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Foothills 2008 Resolutions
“Experiencing More of God’s Power”
(Part 3)

Intro: Over 20 years ago there were a group of guys who created what is called The Power Team. (explain) – But, God already has a Power Team...it’s called the church! And God doesn’t want us demonstrating physical power, but His power in our lives and culture. *I Cor. 4:20 “For the Kingdom of God is not just fancy talk; it’s living by God’s power.” (NLT)* The reality of supernatural Kingdom power.

It will be impossible to advance the Kingdom of God without the power of God. It is a spiritual kingdom that requires spiritual power to be a reality. HOW?

- 4 choices that result in experiencing more of God’s power. God’s Power Team!

I. Choose To Believe That God’s Power Is Available For Me

Phil. 4:13 “For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need.” (NLT) (Put your name in this verse)

II Tim.1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline.” (NLT)

A. I believe God’s power is personal (It’s for me!)

1. It’s pretty tough experiencing something you refuse to believe in. (benefits of Air Travel – refuse to believe it’s safe / Ministry – refuse to believe you can do it / Tithing – refuse to believe God will take care of you /
2. Some of you have never experienced the power of God in your life in a personal way because you simply don’t believe it’s for you! You may believe it’s for someone else, but not for you.
3. Some of you don’t believe in God’s power because you’ve never experienced it in a personal way. But, that doesn’t mean it’s not real. That’s like saying I don’t believe in personal satellite TV. “I can’t see it and I’ve never experienced it, so it must not be real” I’m sticking with my cable!”
4. When you gave your life to Jesus, God placed a personal power source inside of you. God placed the Holy Spirit in you. The Holy Spirit is part of the package deal that comes with our salvation. We all get the same Holy Spirit.

5. I have the same Holy Spirit you do. I have the same amount of the Holy Spirit you do. I didn't get any more power than you did. You didn't get short-changed
6. God's power is so personal because He put Himself in you!

B. I believe God's power is available (I can experience it!)

1. Because God put Himself inside you to be with you wherever you go, that means His power is available to you 24/7/365! You can experience His power in your life if you want to.
2. God's power never runs out / He's never in short supply / Other people can't use it up / He doesn't need time to recharge /
3. We don't pursue things we believe are unavailable to us. I remember buying our first house (Explain – just finished seminary – not much money – I believed it wasn't even an option / not available – Praise God for my wife!)
4. Can you believe what the Scripture teaches that God's power is available for you! Some of you are like me and the house. You see your circumstances / your life / your past / your mistakes / your lack of power / and conclude that you don't qualify for God's power. (Like qualifying for a loan!)
5. Your spiritual credit score is too low! Too many bad choices. NOT TRUE! God's power is available to you based upon what Jesus did for you on the cross NOT based upon your behavior!
6. The choice you have to make is simply choosing to believe what Scripture says and deciding it's time to start living like a son and daughter of the King! If God wants to empower you life, don't you think you should let Him? Aren't you tired of operating on your own power?
7. Can you choose to believe God has power available for you? If you can, now you need to cooperate with Him to experience His power? HOW?

**II. Choose To Obey God's Agenda Not Your Own
(partnering with Him)**

Ps. 127:1 "Unless the Lord builds a house, the work of the builders is useless."

(NLT) I'd better be working with Him not against Him.

John 4:34 "...My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work." (NASB) Jesus models for us a submissiveness to God's agenda. Jesus did not work independently. His power came from His cooperation with the Father.

Luke 22:42 "...yet, I want Your will not Mine." (NLT)

A. I stop expecting God to empower my agenda

1. We all have a tendency to do whatever we want and then ask God to bless it. We offer up our plans to God without ever asking Him what He wants for our lives, and expect Him to give us power to accomplish it.

2. Then, when we get in trouble / experience consequences / have pain / we ask God “why”. We get angry with God for not bailing us out...where’s Your power?
3. We treat God as if He exists for us. As if He is here to help us do our own thing. We treat God like a “Jeanie in a lamp”. He’s here to grant me my wishes.
4. God’s Kingdom does not work like this. If you want to operate on your own agenda and travel your own course, you’re on your own! You’re operating on your own wisdom / resources / power / God will NOT empower you to do your own thing. (He doesn’t leave you relationally– explain)
5. He loves you enough to let you experiment with your own thing. He will let you exhaust your resources. He will let you fail enough times so that you conclude this doesn’t work.

B. I choose to partner with God following His agenda

1. In God’s Kingdom, He only empowers those who follow what He wants...those who will discover and follow His agenda. God’s power is not available for personal agendas...only Kingdom agendas.
2. God is calling us to partner with Him in what He is doing. The more committed we are to what God wants the more power we’ll see. WHY? Because it’s impossible for God to fail! / lose / be defeated.
3. If we want to experience God’s power in our lives and church, then we must be willing to surrender to His will. We must be willing to say like Jesus; “Not My will but Yours be done.”
4. If we’re honest, we’re afraid to do this. WHY? Because we like having control of our lives / we like controlling the outcome / we’re afraid of what God’s will might be or what it might require of us.
5. The potential for God’s power was placed in you unconditionally. You did nothing for it to be available to you. BUT, to actually experience God’s power in your life, it requires the condition of surrendering to God’s will.
6. There is this scene in the movie Spider Man: (Explain scene with Uncle in car – “With great power comes great responsibility.” God is not going to allow us to demonstrate His great power until we embrace our great responsibility. WHY? Because His power is for that responsibility!
7. Are you willing to surrender to His will regardless what it is?

III. Choose Humility So God Can Work

- Humility is the condition of the heart that allows God to work. Humility creates the proper spiritual environment necessary to experience God’s power. Without humility, we ground out the power of God in our lives and church.

II Cor. 3:5 “It is not that we think we can do anything of lasting value by ourselves.

Our only power and success comes from God.” (NLT)

James 4:6 “...God sets Himself against the proud, but He shows favor to the humble.” (NLT)

James 4:10 When you bow down before the Lord and admit your dependence on Him, He will lift you up and give you honor.” (NLT) God’s resources are only experienced in the environment of humility

- Humility has 2 directions where it must be expressed and experienced. I have 2 humility acronyms.
- A. I choose to demonstrate humility before God (HOW?)
1. **H: Hear:** I choose to hear what God has to say. I choose to pay attention. What God says is important to me. Pride will always ignore what God has to say.
 2. **U: Unite:** I unite my heart and mind with God’s heart and mind. I choose to agree with God and what He says is important. Pride always says, “Yeh, but...” Pride always has an excuse why they can’t agree with God.
 3. **M: Move:** I move my life in God’s direction. I admit there needs to be a change of course. Pride remains fixed. Pride always has an excuse why they can’t change the course of their life and move towards God.
 4. **B: Believe:** I choose to believe what God says is true and right and stop listening to myself / stop trusting my feeling / my wisdom. I allow God’s word to be my authority. Pride always wants self to be the authority.
 5. **L: Love:** I choose to love God first. He is not one of many affections, but the First of all affections. It requires humility to love God first!
 6. **E: Eternal:** I embrace an eternal perspective on this life. Pride is rooted in the temporal / instant gratification / pride can’t wait. Humility is rooted in the eternal. Humility is a characteristic of God’s eternal Kingdom. I embrace humility because this is how God’s Kingdom works.
 - **How’s your humility towards God?**
- B. I choose to demonstrate humility before others (HOW?)
1. **O: Outward Focus:** My focus is not inward on myself, but on others. Pride always focuses on self first and ignores the needs of others.
 2. **T: Together:** I do not live in isolation from others. Humility is experienced in community / in close relationships. Pride isolates. When you want to be right, you always avoid other people.
 3. **H: Hear:** I choose to listen to other people. I seek to understand rather than be understood. Pride always wants to be understood first.
 4. **E: Endure:** I choose not to give up on people / not be quick to judge / I make allowances for people’s faults. Pride is quick to judge and quits on people!
 5. **R: Reconcile:** I quickly move towards forgiveness. Humility always wants to reconcile – Pride always wants to be right and judgmental.

7. **S: Serve:** I choose to serve the needs of others not just my own. Pride takes care of self first. Humility sets aside one's own needs to meet the needs of others...just like Jesus did.
- If we desire to see God's power in our lives and in the life of this church, we must embrace the spiritual environment of humility. Is it possible that your pride may be grounding out the power of God in your life?

IV. Choose To Risk By Placing Yourself In Situations To Need It

Heb. 11:8 "It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as an inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going." (NLT) He was willing to move out in the direction God was calling Him even though it was unknown. God didn't give him a detailed itinerary, just a direction.

A. Risk is based upon hearing God's call

1. We don't choose risk for risk sake. I'm not talking about some people's natural desire to take risks. Some people are more natural risk takers than others. God made me to enjoy a certain level of risk (Explain – Belize -God made men this way – videos on TV of stunts and crashes...all men!
2. I'm talking about taking risks that are based upon hearing God calling you to move forward and trust Him. Taking risks in areas of business / relationships / ministry / without God calling you to go there is foolish! You run the risk of going there by yourself and operating on your own power..
3. I'm talking about risking for God's purposes / God's agenda / God's will for your life because He is the One calling you to go.
4. Some of you are convinced you've never heard God calling you to go or do anything. Let's solve this issue right now! Read Together.

1 Peter 4:10 "Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well." (CEV)

5. There! You've all heard God calling you to use the gifts He gave you to serve the needs of others. It's no longer an issue of hearing, but following / willingness to move forward and risk!

B. Risk will always put you in a place to need God and see His power

1. We will experience the power of God as we move forward and trust Him, NOT before. Experiencing the power of God is not about feeling powerful / not about feeling strong / or in charge
2. In fact, often it's just the opposite. We experience the power of God as we move forward / see our inadequacy / lack of resources / feel overwhelmed / we are convinced we can't do this without God / we cry out to Him...and BOOM! God shows up!

3. The problem with most of us is that we will only attempt to do things for God if we are convinced we can accomplish it. If we are sure we can do this thing without God's help. This is why we see so little power! There is an unwillingness to put ourselves in places to need it.

4. D.L. Moody -19th century Evangelist / Pastor- "Attempt something so great for God that it's doomed to failure, unless God be in it."

5. God wants to demonstrate His power in our midst even more in this next year
*Eph. 3:20 "Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, **according to the power that works within us.**" (NASB) God's power in you!*

6. Can we choose to open up our lives and church to experience more of God's power?

- Choose to believe that this power is available for you
- Choose to obey God's agenda not your own
- Choose to humble yourself before God and others
- Choose to take some risks by placing yourself in situations to need Him (serve in some capacity)

Remember, this church is sold out to pursuing the Kingdom of God in this area. That being the case, we must embrace what Scripture says, "*that the Kingdom of God is not just fancy talk, it is living by God's POWER!*" Let's give God that opportunity!