

New Testament Power Today (3)

I Thessalonians 1

Introduction

- A. There are three foundational truths which enable us to understand the meaning of the power of God."
1. The source of God's power is the Lord Jesus. I Corinthians 1:24
 2. The explanation of God's power is seen in the calling and anointing the Lord Jesus. Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-19
 3. The character/quality of God's power is revealed in the four redemptive deeds of the Lord Jesus. The power of God is always redemptive power.
 - a. Power to be free from sin in the Crucifixion. Romans 6:6
 - b. Power to live in freedom and holiness in the Resurrection. Romans 6:4
 - c. Power to live in freedom from doubt and the enemy in the Ascension. Ephesians 1: 18-21
 - d. Power to be free to serve God fruitfully in the Day of Pentecost. Acts 1:8.

- B. In this lesson we wish to identify that with which the power of God is related and united.

I. The Power of God Is Related to the Great Commission. Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ... and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

- A. Here we are taught that Jesus Christ has been given the power/authority by the Father to carry out the plan of salvation. The Savior spoke of this in His prayer, when He said, As though he had given him power (authority) over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou has given him. John 17:2
- B. The work of the Lord Jesus is stated in its historical form in the Book of Acts. And, that work is still continuing today among and through those believers who are involved in carrying out the Great Commission.
- C. Question: How can we have the power of God in our lives and operating through us? Answer: Become involved in obeying the Lord Jesus on the basis of the Great Commission.
- D. The implications of this truth are overwhelming. What honor and privilege is offered to every believer in these verses. We are invited to become a "Worker together with God." II Corinthians 6:1

II. The Power of God is Related to the Gospel. Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power (dunamis) of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. See also Hebrews 4:12 in which the word "power" is "energy."

- A. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because He continually witnessed how God worked through the gospel in a powerful way to save people and to set them free from guilt, condemnation, Satan, the bondage of sin, and the world.
- B. In writing back to the places where he had served, Paul often spoke of those times with thanksgiving. When he wrote to the believers in Corinth he spoke the time he had "begotten them through the gospel." I Cor. 4:15
- C. If we want to see the power of God operating through us – we need to give out the gospel. It is as simple as that.

III. The Power of God is Related to the Believer's Calling. I Corinthians 1:24

But unto them which are called (all believers), both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power (dunamis) of God and the wisdom of God.

- A. It is helpful to see that the presence of Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, is present in the life of every believer so we may fulfill our calling.
- B. All believers are called to exalt the Lord Jesus. Romans 8:28,29
- C. How we are to do this is also explained as a part of our calling.
 - 1. We are called to fellowship with Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 1:9
 - 2. We are called live in liberty. Galatians 5:13
 - 3. We are called to live worthy of God. Ephesians 4:1
 - 4. We are called to live in holiness. I Thessalonians 4:7

D. Do we want God's power? Then we must fulfill our calling in honesty.

IV. The Power of God is Related to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Phil 3:10

That I may know him, and the power (dunamis) of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

- A. In this expression of Paul's desire we find a great promise. He is simply stating in a practical way what he taught in Romans 6:3. There we are told we have the ability to live in "newness of life" through the power of the Resurrection.
- B. Do we want God's power? The only power He has for us is that which will set us free from sin and enable us to live in holiness and spiritual fruitfulness. Is that the kind of power we want? If the answer is "Yes" then there is no limit to God's power for today and every day.

Conclusion: God has provided power/ability for us in great abundance.