

Experiencing More of God's Power

Intro: Gatorade Commercial – Is It In You? Everyone wants to put something in their life to give them an edge / help empower themselves in some way (Gatorade / 5 Hr Energy / Red Bull / Monster / etc...) BUT the real question is not; Is It In You? The better question is: Is He In You? WHO? GOD! Because if He is in you...

God's power is in you! *II Tim. 1:7* "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power," (NLT) If this is true, then why am I not experiencing this power? We have to choose to walk in it. Today we are going to discover how to walk in the power that is in you! We need to experience His presence (last week) but we also need to walk in His power.

HOW?

We can experience God's power when we live in 4 distinct ways.

I. Live According To His Kingdom

Matt. 6:33 "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need." (NLT)

I Cor. 4:20 "For the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power." (NLT)

A. God's power is only for His Kingdom

1. If we're not seekers of His Kingdom, there is no power. God's power is only reserved for His Kingdom purposes not ours! If we have no commitment to walk according to His Kingdom, then we have no kingdom power.
2. God is not going to empower our lives to do our thing. He only gives us power to do His thing. God is not going to empower your life to be materialistic / self-centered / workaholic / unforgiving / pleasure seeking / faithless
3. One of the key reasons so many followers of Christ live powerless lives is the fact they have a greater commitment to this earthly kingdom than God's Kingdom. If our commitment is to this earthly kingdom, we are on our own!
4. What does it mean to seek after God's Kingdom? Answer: Is what's important to God, important to you? Are God's priorities your priorities? Are God's values your values? Is God's will your will? If not, then you follow the wrong kingdom.
5. Until we realign our lives to become seekers of His Kingdom, we are stuck existing on our own resources alone.
6. Some of you may be wondering; "Why isn't God helping me? Where is God? Where is His power? Where is His help? Doesn't He love me? Of course He does! But He is not going to answer a prayer that promotes the wrong Kingdom.

B. This power only comes from the King

1. This power is relational power. It only happens in the context of relationship. What is the greatest value / priority in God's Kingdom? To love the Lord your God with all your heart / soul / mind / strength. Power flows out of our connection with God.

2. Once we decide to be seekers of the King and His Kingdom, it's like turning the Main Breaker on to your house. Power begins to flow into every room of the house! Power begins to flow into every area of your life.
3. Some of you need to realize that you are wired for power. The only problem is the breaker's turned off. Choosing to connect with the King and embrace His Kingdom throws the switch! HOW?

Simple steps:

- Review and commit to last week's message on the presence of God.
- Seek His Kingdom by seeking it through His word. (The word of God describes the values / priorities of His Kingdom / - every weekend service I speak about His Kingdom ! God's word in your life is power!
- Choose to follow it

II. Embrace Our Role As Witnesses

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere..." (NLT)

Acts 4:33 "With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all." (NIV)

A. God's power is available to those who represent Him

1. God wants to empower our lives so that we can represent Him to a lost world. In the book of Acts, we see that God's power in the Apostles was directly related to sharing Christ with others.
 2. Every believer has a responsibility to be a witness for the reality of Jesus in our lives. This is not reserved for just pastors or missionaries, but for every follower of Christ.
 3. One of the reasons hindering the expansion of the Kingdom of God is the fact that too few believers are committed to their role as witnesses. God's power is reserved for this role.
 4. This role just puts fear in people for some reason. Maybe this is why God promises power. If we are willing to open our mouths, God will do something supernatural and powerful with it. I have seen this play out countless times on mission trips.
- Mission trip stories of students sharing their faith with campers
 5. Power is not the result of your presentation but of your obedience! Experiencing God's power is not feeling powerful. It is being obedient even in our fear and weakness and watching God do something powerful despite us! Stop waiting to feel powerful...just represent Him.

B. God's power in us makes our message believable

1. There are times when our words give the witness for the Lord. Then there are other times when it is our life. God's power is available so that He can use us, but God's power also changes us. Our changed lives are a tremendous witness as well.

2. Our changed lives / marriages / relationships / priorities / attitudes / are all on display for people to see. Our lives validate or invalidate what we say with our words.
3. Years ago I worked with this older interim pastor. Smartest and most knowledgeable guy I ever ministered with. One day we went into Portland together and I was in shock at his attitude and language towards other drivers – explain
4. His life diminished the power of what he said. Some things we not real in his life. This isn't about looking for perfection, but it is about consistency. Has God's power changed our lives and is He still changing them?
5. Our words and our lives are on display. God's power is available for both!

Simple steps

- Invite people to church
- Be aware that others are watching you (This is always on my mind) What is your life saying about the reality of Jesus in you? (last weekend at Town Center)
- Let God's power change your life (This makes you a witness!)

III. Engage Our Spiritual Enemy

Eph. 6:10-11 "A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil." (NLT)

A. God's power is available to confront demonic activity

1. Since we now belong to God's Kingdom, we must be aware that we have an enemy that belongs to the other kingdom. These kingdoms are in conflict with one another. We are part of this battle. God's power is available for the conflict.
2. Some of you may be thinking...I don't want to be part of it. Sorry, we don't have this option. Therefore, we can either learn to confront the enemy in the power of God or be powerless and become prisoners.
3. There are a lot of prisoners; even believers (prisoners to drugs / alcohol / porn / bitterness / materialism / greed / broken relationships / hopelessness. The enemy is a master at holding people as captives.
4. As followers of Christ, we don't have to live in fear of the enemy. WHY?

I John 4:4 "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." (NIV) We have more power in Christ!

5. Confronting demonic activity is not going around looking for it. It is simply following Jesus in this life and learning to stand strong in His power when we encounter it.
6. There have been times when Satan has gone after me and this church. How do I know? Some circumstances are just life. Some are intentional and strategic. I believe the more we walk with the Lord the more discernment He gives us in this area so that we know what is going on.
7. What do we do? Three R's – Rebuke / Remain / Receive – Rebuke the devil / Remain on the course / Receive God's resources for the struggle.

B. God's power is available to destroy strongholds and advance His Kingdom
II Cor. 10:4 "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." (NIV)

1. There is the normal demonic activity we will experience in this life, then there are demonic strongholds. What's a stronghold? A demonic stronghold is an entrenched, often repeated, habitual attitude or behavior that hinders the progress of the Kingdom of God in a person or even a community.
2. In a family it could be generations of drug and alcohol addiction / generations of abuse / bitterness / divorce / where there is a long history there may be a stronghold.
3. Strongholds exist in communities as well. If there are repeated, habitual characteristics of a community that have existed for years, there is a stronghold. Does Molalla have strongholds? Yes!
4. This is also why God has placed Foothills here...to identify and demolish strongholds so the Kingdom of God is a reality in Molalla. God's power is available for this!
5. If we choose to engage at this level God promises that His power is available to demolish whatever is set up against the Kingdom of God in this town or your life!

Simple steps

- Be aware of the spiritual battle
- Practice the 3 R's – Rebuke / Remain / Receive
- Learn to use the weapon of prayer (Prayer event coming up – Nov 24th)

IV. Choose To Live By Faith

- Summarize story

Matt. 17:19-20 "Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast out that demon?" You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible." (NLT)

A. The measure of our faith determines the measure of our power

1. I have always had a hard time wrapping my mind around Jesus' response to His disciples. How could they not have enough faith? They walked with Jesus every day / saw His miracles and even did miracles themselves!
2. I may not be able to answer my questions but it doesn't change the fact of what Jesus said. Our lack of faith hinders our experience with the power of God.
3. So let's get honest. How much of what we pray for do we pray never expect God to answer? OR if He did we'd be surprised? Or we pray wondering if He really hears / listens / or cares?
4. How much of our relationship with God is rooted in a lack of faith? Forget about moving mountains...how about faith for a job? For a relationship? For our needs and finances? How about the \$200K we need for the building remodel?

5. Just think about how we talk about circumstances? Is there any “faith talk” or is it all focused on what we can merely see with our eyes? How much of God’s power are we literally cutting ourselves off from because of our unbelief?
- Wouldn’t it be great to increase our faith? HOW?

B. Growing our faith requires obedience despite what we see

- Summarize story

Matt. 14:30-32 “But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?” When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped.” (NLT)

1. Jesus may have pointed out Peter’s lack of faith but in my mind, he is a hero of faith. WHY? He’s the only other guy in history besides Jesus who walked on water. Let me know if you want to try this!
2. What Peter had to do was ignore the circumstances and believe what Jesus said. As long as his focus was on Jesus he was fine. As soon as the wind and waves became bigger than Jesus he sank. This is why Jesus said to Peter; “Why did you doubt me?”
3. It wasn’t faith in walking on water that empowered him. It was his faith in Jesus and His power. His lack of faith was a relational issue! That’s why he sank!
4. This is a great lesson for us. If we want to see our faith grow and the power of God be experienced in our life we must choose to trust and follow Jesus regardless of the circumstances. We will either trust the circumstances or trust Jesus. Faith and power are relational issues.
5. When we choose to follow what Jesus says regardless of circumstances we will experience His power and our faith grows.
6. Some of you want your faith to grow but you are still stuck in the boat. Jesus is asking you to trust Him and get out of the boat and you’re so focused on the wind and waves you refuse to. This is why you have no power / no faith.
7. If you want your faith to grow and God’s power to be real, you must get out of the boat!

Simple steps:

- Stop your faithless talking (Become more aware of how you talk – negative / faithless)
- Get your eyes off the wind and waves and on to Jesus (Utilize his word – promises)
- Get out of the boat despite the storm. (Where is He asking you to follow Him despite the circumstances. Refuse to have circumstantial obedience.

It is the heart of God that we not only are people who experience His presence, but also people who demonstrate His power in our lives. Let’s become those people!

1. Let’s live according to His Kingdom

2. Let's embrace our role as witnesses
3. Let's be willing to engage our spiritual enemy
4. Let's choose to live by faith.

If we will, then I believe this verse will be our testimony

Eph. 3:20 "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us," (NIV)