

Ephesians 1:15-21 --- Supernatural Power through Christ

INTRO: Great is Thy Faithfulness....

2 Words that I think of when I sing this song, 2 words that are crucial to our lives as believers everyday....through the good, the bad, the normal....the mountain tops, the valleys...

Hope and Power

"Strength for today (Power from God) and
bright hope for tomorrow (Hope in God)."

If you are like me, I sing this song and I think, "Lord, how can get more of these 2 things in my life in my life? More hope and more power?"

My guess is that many of us in this room are not experiencing as much hope and power in our relationship with the Lord right now as we would like.

My prayer is that as we dive into God's Word together this morning, by His grace and through His Spirit, the Lord might do a mighty work in our hearts and lives today.

Open Bibles - Eph. 1 (New Bible?) PRAY

Now in the original Greek, verses 3-14 is one sentence and so is vs. 15-21.

- Intro
- ① In Ephesians 1, verses 3-14, the focus was on the spiritual blessings that are ours if we are in Christ...
 - ② ...the Apostle Paul now goes on in verses 15-23 to pray that these believers in Ephesus will understand and live into the realities of these blessings that are theirs in Christ....and the same is true for us.

TRANS. - So Paul begins in verse 15...

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, **16** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

1. First thing we see, Paul loves these people....he is excited to hear what God is doing in them and through them! He is excited that they love Jesus and they love one another.

- And He wants them to know this...and He wants them to know that he is praying for them!

- How encouraging do you think it was for these believers to get this letter and hear that Paul was praying for them. → *What about You? When you get an encouraging note → someone praying for you?*

APP - We need to follow His example...to pray for one another regularly. Touch 3...Encourage and pray for 3 people a day and then let them know it!!!! Through text or email or phone or FB. We should do this, not because we have to, but because we GET to!!!

★ **TRANS.** - So what should we pray for? Now while there are tons of things we can pray for one another about, ~~but~~ there is one thing that is more important than any other thing....and Paul tells us in verse 17...

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, **18** having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

- **Pastor Steve did an awesome job** breaking down verses 17 and 18 in depth last week, but for this morning, I just want us to see here...

...the thing that Paul prays for above all else is that God's people would **KNOW God....**

Friends, we must pray for one another that we each would KNOW God!

① **1. Now we need to understand here that...**

...whenever the Bible talks about knowing God, it isn't speaking simply about information about God, it is speaking about transformation by God...this is what it means to **KNOW GOD!**

② **2. Paul is NOT simply speaking of:**

- 1) Having Bible Knowledge
- 2) Knowing about God

- Knowing God and knowing about God are 2 radically different things. God wants us to know Him! That is what Paul is praying for here.

▪ **ILL.** - Know a lot about Peyton Manning but I don't know him. *College at TN, 4 time MVP, wins Super Bowl, brother is Eli Manning for NY, etc.*

Jesus Himself prays, not that we would know about God, but that we would KNOW God that we might be transformed BY GOD...in John 17:3,

"And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

3. Here in Ephesians 1...the prayer is that we as believers would KNOW God and that this knowing God would result in loving God and living a life of joyful, intimate relationship with God everyday!

Let's look together again starting in verse 18:

TRANS. ---- (Look with me) So in **verse 18** Paul prays that "*they may know what is the hope to which he has called these believers,*" and continues in **verse 19** "*...and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*"

1. Now as we break down these verses, verses 19-21 we see **ONE** major idea that Paul desires to communicate and that is this...

Supernatural power is ours NOW through Christ.

2. Look, the bottom line is this: If you are a Christ-follower today, you need the supernatural power of God to live the Christian life God has called you to.

- ①. Without God's power, we cannot love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and we cannot love our neighbor as ourselves.
- ②. We cannot do this thing on our own. we cannot find this power from within ourselves, we must go outside of ourselves to find this kind of power....we must go to the one source where this power can be found: **Jesus.**

TRANS. -- Now when we put ourselves in the context that Paul is writing...we need to remember that he is writing to these Christians who live in or right around the city of Ephesus.

- o ...which was one of the five great cities of the Roman empire,
- o ...and it was the place where the temple of the goddess Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, was located. **In fact, Ephesus was known as the "city of Diana," and the people of Ephesus sought to give all glory to her for their health and wealth as a city.**

- They believed Diana was the source of power and fortune in life!

***But in this letter, Paul tells the Ephesian Christians that it is Christ's power, not Diana's power, that saves them and causes them to live a life that is pleasing to God!!!!

APP!

Paul is saying the same thing to everyone of us this morning...if you and I want this supernatural power, it doesn't come from any source, any cause, any organization, any person other than Jesus Christ!

***And so to tap into this power, we must be plugged into Jesus. This power only comes in relationship with Jesus as we humble ourselves before God and surrender ourselves to Christ. YES!

1) Power in prayer, 2) power to fight depression, 3) power to fight addiction and sin, 4) power to fight impure and destructive thought patterns in your life... this power is found only in connection to and relationship with the God of the universe, Jesus Christ.

Listen to how Jesus Himself said it...turn to John 15:5...

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

****Jesus is the source of the supernatural power we need and desire!****

Now, let's look again at how Paul prays in Eph. 1:19-21 that as believers we would know... "the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

TRANS. - As we look closer at this beautiful and rich passage, we see that Paul offers us **2 proofs of the Lord's supernatural power** that should cause us to place our absolute trust and confidence in Him.

Toward us who believe

Proof #1: He raised Christ from the dead.

Paul prays in Eph. 1:19-20 that as believers we would know... "the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might **20** that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead..."

1. The first thing we see here in verse 20 is that the power of God toward us now is "according to His great might ("great power") "that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead."

1. God raised Jesus from the dead...**for real!** Jesus was physically raised from the dead, it is what Easter is all about.

2. And the point here in verse 20 is that the power of death is broken for every person who is in Christ Jesus. If you are in Christ this morning, you can rest secure that "death," is defeated!

2. For Paul, the death of Christ was the death of death. Sure, as Christians, like everyone else on this planet, we are going to die, **but the sting of death has now been removed by Jesus!**

1. As John Piper says, for the Christian, "**The poisonous event of death has become a pathway to paradise.**"

2. **Death is swallowed up in victory** because of the resurrection of Jesus.

3. This is why Paul could say in **1 Corinthians 15**... "Where O death is your victory? Where O death is your sting? ...Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

*****Think about this for a second... **this same power that raised Christ from the dead is now our power as believers!** This power **ALONE** raised us spiritually from the dead and gave us life and faith.

2. This power **ALONE** opened our blind eyes, and conquered our rebellious wills, and **created a new heart** that loves God and people.

3. And this power will **guard us and secure us** in our faith and bring us to the end of our lives in persevering faith. This power alone will assure that our **physical death**

This is **supernatural power that is ours NOW through Christ**—to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength... and to love others radically and sacrificially... like Christ.

★ This Supernatural Power alone gives us real "joy & peace" for today and **REAL "hope"** for tomorrow!

Read

Read

Sometimes we just need to stop

1. Raised from spiritual death

2. Physical death is not the end!

→ of God's power toward us who believe.

Proof #2: Christ has been seated at the right hand of God, giving him authority over all things.

Again, Paul prays starting in verse 19 that as believers we would know... "the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might **20** that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead **and seated him** at his right hand in the heavenly places, **21** far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

1. **Look at this....** So we see here that God "seated him (Jesus) at his right hand in the heavenly places.....**and He set Jesus**...

..."far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come."

★ **So who are these rulers and authorities Paul is speaking about here?**

.....Turn with me over to **Ephesians 6:10-12**...here Paul tells us what powers he has in mind here in chapter 1, verse 21...

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. **11** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. **12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

***You see, what Paul wants us to know in chapter 1, verse 21, is that the power that we now have in Christ is a **devil defeating, evil defeating power.**

2. In **Colossians 2:15**, Paul says that at the cross God "disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Christ."

1. So you see, through Christ's death and resurrection, He is now seated at the right hand of God and **has authority over all the rulers and forces** of this world...both in the physical realm and in the spiritual realm.

While **spiritual battle** in this world continues to be a reality **this side of heaven**, we know that **ultimately**, Satan has been defeated and the time is coming when he will be **silenced** and **disarmed** once and for all.

So here's what we need to know for our own lives, in the midst of our own spiritual battles in life, we have supernatural power that is ours NOW through our conquering King Jesus.

that Christ rule has authority over?

3 Enemies:

TRANS. - OK, so now, in light of verses 15-21 that we have looked at this morning, and in light of all this talk about God's supernatural power that is ours through Christ....

...you might be like, "this sounds great, I would love to have more of God's supernatural power in my life! Who wouldn't! But how do I tap into this power on a daily basis? How do I live each day empowered by Jesus in this way?"

First

Well, before we talk about **HOW** to live in this power, I feel like I need to take a few minutes and help us really understand the main reason **WHY** we so desperately need God's supernatural power in our lives.

...just in case you might be thinking you are fine and don't really need this supernatural power in your life, let me tell you why you do!!!!

So why do we need this power? We need it because **we have enemies.**

According to the Scriptures,

2. We have **3 primary enemies** that are seeking (1) to take us down, (2) to rip us of joy (3) and to lead us away from God and truth and into deception and emptiness.

- **These are the 3 enemies** to our souls that we see throughout the Bible... **St. Augustine referred to these 3 enemies simply as the world, the flesh, and the Devil.** → let's look at each one briefly...

Enemy #1: The first enemy is the world.

1. **We face opposition**, not only from men and women in the world who oppose God and the gospel, but from the spirit of the world—its values and philosophies.

2. I ~~don't~~ ^{doubt I} **have to convince you that we are bombarded** with worldly values and images portrayed in newspapers and books, on television and through the Internet all the time... **it is constant.**

3. **As we go to school or work, worldliness that opposes Godliness saturates our day to day lives...** and if we are not careful the world will **creep into us**, and we will begin to **talk, think, and act like the world.** **This is enemy #1: The world.**

Enemy #2: The second enemy is the Flesh

1. **We have an enemy in ourselves** that the Bible calls the flesh.
2. **This is our sin nature that remains even after we are regenerated and made new creations in Christ.** And so, we are in a daily battle for holiness and Christ-likeness against the flesh.
3. ^{Our} ~~the~~ flesh loves sin, worldliness, laziness, the flesh is self-centered and self-absorbed. The flesh keeps us from experiencing deeper joy in God and it hinders us from becoming more and more like Jesus. **This is enemy #2: The Flesh.**

Enemy #3: The third enemy is the Devil.

1. **The Devil is real...**and while we should ^{NOT} live in fear of Satan, ~~we must~~ we must be aware that as Christians we are a prime target that he comes after in various ways every day.
2. **The Bible warns us that the Devil,** like a roaring lion, ^{is} seeking whom he can devour.

Because we have these 3 enemies constantly seeking to pull us away from the Lord, this is **WHY** we so desperately need the mighty, supernatural **POWER** of God working in us everyday.

So now, in light of the reality of these 3 enemies... Let's move onto the How?

How do we tap into and live in the power of God that we so desperately need in our daily battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil?

I want to get real practical here as we try to put what we have learned from our passage this morning into practice.

~~A desire to...~~

→ I want to do this by giving us,....

A Gameplan for confronting sin and temptation with power

Remember → ☆ Jesus is the Primary power source, 10 other sources of "ways" we can plug into His power to live the life He has called us to live!

10 Sources of Supernatural Power for our daily battle against the world, the flesh, and the Devil

Power Source #1: Pursue Humility and Submission before the Lord daily.

James 4:6-8.....6....Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Power Source #2: Grow in the discipline and practice of repentance.

2 Corinthians 7:10.....For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret.

3 Aspects to true repentance

- (3 Rs)
1. **Revulsion** – seeing your sin as God sees it...so offensive and distasteful that it causes you to recoil from it.
 2. **Resolution** – purposing to walk in righteousness and newness of life, knowing that you are forgiven and secure in Christ.
 3. **Repetition** – the ongoing nature of true repentance

Power Source #3: Abide in the vine of Jesus constantly.

1. There is no power to fight the world, the flesh, and the Devil without abiding in Christ (*not just a one time "abiding" but an ongoing "abiding"*)
2. **John 15:5** "I am the vine, you are the branches"
3. **When we are united to Christ, His Holy Spirit fills us and gives us all the power we need for life and Godliness!!!!**

Power Source #4: Rebound quickly by focusing on the truth of the Gospel.

Isaiah 44:22 - I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you.

lead → [***Self pity steals your power, the truth of the Gospel fills you with power.***
 ***Remember who you are in Christ! Preach to yourself-- You are a new creation in Christ...live into that reality!!!

Power Source #5: Saturate your mind in the truth of God's Word.

John 17:17 - Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

1. The 3 primary weapons of the world, the flesh and the Devil are 1) Deception, 2) Temptation 3) Accusation.
2. All 3 of these you combat with the TRUTH of God's Word.

Power Source #6: Put on the full armor of God everyday.

Ephesians 6:10-12 --- **10** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. **11** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. **12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. **Read 10-18 everyday for a week.*

Power Source #7: Worship the Lord passionately and persistently, both publically and privately (*Tap into the power of God in worship*)

Psalms 59:16 But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.

Power Source #8: The hope and peace that comes through the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13....May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

→ ① Be still ② Ask the Spirit to fill you & give you His hope & peace

Power Source #9: Kill your sin...make war against your flesh daily.

Romans 8:13...**13** For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

in the midst of Chaos & worry.

Power Source #10: Commit yourself to being an active and committed part of the Body of Christ.

Colossians 3:15-16 --- **15** *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16* *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

→ we draw strength & power from one another in community!

Conclusion

1. God is faithful to give us all the power we need in this life...to live for His glory...to love Him and to love others with all that we are.
2. Like Paul, let's be praying for one another daily (we are all fighting hard battle against sin, depression, anger, loneliness) that we each might experience the supernatural power of God that is ours NOW through Christ!!!!

PRAY...prayer team

Power Source #19: Commit yourself to being an active and committed part of the Body of Christ.

Colossians 3:12-16 -- 12 And let the peace of Christ, His in your hearts, to which you were called in one body. And be thankful. 13 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you sing and make melody to the Lord with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to the Lord.

12 And let the peace of Christ, His in your hearts, to which you were called in one body. And be thankful.

13 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you sing and make melody to the Lord with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to the Lord.

14 Let your members, as instruments of righteousness, be presented to God, as you offer yourselves to God as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your worship and service.