

Claiming the Power of God

“...And grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:29-32).

Individuals today seem to be on a power hunt; a quest for power. Billboards even advertise with captions like, “Feel the Power!” or “The Power.” Examples abound of people who have power and misuse it. This misuse of power usually leads to abuse and even dictatorship. However, the Holy Spirit gives power as the life support system to the Church. There is no substitute for the demonstration of God’s Spirit and power in the Body of Christ. The Early Church used the power for the glory of God and the Church moved forward. In order to claim the power of God and effectively use it, five things must be evident in the life of a believer. These characteristics (and more), were evident in the lives of the early Christians in Acts.

1. Love
2. Unity
3. Prayer
4. Fasting
5. A yielded, sinless life.

Paul said, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings” (Philippians 3:10). The world is

looking for men who know their God, and for a demonstration of His power. “But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits” (Daniel 11:32).

In Luke 4:1 Jesus is described as being “full of the Holy Ghost.” After praying, fasting, and being tempted by Satan He then returns in “the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14). Immediately we see Jesus going into the temple and declaring, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down” (Luke 4:18-20).

After Jesus clarified the areas of ministry for which He was anointed, He handed the book to the minister. This signifies His transferring the responsibility of ministry to us. People were astonished at His doctrine because His word was with power (Luke 4:32). Jesus has also anointed us with power to do the same things He did while He was on the earth. “Behold, I give unto you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19).

Not only did Jesus promise we would be able to do the things He did, He promised to do greater things through us. “The works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12).

When we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit we receive power (Acts 1:8). It is important that we utilize this power to be a blessing. While we were not saved we were considered to be in the flesh; the carnal man. Now we have become a

Power

spiritual man, and we ought to walk in the Spirit. Paul said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:1, 5-6, 8-9).

We need to allow the power of God to flow out of our lives. This requires us being sensitive to the Spirit and boldly doing what God tells us to do.

John the Beloved was on the Isle of Patmos when the Spirit began to talk to him. In Revelation 1:10 he wrote, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Notice the three progressive steps here in this verse.

1. I was in the Spirit
2. On the Lord's Day
3. And heard

What a difference it would make if everyone started being in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and expected to hear from God. He is ever ready to speak and show us great things. Many times we begin to operate in the flesh instead of relying on God to speak. "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3). We must begin, and stay in the Spirit. "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the

plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

In the Book of Revelation seven times are the words recorded, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

Elijah was a man who understood how to hear the voice of God. "And, behold the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it" (1 Kings 19:11-13).

We must have sensitive ears to hear what Jesus is saying to the Church and to us. It takes living a life of knowing Jesus. This is only accomplished by:

1. Having the Spirit within.
2. Living a sinless life, in holiness.
3. Prayer.
4. Fasting.
5. Reading and studying God's Word.
6. Developing sensitivity to His voice.
7. Doing what God tells us to do.

Paul developed this type of lifestyle. He challenged us when he wrote, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of

Power

man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2, 4-5, 9).

Christ at Work in You

- Here is my brain, think through it.
 - Here is my face; glow through it.
 - Here are my hands; touch with them.
 - Here are my eyes; see through them.
 - Here are my ears; listen with them.
 - Here are my lips; speak through them.
 - Here is my heart; love through it.
- (Author Unknown)

5. How do we develop the ability to hear the Spirit? _____

6. What statement is recorded seven times in Revelation? _____

Study Questions

1. What are five characteristics that need to be in the lives of Christians in order to claim the power of God? _____

2. What was Jesus anointed to do? _____

3. Give two references that show we have been given power to do great things for God.

4. What are the three progressive steps in Revelation 1:10? _____

Additional Notes