

The Power of God

By Jeremy Cagle

Yesterday, during the Iron Man's Bible Study, some of you know we're doing-- I'm going to the Bible book by book on Saturday mornings with the men. And yesterday, we had the opportunity to study the book of Second Kings. Just want to mention that to kind of introduce some things for you this morning. And we came to the life of King Josiah, and if you remember the life of King Josiah, Josiah discovered something that had been lost in Israel for a long time, and that was the Bible. And the story of Josiah, they're cleaning the temple and comes across a copy of the Old Testament, and I asked the men a question, kind of bugging me as I read that, "Where did it go?" In order to lose something, that means you don't know where it is, where the Bible goes for centuries?

And we don't know that, Second Kings doesn't tell us. But I mention that because if you do a study of church history, there have been hundreds of years, you can argue maybe even almost a thousand year period of time when the Bible was lost to a big portion of society. We often think English speaking countries are so smart, but if you study the Reformation time England was the darkest country in the Reformation. It was the last country to form in Europe. France, Germany-- they were all the head of England. In fact, they interviewed some of the Bishops and Priests of the time in England and most of them could not tell you five of The Ten Commandments, or any of the Beatitudes, and they couldn't even find certain books of the Bible. They just were totally ignorant and in the dark.

I mention all that to say that we need to be very appreciative of our Bible today. We live in a period in history when you can actually find and read it for yourself. They would, during the Reformation time, some of you've heard this, but they would chain copies of the Bible to the pulpit. Now they would do that, so you wouldn't steal it but there was also something symbolic

about that. The only place you could read the word of God was in the church, and you couldn't even read a copy in your own language. It was in Latin.

So it is a privilege to have a copy of the Bible today, isn't it? And then it's a privilege to just have one at all. Many of you have, if you're like me, you have dozens of them in your home. And you can go online and pull up how many copies, right? We have access to the Word of God today, and it is an honor.

William Tyndale Some of you have heard the name William Tyndale. He has been nicknamed God's Outlaw because when he was translating the Bible, he was chased around. And there are stories that he would be translating Mark or Matthew, and he'd hear the authorities would come, and he'd just have to bolt out the door and leave all his stuff behind. And the next place he would go to he'd have to start all over again, because the authorities confiscated his work. He was even in a shipwreck and he lost just hundreds of pages of material even working on.

So it is a privilege to have the Bible-- there is blood on the copy of your Bible today. You have the copy you have because men like that made the sacrifice, and with that in my let's open the Word of God together, this precious Word that we have, to the book of Ephesians.

This morning, we're looking at a book that I hope has been an encouragement to you. It is a priceless treasure to be able to read something like this in our own language, but turn with me if you would, to the book of Ephesians.

If you're joining us for the first time today, we're in a series on the book of Ephesians that we've been in for about four months now. We've taken a break to do some other things, but we've been studying this for a little while since October. And we are in a passage today that has been considered to be the most important one in here.

It's hard to kind of qualify something like that. But we're in a section that has been called the most significant one in the book. One New Testament commentator has called Ephesians-chapter-one the greatest chapter Paul ever wrote.

Which, if you consider all the things that Paul wrote in the Bible, that's saying something, isn't it? That's quite a statement, but he said this is the most important thing you put in the Bible. And today we're going to see how it ends. That's where we're at this morning, in the book of Ephesians. We're going to see the end of Paul's greatest chapter, and I'd like to introduce it this way, just to get it started this morning.

In one of the preaching journals I read, the story is told of the time four young people went on a tour of one of the most famous churches in London in the 1800's, and for two consecutive Sundays, they visited the biggest places of worship until they came to the Metropolitan Tabernacle where Charles Spurgeon preached. It was the largest Protestant building of the day; it held up to six thousand people. Massive structure, you would have to get tickets to get into a service. They gave out-- there was a ticket system. They didn't have room for everybody. And as they came in, they got their ticket, they came in and an Usher greeted them, and asked if they would like to see the heating plant of the church, which they thought was kind of strange, but he asked if they would like to see where the heat came from for the building. They said, "Sure." So he took them downstairs to a room where people were praying. Took them to a place downstairs where there was a prayer meeting, and the Usher told him this is where the heat comes from for the building. This is where the ministry is heated up.

And I mention that because I think the same could be said for any church. Same could be said for anything we do in the Christian life: the heat comes from prayer, doesn't it? The passion comes from prayer.

Leave it out and the church grows cold. Forget to pray and the temperature drops. We've all been in frosty churches, haven't we? We've all been in a church where you walk in and you just kind of want to walk right back out, right? That's because the people have lost their connection with God. They don't pray anymore. This is absolutely essential in the Christian Life. In fact, I would say this probably nothing more common today than cold churches. Would you agree with that? There's nothing more common than churches that don't pray anymore. There's no heat in them, there's no warmth.

You know the common complaint you hear about the church today is that's full of what? Full of hypocrites, right? It's full of coldness. That's because we've lost touch with our power, with this. Spurgeon himself said it this way, said 'if you want to know how popular the church is, go on Sunday mornings. If you want to know how popular the preacher is, go on Sunday nights. But if you want to know how popular God is, go to the weekly prayer meetings. That's where you see how popular God is, when people pray.'

Which is sad because a lot of churches don't even have a prayer meeting anymore. A lot of churches don't even talk to God collectively. They don't even try and as a result. They've grown cold.

To say it another way, you would say it this way, this is what the passage is about this morning: the church needs to regain its sense of power once again. The church needs to regain the strength that it once had. And stop being so weak.

If you go to-- Old towns, often times, the whole city was built around what? The church. Church was downtown because the whole city came out from that. We need to regain that again. I mean if the church is anything today, it's week isn't it? We don't have any power.

Some of you saw in the news recently that Chilliwack just became the 13th largest city in British Columbia. Congratulations, by the way. We've grown 18% in the last decade, past Victoria in size, which is really neat to think about, but you could also argue that in a lot of cases the church is not growing.

Town's growing. Businesses are growing. Restaurants are growing. Malls are growing. Houses pop-up around here like flowers. Church isn't growing. Why? Because it's lost its power. People drive by the churches in our town, and they say, "Who cares? Why do I need that?" They drive around and say, "What's in it for me? I'm glad you got your religion. I'm glad that works for you, but I'm fine. I don't need that."

And the way we change that, the way we get the power back, the way we get our strength back is going back to God in prayer, which is what our text is about this morning. This is what we're going to talk about.

If you look in Ephesians 1 verses 15 through 23, Paul writes this. Read the first part earlier, but here's the second part of the passage. Verse fifteen, he says:

15 For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you and [u]your love for all the [v]saints, **16** do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers; **17** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the [w]knowledge of Him. **18** *I pray that* the eyes of your heart [x]may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the [y]saints, **19** and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might **20** which He brought about 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 every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. **22** And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, **23** which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

You can just read that and tell it is a wonderful passage, isn't it? It's rich. And just to give you some background on this: I told you before, verse fifteen begins the second sentence in the book of Ephesians. Begins the second big idea from the Apostle Paul, and the idea's about prayer which is why we've been talking about that the past couple of weeks.

The first sentence in verse three to fourteen. That's one sentence. It says here are your blessings, here is what God has done for you and Christ. He's adopted you and redeemed you and sealed you. The second sentence, starting in verse fifteen, says here's how you receive it, now you pray. That's Ephesians 1. That's what it's all about.

If you notice, verse fifteen says 'for this reason.' That means, for this reason that I wrote about above, for this reason that you have all of this. You have all these blessings. I offer this prayer. And to give you confidence in your prayers, in verses twenty through twenty-three, Paul says here's how you know your prayers will be answered, here's how you know God will hear you, because He has the power to. You don't serve a weak God. You don't serve a sissy God. You don't serve a puny God. You serve a powerful God. And that's why you know He will hear your prayers.

Verse nineteen says, "these are in accordance with the working of the strength of his might." See the word 'strength' in there, the word 'might.' Which means that these prayer requests are made according to His power.

Verse twenty mentions God raising Jesus from the dead. Verse twenty-two mentions God putting all things under His feet. All to say that God has power. He can do all things and you need to remember that in prayer.

You know, as I was going over this this week, just different things that came up in the office. I was reminded that one of the things I have the privilege of doing in our church is counseling. And one of the things I have the privilege of doing is talking to people about their problems, helping them through things in life, and it could be anything. I mean, one thing about ministry that I love is that it's never a dull moment. I mean, you just never know what's going on in someone's life, what you can help him with: marriage problems, parenting problems, conflict stuff, purity things.

We talk about all of it, and the one thing I hear from so many people is that I can't do this cuz I don't have the power. I can't change. I can't be different in my marriage or parenting or conflict because I just don't have the strength. This passage right here says that you do. This passage right here says you do have the power to change all of this because you have the power of God. It's not your power. Your power doesn't do anything. It's His power.

I also have the privilege of praying with people in our church. I get to talk to people who come to me and say, "Pastor Jeremy, would you pray for me? Would you ask the Lord to help me?" And I love to do that. I love praying for you guys. I pray for you everyday. But I would also say, and I tell this to people quite often, is you need to pray for yourself too. Don't just ask me to pray for you. I'm not your priest. I'm not your confession booth. You can go to God yourself to Christ because He has the power.

Some religions don't teach that. They teach that in order for you to go to God, you got to clean up your life, because He's kind of a puny God and you got to help Him out. Our God is not like that. You can go to directly to him because He is a mighty God.

In his commentary on Ephesians, William Barclay tells of the time Jesus and the angel Gabriel, it's a made-up story, but Jesus and Gabriel were having a conversation about the church before it started. And Gabriel asked the Lord, "How are you going to do it, Jesus? How are you going to build this church? This church idea thing?" And Jesus said, "I'm going to use men. Men will do it. People. Men and women." To which Gabriel said, "Men? Men are weak. Men are sinful. Men are foolish. They're going to mess everything up, Jesus, don't you have another idea?" And Jesus said, "No, this will work, I promise you, because they will have My power."

Friends, he's right. The church will work, what we're doing will succeed, the Gates of Hell will not prevail against it, because we have the power of God. We just need to take advantage of it and that's what we're going to talk about that this morning.

So if you're taking notes, in Ephesians 1 verses 20 through 23, I want you to see three ways the power of God is displayed through Jesus Christ. That's our outline for today. That's what we're talking about this morning: three ways the power of God is displayed through Jesus Christ. Because this is something we all need, isn't it? Amen? Does anybody feel like they need power this morning? Anybody in here coming to church feeling a little cold? Let's just be honest, a little cold to the things of God? Calloused? Indifferent? Puny in your souls? Anybody feel that way? If you have red blood in your body, you should say yes, right? We feel that way.

Well, the good news is, you don't have to go out that way this morning. You may come in here feeling cold, but let's look at our heating plant. And let's get some warmth this morning, and some power, and we're going to look at this with three ways the power of God is displayed through Christ.

The first one is through the resurrection. Paul says, the first way the power of God is displayed through the Lord Jesus Christ, was through His resurrection. Paul starts off on a very high note,

here, this is a very amazing thing to say, because this is the greatest display of His power. This is the greatest display of the strength, when the Lord came back from the dead. But if you look in verses 18 through 20, this is what we read and it says,

18 *I pray that the eyes of your heart [x]may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the [y]saints, **19** and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might **20** which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

There's a reference to the resurrection, there at the end of what I just read, when He raised Him from the dead.

Just to give you the context for that, starting in verse eighteen, Paul gives us a list of prayer requests for the Ephesians. He gives us a list of things that he prayed for them to know, and it includes, 'what is the hope of his calling?' 'What are the riches of the glory of his inheritance?' And then he mentions, 'the surpassing greatness of His power.' That's a third request there. 'Not just,' Paul says, 'I don't just want you to know His power. I want you to know the surpassing greatness of it.'

This doesn't come across in English, but this is an interesting phrase in Greek, because it has four different words for power there, four different words for strength, to say that God has given you strength strength strength. He's given you power power power,. And then, in case you don't get it, he says, 'these are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.' That could be translated: these are on the basis of His strength and praying this on the basis of God's strength.

In other words, Paul says 'I can pray all of this because I know I serve a strong God. He can handle it.' And to elaborate that he mentions God raising Jesus from the dead.

If you think about it, the resurrection was the greatest display of God's power, was the greatest display of His strength, because death is the greatest power in the universe. Does that make sense? There's nothing stronger than death. Everybody dies. And we've never found a cure for that. Everybody's talking-- Doctors talk about cures for all types of things, but young and old, rich and poor, healthy and unhealthy-- we all die.

Everybody's on a health kick today. I think it's a very popular thing in British Columbia. I've never felt so unhealthy in my life as since I moved here, you know? I think McDonald's is a wonderful place. But we want to eat right and drink right, that's very popular, which is okay. That's fine. But let me tell you this: it won't keep you from dying, right? You might make a healthy corpse, but it won't keep you from being a corpse at some point in the future.

You know, another example is, my in-laws live in China and they had to evacuate there last week. If you guys have followed the news because of the coronavirus, right? Millions have evacuated. There's a big scare going on in that country there because they don't want to die, which I don't want my in-laws to die either. But I do know this: everybody will die eventually. You can leave China for a season but death is going to come for us all. Because you can't stop it. You can't defeat death.

But here's what Paul is saying in this verse, Jesus can. Right? That's Paul's point here. No one has the power to defeat death, but Him. He is stronger than death. He is mightier than death, which means He's stronger than anything this universe has. Plants die, animals die, people die-- Jesus has defeated all of that.

Which is important because our faith is built on this, our faith is built on the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead. If you think about it, nobody would go to heaven if He didn't. Nobody could be saved if He wasn't strong enough to do that, because you can't defeat death on your own. When you die, that's it. If it were not for the power of God and Jesus has that power.

It's been said if the cross was the victory over sin, then the resurrection was the Victory Parade. Because it proved that God could defeat this. Which means you can have this power as well.

This is Paul's point here. He can defeat your sin and your weakness and your temptation. He can raise you up in your marriage and your parenting and your conflict. You just need to ask Him to do it through prayer. If you can defeat death, I promise you He can defeat whatever problems you're having today.

In fact, one commentator says you should draw several conclusions from this, you could draw several applications here. One is that, Jesus power is His, which means that He has it already. He's not waiting to get His power someday down the road. He's not waiting to get power in a future moment. He has it now. He is powerful now.

Which means, second, that you can have this power too. And you can have this power now. You're not waiting for this power, someday. You're not hoping to get it down the road. You have it now because what is His, is mine. If I'm in Christ, and whatever He has I have.

Third, this means you're safe from sin. Sin can't touch you now because Jesus is stronger than sin, He's stronger than death: He proved it at the resurrection. And, fourth, this means you can defeat death too. Through Christ, in His power over death, you can be victorious. Which should give you hope.

The whole thing Paul is trying to give you here is the confidence to have hope and pray in the Christian Life. I meet so many Christians who don't get this today. I meet so many Christians who don't feel like they have any power. It's almost like we're the weakest religion on Earth at times.

We listen to some Christian radio and it's almost like the only thing we can talk about now is safety. This is just safe for the whole family. Well, it wasn't safe for Jesus, right? He died. But our religion is not about safety, our religion is about power. God can raise the Dead.

I hear so many people saying, you know, "I can't change. This world is so bad. I don't know how we're going to make it." As if we don't know. I mean, as if that hasn't been figured out for us.

Friends, you know how you're going to make it. You know where the power comes from. You know what's going to happen to this world. Jesus Christ is Sovereign over all of it all of it.

I was visiting with someone from town awhile back, a professing Christian from another church, who was trying to help some of the bad things going on. He said, you know things have gotten so bad in Chilliwack that that we don't know what to do. We don't know where to go for help." I had to gently remind him that yes, we do. We go to Jesus Christ. That hasn't changed. It's always been the same. You go to Him for help. He's the one with the power.

The reformer John Knox said, "God plus one always equals a majority." And if you have God, God is all you have, God is all you need.

So that brings us to the next point to consider this morning, the second way the power of God is displayed through Jesus Christ. The first one is through the resurrection. When God raised Jesus from the dead.

This is a doctrine we really don't talk about enough in our faith. But Jesus defeated the strongest thing in the universe. He has power over the thing that frightens us all. He can defeat death, which means you can through him. You have His power as well. Bringing us to a second way the power of God as displayed through Christ, and that is through the Ascension. The second way the power of God is displayed through Jesus Christ is through his Ascension into heaven.

Piggybacking off the first one here, the Bible says, 'Not only did God raise Jesus from the dead, but he also raised him from the Earth.' Not only did He raise him from the grave, but He literally lifted Him off the ground and brought Him into heaven to display His power that way as well.

And if you read verses nineteen through twenty-one, this is what it says. Paul writes and he says, "These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might, which he brought about in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age, but also on the one to come."

As Paul is going on to describe the power of God here, and His strength, He moves from the resurrection to the ascension here.

He moves from one event in the life of Christ to another. This all happened, by the way, after the cross. This is an interesting thing about this passage. This is all after Jesus died. So this is an eternal perspective on Christ, this is a ministry of His after death.

And I know you don't see the word 'ascension' here, Paul refers to by saying that God seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places. That's not a figurative expression, actually, this is a literal one.

If you remember your Bible history for a moment, Acts chapter one says that after Jesus rose from the dead, he taught the disciples for a period of forty days. He instructed them. And then He ascended to the father's right-hand literally and bodily form.

My son and I, some time ago, were talking about Jesus, and we were going to pray and I said, "Can we pray to Jesus now, buddy?" And he said, "Well, Dad, first we need a hundred airplanes."

I said, "What? What do you mean? What do you mean a hundred airplanes? What does that mean?" Then he says, "Well, because he's in heaven. It's going to take a hundred airplanes to get up there to him, you know?"

Well the Bible actually says that you can go directly to Him in prayer, we'll get to that in a minute, but He is in heaven. In Acts chapter one, let me just read this to you. Out of the lips of babes, right? I mean that was pretty... Acts chapter one, versus nine-through-eleven, I'll just read this to you. It says, "After He had said these things, Jesus was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight, and there were gazing intently into the sky while he was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them, and they also said 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you in heaven will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.'"

That's a powerful statement, but it means that Jesus will return the same way He left. Just as He ascended to the Father in a body, He will return in a body, and we need to be looking forward to that. But not only that, but Paul says here, in Ephesians 1, Jesus did this for a reason. He ascended to teach us a lesson, and the lesson is that He is powerful. That's the point of all this. Christ is powerful.

Just to explain the passage, verse twenty-one says that he did that to sit at God's right hand in the Heavenly places. The right hand in the first century was a symbol of power. Most people were

right-handed at the time. They did all their work with the right hand and so it became a symbol of strength and power, and to put someone at your right hand was a way to honor them. It was a way to say that this is the most important person in the Empire next to the king. Not anybody got to sit there. That was only for special people, and God did that with Christ here. God did that with his Son. He seated Him at His right hand to show His power.

This is also important because there were no seats in the temple, from what I've been told anyways. There was nowhere to sit down, because the work was never done in the temple. It was never over. There was always one more sacrifice to make, one more animal to kill. It was just an ongoing thing, but Jesus sat down because his work was done. The Lord sat down because His work was finished.

In fact, if you read the book of Acts, one interesting encounter is in Acts chapter seven, when Stephen is dying, if you remember, it says he saw Jesus standing. That's because He was taking an interest in his death, but the Lord is seated because His work is over.

Verse twenty-one says this places him above everything. To be seated at the right hand of God has to be above the sit on top of the world, and it put Him, it says, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but in the one to come. You can see how comprehensive this is, in that passage because the word 'all' and the word 'every' is mentioned there.

In fact, not only is Jesus above all rule, but He is far above it, far beyond it. Not only is He above all authority and power. He is way beyond that.

You know we get so worried about politics and world leaders and world events and listen, you serve a God that is way beyond that. Way beyond that. We get so worried about the coronavirus or health or some of these kinds of things and He's way beyond that stuff is well.

He's above your temptation and your sin. He is just in another place seated with the Father, and you can be with Him as well, if you pray. That's what Paul saying here. Just as He is above all things, He can triumph over your problems, if you come to Him in prayer.

In fact, if you look a couple places, this is part of the mystery of this doctrine, but if you look in chapter one, verse three of Ephesians, you see the same phrase 'heavenly places' used this way. Chapter one verse three says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."

And then if you look in chapter two verse six, it says this, if this doesn't blow your mind, it says, "He raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ."

Paul says that in a mysterious way, in a way that is kind of unexplainable, through our union with Christ, our soul is already with Him in heaven. We're as good as already there. We're on His mind, we're in His heart, and we're seated there with Him in the heavenly places.

You know, I think that if we don't talk about the resurrection enough, this is a doctrine we really don't say much about, the ascension. It's kind of ignored in a lot of ways, but it's so important because it shows us how powerful your Saviour is? I mean, if the resurrection shows that He defeated death, the ascension shows He defeated everything. Everything. I mean, nothing can touch Him now.

In fact, He goes up into heaven forty days after the cross, which means He was crucified in the most inglorious, ugly way imaginable, and forty days later He is seated next to God in heaven. Which means that we have no excuse for being discouraged today. We have no reason to feel afraid because we have this type of power living in us.

You know, a missionary to Africa once told a group of Seminary students about the time his car was having trouble, and he didn't know how to fix it, he didn't know what to do. So for two years, here's what he would do: he would push his car to get it moving and then he would jump in and turn the key. Now, our brothers from South Africa, I don't know if it's a normal thing you guys would do for cars there, but... He would risk his life. He would put the car on a hill, let it start rolling down the hill, and he would jump in and get it started. And, finally a mechanic buddy of his from the States came to visit him. He looked at the car and he said, "Okay, here's the problem. The problem is that you have a loose cable. The problem is that you're not connected to the power."

And the missionary told these seminary students, he said, "I wonder how many Christians do this with their spiritual lives. I wonder how many do this with Christ." We struggle and fight and wrestle with sin. We go running down the hill, we risk our lives and chase after the car because we're not connected to the power. Our lives don't change, our marriages don't change. We're so cold and hard and indifferent because we do it in our own resources when we should be doing it in His.

Listen friends, if you're struggling with some of the stuff I've been talking about this morning, let me just ask you, how's your relationship with Christ? How's your relationship with the Savior? Do you see Him seated on the throne? Do you see your God Mighty and Powerful? And are you staying close to him?

That's how you solve your sin problem. It's not that complicated.

And I told you last time I really believe that most of the problems in our church would go away if we would just pray more. I really believe that.

Most of the marriage difficulties, parenting difficulties; all that stuff with would work itself out if we would go to Christ. A lot of our indifference would disappear if we would go to Him. So, how is your relationship with Him?

You know, this is backwards in a lot of churches today. We get this mixed up because we see Jesus on the cross, and we see Him as a sweet little baby in a manger, and we talk about that at Christmas and Easter, which we should do, but for some strange reason we think He stayed there.

We think He stayed in the manger. We think He stayed on the cross. You go into some churches and you see their artwork and it looks that way.

Friends, He's not on the cross anymore. He's not in the manger anymore. He left. He's in heaven, seated over everything. Over all the troubles of life, over all the sins and temptations, over all the mess and gunk in your life, and He can give you power over all of that-- if you would pray to Him.

In fact, Hebrews tells us that He's praying to the Father now on our behalf. So He's already praying to the Father for you. You just need to pray to Him as well. Brings us to one more thing - isn't that encouraging, friends? Isn't that amazing? You serve a Saviour like that.

Brings us to one more thing to talk about this morning, one more way the power of God is displayed through Christ. Just to look at these other ones again: the first one is through the resurrection. Power of God was displayed when the Lord raised him from the dead.

Second way the power of God was displayed was through the ascension. Not only did God raise Him from the dead, but He raised Him over everything. All power and authority and everything to show that He defeated all of that as well.

Brings us to one more point to consider, one more way the power of God is displayed through Jesus Christ, and that is through His headship over the church. A third and final way we see the power of God displayed in Christ was through His headship over the church.

Which is another way of saying His rulership over the church, His sovereignty over the church. We just saw that Jesus is sovereign over all things but in a special way, He is sovereign over His body.

And if you're reading verses nineteen through twenty-three, it says, "These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might, which He brought about in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet and gave His His head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."

As Paul is finishing this chapter and bringing it to a close, he goes from the general to the specific here. He says not only does Jesus show power over all things but He shows it specifically through the church. Through us. Through the people in this room.

Says, "He gave Him His head over all things to the church." Then in verse twenty-three it says, "Which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." That's a tough phrase to interpret, but the idea, it seems to be that Jesus fills all of us out of His fullness. He fills every Christian with His power.

If you're wondering, 'Do I have enough power?' Well, you're serving an eternal God, an infinite God, and the answer is, 'Yes, you do.' He's full of power and He fills you out of that.

Just to explain that some, the Romans thought the source of a man's power was his head. We think it's the heart particularly, probably, but they thought it was the head. I which is true in a sense because if you cut off your head, you die. You can't live without a head, and that's what Paul is referring to here. Jesus is the head of the church; He gives it power. You can't live without Him.

To say it another way, every part of the body is connected to your head. Whether it's your finger, or your toes, or your hearts: they're all tied together through your head and that gives them power. The unity of the body gives it power. And in a similar way, our union with Christ does that.

Which means this, guys, here's the encouraging thing: whether you're a finger or a hand or a heart, you have this power flowing through you, amen? I mean, whether it's your job to get stepped on, or to whatever fingers do... point? You have the power.

Even though you're the smallest Christian, the newest believer. Even though you're brand-new to this stuff, if you're connected to the Lord you have power.

I mean, some of you are going to read a passage like this this morning and walk away saying, "I can't have this. This isn't for me. I need to go learn more first. I need to grow more first before I can experience this." That's not what it says. That is not what this passage says.

Some of you're going to read this and say, "Well, I can't have this because I'm too sinful. I trust in Christ, but I can't have this because there's so much in my life that needs to change first." That's not what it says. This says you changed through the power.

Some of you will say, "I need to get my life back together again first." Some of you will say, "I need to join the church for a while. Do a bunch of good deeds for a while." That's not what this says. This says you can have the power now. Right now.

Let's say it this way, friends. This is good news because we all need this today, don't we? We need some power. There's not a single one of us that doesn't struggle with this. So we all need with this is talking about, and Paul says that you can have it, if you believe. Which leads me just to ask this morning, do you believe this this morning? Are you trusting in this? Does this give you hope and enjoy and encouragement?

Do you believe, do you understand, that even though you're the smallest Christian, even though you're the least Christian, you can have power. You can have the fullness of Him who fills all and all. You can come in here empty, but you can leave out full this morning.

Do you feel cold today? Do you feel like a wimpy Christian? Paul says you can have heat and warmth in Christ, if you will come to Him through prayer. He is seated at the right hand of the Father and He is above all things, but the good news is, He's a hundred airplanes away, but the good news is you can come to Him directly in prayer. He is an accessible guide to you. Prayer is the ladder that leads you to God. It is the connection to His power. Will you take advantage of that this morning?

You know, in my studies this week, I came across an article that gave some following observations from Isaiah chapter 40. I thought this was interesting. It said, "The the oceans of the world contain more than 340 quintillion gallons of water, yet God holds them in the hollow of His hand." Isaiah 40 verse 12. Said that 'the known universe stretches more than 30 billion light years, but God measures it by the width of his hand.' Isaiah 40 verse 12. 'The Earth weighs 6 sextillion metric tons. Yet, God says it is but dust on the scales.' Chapter 40 verse 15. Scientists claim that there are at least 100 billion galaxies, and each galaxy is made up of about a hundred

billion stars; more than we could ever count, more than we could ever fathom, and yet God calls each star by name. Verse 26.

My friends, this is the kind of God you serve. This is the kind of God we worship. We worship a Saviour who calls the stars by name, and you can go directly to Him. You can access His power through prayer.

Let me pray for us now, that we would all grow in this and take advantage of what the Apostle has taught us this morning.

Father, we come before you this morning acknowledging that this is something we all need to wrap our minds around. I don't think any of us in here have not felt like a sissy Christian from time to time. Yeah, we read a passage like this one and we have to say shame on us. Shame on us.

Lord, thank you for revealing such things in Your Word about Yourself. Father, may we walk away and be a people and that change as a result of what You have said in here. Walk away as a people who want to see change in our community, change in our town, because of what Christ has done and what Christ is doing now seated at Your right hand.

Lord, we rejoice that we would have such a God. Other religions have gods that... they can't touch this. They have gods that are that are weak and powerless. We don't have that type of God. Lord, may we go out now and live in light of this. May we worship You for what You have done in your Son.

As we take the Lord's Supper as well, may we remember that you were on a cross, dying for our sins, paying the price to make us right with You. And after that You did rise from the dead. You rose from the Earth, so that we can have this type of power. Would You be glorified as we take

the supper this morning, Father. As we remember what Christ has done. We pray this all in His wonderful name. Amen.