lord Jesus Christ and the door of heaven was opened to us.

We spoke last time of the hiding of God’s power. One of the great manifestations of the power of God is hidden. What is this hidden power? God who rules over all, is ruling and over ruling in your life and mine with his sovereign providence. Like the apostle Paul, who was high up in the religious kingdoms of this world. One day by the mercy of God he saw a heavenly vision and he realized that there was a divine over ruling of all of his life up to that point. And he spoke to a Lord who knew him in every detail of his life. As a Jew, Paul has sought after the kingdom of God but can only see God through a veil as he read

the old covenant. But in that moment of heavenly vision, he saw the king. And he spoke the words of a kingdom servant, 'Lord what would you have me to do'.

And so it is with all of our lives. Many young people here have many plans; who to marry, where to go to school, where to live. Walking in this world, perhaps you grew up among Christians; you have heard of Jesus with the hearing of the ear, but when the kingdom comes into collision with your life, you realize that God has been ruling in your life, moving you to this place and to that church and to meet all these people. When such a moment occurs, I pray that you will become one of the King's servants. Every Christian should be two things; one, a member of the body of Christ by His grace; two, a servant of the King of kings. According to our Lord Jesus, these things are not optional; it is the very foundation of our life and our service.

### The Apostles Received the Power

We read these scriptures regarding the last days that our Lord Jesus when He was on earth, and He wanted to make very real to the disciples Thine is the power. And so He came among them after His resurrection and by many proofs show them He has been victor over death itself. And then He wanted to connect them to this power in the kingdom of God. He told them the basis upon which this power is received is from on high. He said they should wait in Jerusalem and they will be clothed with power from on high. And they watch the Lord Jesus ascended before them and He went up to glory, sat down at the right hand of the father.

And when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost, these apostles were connected with power to the Kingdom of God. They remembered the Lord said all power and authority has been given to me on heaven and on earth. And so endued with kingdom power they began to teach the kingdom of God. You remember the moment when they raised up the lame man by the temple and a great crowd of people came around? Do you remember what Peter said? 'Do not think this was done by any power or righteousness of mine, it is the name of Jesus, the One you crucified and God raised Him up again.' They were witnesses of His resurrection and wherever they witnessed of the resurrection of the Lord, God manifested kingdom power in their midst. Every time the enemy tried to stop the witness of these disciples, they were overruled by the Lord of lords. Even when Stephen was martyred and the disciples were scattered out, it was all within the great sovereign plan of the Lord to bring the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.

When we read the Book of Acts, we see that the Lord Jesus is the King and He is upon His throne, and He is manifesting His kingdom power everywhere the disciples went. They went to various places and God opened the door of the kingdom; there were great demonstrations of power in the city of Samaria. The kingdom of God and the name of Jesus were preached by Philip the evangelist. And God overruled all

Jewish prejudice by bringing many Samaritans to the Lord. Peter was in the house of Cornelius. Peter loved to preach but his preaching got overruled. For right in the middle of his message about Jesus, the Holy Spirit was poured out and stopped his sermon. The kingdom of God has come to these gentiles as they listened to the gospel.

We remember in chapter 19 when Paul came to Ephesus. Of all the cities that Paul has preached and built the churches, Ephesus had the most spiritual warfare and resistance. There were those possessed by demons; there were exorcist. The city was full of people practicing magic. Many people were under the bondage of the principalities having to do with the temple of Artemus. But God with great power demonstrated the reality of His kingdom and many miracles ensued during Paul's ministry in Ephesus. We have before us in I Corinthians chapter 2, a brief testimony of Paul regarding his visit to the Corinthians. He came to the Corinthians not with his own eloquence and the wisdom of men. His words were not of wisdom but demonstration of the spirit and of power. There was a tremendous work done there. Many, many gentiles were saved in Corinth and so we read through the New Testament the manifestation of God's power.

#### How We Can Be Filled With the Power of the Holy Spirit

Now we who preach the kingdom of God today, we also should expect that our God will demonstrate the reality of the kingdom power as we preach the gospel. It is necessary for those who are witness of the kingdom to be clothed with power from on high. His anointing and His gifts are available to us; to be faithful in preaching the kingdom. We talk a lot about being full of the Holy Spirit. It is our regular vocabulary. But would to God it is our reality. Do you know the clothing of power from on high? This is vital to the kingdom progress in this world.

But when we speak of this outpouring, we have a problem. And what is this problem? God is very sovereign in how each individual receive this power. Some who are filled with the Spirit have deeply emotional experiences and ecstasies as the Spirit comes upon them. If you read the testimony of the faithful evangelist D. L. Moody, he testified that waves of love poured over him in unceasing strength until he had to ask God to stay His power. But then we take the evangelist Billy Graham. A young pastor named Stephen Olford in England spoke to him of the filling of the Holy Spirit. And the young Billy Graham got down on his knee and asked God to fill him with the Holy Spirit. But there was no outward manifestation. However that night, when he went to the gospel crusade that he was preaching; when he gave the invitation to receive Christ the heavens opened and in one sense we could say his effective gospel ministry really began.

God is very sovereign about this matter of being filled with the Holy Spirit. It is not really a matter of experience but there are some things in common with those who have known such an enduement.

Number one, they sensed their need; number two, they surrendered all; number three they asked in faith. Some know the exact moment of this enduement, some cannot clearly say. It is not the experience but the reality that is important. And once having been clothed with the power from on high, it is also necessary for the servant of the kingdom to follow God's purposes. God is moving through this world today, He is looking for servants who know the direction and the purpose of His going. Whenever the powerful providence of God meets a willing and yielding servant of God, there are demonstrations of kingdom reality.

### God's Power is Manifested in the Days of His Hiding

I do not want to speak more of this enduement from on high except to put in the context of the hiding of His power. When we study the Book of Acts, there are two observations that touch on this matter. The Book of Acts written by Luke are snapshots or a telescoping of the thirty-three years of the first days of the church. In those thirty-three years, we can see the sovereign moving of God as the church was built further and further out into the world. And Luke recorded for us, depending on how you count, roughly thirty miracles, specifically that he recounted in the Book of Acts. Now he was not interested in giving us a history of miracles. But he spoke about those supernatural manifestations of God, especially when God was opening up new doors of the kingdom in places and cities. Thirty-three years and thirty miracles come to less than one year. Now we know there were many, many more demonstrations of the kingdom power in those thirty-three years. But what we need to balance the manifestations in the Book of Acts with is the awareness that there were many days where the gospel of the kingdom was faithfully preached without any outward manifestation. We see some great moments in the Book of Acts. But our brothers who went about faithfully preaching the gospel preached many, many times. Many times there were no miracles but only trouble. At times there were discouragements; at times the closing of doors. But they were faithful. They relied on their King to open doors to manifest Himself at certain times.

And so we have to realize that the manifestation of the kingdom power is presently in the hiding of His power. We looked at Luke chapter 17. Here the Pharisees were asking Jesus to perform some great demonstrations of kingdom power. We see in verse 20, 'And having been asked by the Pharisees, When is the kingdom of God coming? Jesus answered them and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor shall they say, Lo here, or, Lo there; for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.' Now the Pharisees were asking for some great political sign; the messiah coming in power with his army to destroy the empire of Rome. Or perhaps they wanted a sign in the sky in the heavens above. Jesus said you will receive no such sign. But He said do not say look over here or there because the kingdom of God is in the day of the hiding of His powers. But then He said you can see the kingdom of God if you have eyes to seek. For He said, 'for behold', that means 'look, the kingdom of God is in your

midst'. Now what did He mean by this? Of course He meant that He was the King and if they could see He was the king, they would certainly realize they were in the kingdom. The basic principle is that wherever the King is, then there is the manifestation of the kingdom of God. Now in English, this verse has two different translations and both of them are quite satisfactory. One said, 'behold the kingdom of God is within you'; the other said, 'behold the kingdom of God is in your midst.'

#### Wherever There is Submission to the King, There the Kingdom Will Be

And here we understand where we are today regarding the power of the kingdom. When we look around this world, we have to admit this world is still under the control of the ruler of the darkness. The whole world lies in the evil one. But wait; there is the manifestation of the kingdom all over this world. Where is it? The kingdom of God is within every servant of God and you can see it. And regarding the church, wherever two or three are gathered in His name, the kingdom of God is among them. The kingdom can be seen today in the lives of all of His children who have yielded to the King. Many here today will confess that they came to God because they saw Jesus in some brothers and some sisters. And also there is the wonderful family which is whenever the church gathered together under the Lordship of Jesus, you can see the kingdom there. Many see the Lord Jesus in His church. But it needs to be a church that is learning the Lordship of Jesus; a church that is following the way of God's purpose; a church that is praying under an open heaven. Is that where you gather? Is there a testimony of His kingdom there where you meet? We know the Lord is very near to all his people, but there needs to be repentance for us in order to become a vassal where the Lord will manifest Himself. Now the Lord can sovereignly rend the heavens any time He wants. In His mercy, He demonstrates His saving power in a very sovereign way. But for us as Christian, it is not for us to go looking here or there for some great demonstrations. It is for us to be before our God on how we can know the Lord's manifestation in our midst. Why? It is because the Lord not only shows His power in His hiding of His providence in circumstances; but the Lord also wants to manifest the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe in His church.

#### The Power is Manifested in Those Who are Saved

Last time I spoke of the hiding of His power. Now let us look at the exceeding greatness of His power. Let turn to Ephesians chapter 1, we see Paul praying for revelation for the saints in Ephesus. He was praying that they could see with revelation what is the hope of His calling. And that we as Christians can see the glorious riches of His inheritance in the saints. But in verse 19 we come to the third matter of what Paul was praying regarding the saints in Ephesus. 'That it may be revealed to you what is the surpassing greatness of those who believe.' There is a tremendous kingdom power to be upon the church. But we need revelation to see it. Look how Paul was using power word upon power word to give us a

notion of how great the power of God is. Notice in verse 19, 'this power is in the working of the might of His strength'. Notice that the words strength, might, working; they are all power words. Now why do these Ephesians need revelation to understand about this incredible power? The Ephesians already knew the clothing of power from on high. They have already known some of the gifts of the Spirit and they have seen the way the Lord moved and manifested His grace. And yet Paul was pressing upon them the importance of seeing this exceeding greatness of this power toward us who believe. What was he talking about? What is the power that Christians must know? Now here it will help if we do not have a chapter break at the beginning of chapter 2 because if we read it continuously we will know what Paul was after. In verse 20 he said, *'[in] which he wrought in the Christ [in] raising him from among [the] dead, and he set him down at his right hand in the heavenlies,'* and then Paul continued the thought in chapter 2 and He said, *'and \*you\*, being dead in your offences and sins';* and then verse 4 – 7, *'but God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love wherewith he loved us, (we too being dead in offences,) has quickened us with the Christ, (ye are saved by grace,) and has raised [us] up together, and has made [us] sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.'*

Now what is the exceeding great power that Christians need to see? First, the power that raises us from death to life. Then there is the power that raised us up to life and seated us with Christ in the heaven. Now how much power it takes to raise up a dead man? Can Dr. Frankenstein raise the dead? There is a tremendous power necessary to raise the dead and God who rules and overrules raised Jesus from the dead. Death can never hold Him again. He is alive forever before His father; and not only that but there is also the power that raised Him up. You think the disciples discussed how Jesus went up in the air? What was that power? Of course, Matthew may had the theory of rocket power. Maybe Philip had theory of anti-gravity. How much power does it take to raise an earthbound person into heaven? And how much power does it take to bring the Lord Jesus, a human being, glorified to sit at the right hand of the Father in glory? How much power did that take? That is how much power towards us who believe. Now I do not know about you and you all look very religious and you have always been good. But I know the power that it took for the Lord to have mercy on me and raise me from the power of death and sin. Now I was 20 years old when I got saved. And by 20 years old I was already really dead. I was dead and stuck in transgressions and sins. You will never believe what I like when I was 19 years old. But God in His mercy saved me. The bible tries to describe these things. Paul said to Titus, 'God has literally regenerated our spirits'. My spirit was so dead to God. But on April 1, 1964, I prayed a prayer and I knew Abba is my father. I have prayed at times unbelieving. But on that day my prayer broke through because I knew Abba. What a resurrection; the regeneration of our spirit. How much power does it take for a spirit to be quickened, to be born again? You remember Paul in II Corinthians chapter 4 where he talked about preaching the gospel? And he declared when he preached the gospel, the same

God who said let there be light and created the heaven and the earth is the same God who said let there be light and the light of Jesus Christ came into our souls and we are saved. What a powerful work this is! He gave us a new spirit, He gave us a new heart. Can you believe that now we are seeking first His kingdom and righteousness. What happened to us? Before I was saved, I sought after many things but not His righteousness nor His kingdom. When I was saved, I received such a boost that I read the whole bible once in three months, from Genesis to Revelation. I could not stop. And can you believe this that by His great power, He began to renew our minds from the world's understanding. And how can we not testify as to the moral power that comes into the newborn life by the power of the blood of Jesus? My worldly friends at school were shaken when they saw me after I was saved. And believe me I was a carnal Christian. I was a baby. But the power of the blood has produced the change in me that people could see. I think before us Christians, there needs to be repentance when we behold the power of God that has raised us from the dead and seated us in heaven with Christ. This is the second of the great manifestation of God's power that we see in His kingdom power. The first is the sovereign ruling of His providence. The second is the exceeding greatness of his power towards us who believe.

#### The Power of the Indwelling Life

We turn to Ephesians chapter 3 and we see Paul speaking more on this matter. We pick up in verse 16 through first part of verse 17 'in order that he may give you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man; that the Christ may dwell, through faith,' Many times even Christians are very concerned about the outward demonstrations of His power. But here is the great hidden powerful work that is going on. We are being strengthened by the power of His spirit in our inner man with the goal that Christ may dwell in our heart through faith. If you are a Christian and you are living your life in a carnal way and in cross purpose with God, you will find that your circumstances will overrule your desires because God determines to strengthen your inner man so Christ can dwell in you. This is the work that is going on today. This is a hidden work. You cannot always see Him working in people's life. But as when the makers of the temple stones were hammering those stones underground in the secret places, so God by His exceeding great power is building a home for the Lord Jesus in your life and mine.

#### We Need to Cooperate With God

Now regarding this exceeding greatness of His power, there are two perspectives that enable us to cooperate with this process going on within. The first perspective is that there is a turning point that comes in a Christian life when we realize that the exceeding greatness of His power is not a power but a person. We realize that there is a life inside; that we are temples of the Holy Spirit. It is no longer just a

sanctifying power or a power that makes us righteous but a person that lives in us. For so many Christians we have to go through a season as if we were in the wilderness. We strive to be better. We want to read our bible more. But we only know failure. We sense greater distance from God. We see sin operating in us. We feel we were captured by the flesh. Our mind seems to be so ungodly. Everything we do and all our good intentions seem to be lay hold by the law of sins and of death. When a person has really tried to be a Christian that is the time he realizes the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; and that is, the Spirit of God dwelling in you. He can mortify the deeds to the flesh. He can resurrect your spirit. He can renew your mind. He is the righteous one. He is your life. Now when a Christian lay hold of this indwelling life, it makes such a difference in him that he can cooperate with God.

Galatians 2:20; we all know this life within. But we discover that the basis of our very life is the incredible power of his Spirit working in us. I will give you the secret for righteousness, for wisdom, for overcoming power, for victory. Here is the secret – abide in Him and He in you. This is the victory that overcomes the world. Greater is He that is in you than is in the world. There is a life in you. But I dare say seven out of ten Christians do not realize this. Oh to know this revelation is rest for your soul. This is the first perspective when we realize that the power is not a power but a person. When you discover this, you discover what it means that ‘once it was the blessing now, it is the Lord.’

Now there is a second, very important perspective that enables us to cooperate with this great power working in us. And it is this; the cross of Christ is the regulator of the power of God. Now we say Thine is the power. God holds His power very fast, but He distributes His great power through the cross. So we read in I Corinthian chapter 1. Paul is talking about the message of the cross. He said ‘*but \*we\* preach Christ crucified, to Jews an offence, and to nations foolishness; but to those that [are] called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ God's power and God's wisdom*’. Many Christians are hungry for the power. But power comes by the way of the cross. I do not want the cross, I just want the power. But God is very jealous about His power. First, it is to the end of yourself; then onto resurrection ground; and there is the place of power. Everybody has to go through that. Do you want His power? There is an undoing in our life that takes place. The cross is God’s divine veto on our flesh. The cross says ‘no’ to our self initiated ideas. And so we draw near to the Lord and we find a power working in us and this power is undoing things in us; tearing down things in us; bringing things to naught in us. Anything superfluous to the kingdom of God, we sense the veto in us. Now the cross is the power of God and it is a mercy to us. What would happen if you and I were given the power of God to use in our own idea and strength? And so the cross works upon His servants, and if we were to follow after Him, we must deny ourselves, take up the cross and follow Him. And the cross is there to bring us through to resurrection ground. Now we all know verse 10 in Philippians chapter 3. Paul said ‘so that I may know the power of resurrection.’ What does Paul mean? Did he want to see more miracles or powerful demonstrations? He

had already seen many of these. He was not looking for miracles. He was in jail when He wrote this book. He was looking for the overcoming power of an indestructible life for him; a life on resurrection ground. It knows victory. It knows buoyancy. It can be knocked down but it cannot be knocked out. ‘ I want to know the power of His resurrection.’ Paul was in jail and he felt many of the things that we feel. Situations seemed to be dire. Maybe he sensed a great sense of loss.

Maybe in your fellowship things are almost coming to an end; or failures or weakness or defeat and then the Lord touches us on resurrection ground. Life comes in among us in a place we did not expect. And suddenly we realize that all of the breaking and all of the dealing that have been going on is now the releasing of his Spirit on a new resurrection life. Paul spoke from experience when he said, ‘God said in weakness my power is being perfected.’ Now how many of you want to vote for God’s power? Are we willing to accept weakness as a way for the perfection of His power? The cross is the great arbiter for the power of God.

And if you are a part of an assembly that really wants the Lord in fullness, then He will deal with your assembly. As you discover the real, practical headship of the Lord Jesus; as you discover the resurrection ground of praying under an open heaven; as you discover that you have been united in spirit and the trials that you have gone through in the fellowship is bringing you on the resurrection ground in the unity of the faith, such an assembly can say do not look there, the kingdom of God is in our midst. I hope that you have a single eye and that you can see how much we need the work of the cross in our life to know the power of God. The Lord wants men and women that He can use powerfully as His testimony but they must be proven by this way of the cross. Our God is moving with tremendous power and providence right now. The day of His power and His coming is very soon. He is shaking our country, our city, and our families. The Holy Spirit is working with exceeding great power to produce the bride to gain the kingdom for his King. Soon He will come and all of these that were hidden will be shown in the light. All the mysteries of our circumstances and tragedies and problems will be understood. All the problems in our fellowship and our heartbreak will be clear. Now do you see that the Lord is ruling right now? Ruling over your life, or overruling your life? There is an end of glory soon to come. May we find ourselves being exercised by this great power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Let us pray.

*Lord we thank You even today for the mercies that enable us to share together in this time. And no matter what trials are going on in our life, we confess that Your mercies are new every day. And because You are the same, we are not consumed. I pray for those who are here and they have heard about the kingdom but never have the divine interception, by Thy mercy show Your King to those who seek Him. And to those saints who in secret are striving through failure and disappointment, show them the*

*presence of the Holy Spirit in their life. And we thank You for the mercy of the power of the cross, the wisdom and the power of God. Lord, give us revelation to see so that we may cooperate fully with You these last days. We pray in His precious name. Amen.*