

Monday, February 23, 2009

In modern society we are surrounded by all types of "POWER", and recently have once again been reminded of artificial, drug generated strength in athletes, despite their denials. That is not the God power we study this week

In what situations in life do you feel the need for "supernatural power"? Strained relationships / contentment in a global economic turmoil / battle with the enemy of your soul, Satan, who is scheming your demise / strength to prevail in all situations, to accomplish the mission for which God has made you?? This week let's dig into the magnificent mystery of God's empowerment of people! It's found throughout history . . . but is it you?

Every great Bible hero you can think of likely was empowered by God to BE and DO what He called them to, right? Moses, Abraham, Joseph, Samuel, Hezekiah, David and the NT heroes too. Now, what about you . . . where does your battle rage most fiercely? Where are you in most need of God's empowerment?

Do you agree with Gabriel's statement to Mary (Luke 1:37) that nothing is impossible with God? What great Bible accounts make that real for you? How about Exodus 16 and 40 years of daily manna for 2 million people, or water from solid rock in Ex. 17? Do you agree every character trait of God is compounded in its value with HIS unlimited power? (Love, Forgiveness, Mercy, etc.)

Do you agree God has a mission in life for you? Something for which He has designed you, and to which He'd like to call you if you'll hear Him and respond in obedience? Do you see that as the Biblical pattern in many people? Acts 1:8 is that famous "power promise" Jesus made, and do you agree He made it for you too? Yes, it's the resident Holy Spirit who comes into you at Salvation, but more, God will anoint you with special Holy Spirit power when needed to accomplish the mission He entrusts to you! Read Judges 6, the story of Gideon. What do you see?

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

One of our theme verses, Exodus 9:16, involves a man who was miraculously empowered by God in leadership for 40 years (Moses). By my calculation, he went up Mt. Sinai at least eight times to meet with God, twice staying 40 days and nights in the powerful presence of God. Ex. 24 & 34 are two chapters I urge you to read today. When Moses came down after the first meeting (Ex. 31), he was empowered by God to deal with the Golden Calf rebellion. The second time (Ex. 34), note the change in his appearance (vs. 29). Read both chapters and ask God to show you what such closeness with Him might mean for you!

Moses and many other God selected leaders, have faced the challenge of prevailing over the long haul in the face of great opposition. I celebrate 1 John 4:4 "*greater is He (the Spirit of God) that is in you, than he (Satan) that is in the world*". Note 1 John 5:19 tells us God has allowed the whole world to be under the strong influence of Satan. That was permitted in response to Adam and Eve's choice to turn away from God present here with them, and invite Satan's presence (Exodus 3).

If you read carefully Romans 8:1-17, you'll see a powerful explanation of the work of God when He places His Holy Spirit within you and how the Holy Spirit should transform your mind and heart, awakening in you the strong sense of 1 John 4:4 empowerment!! Do you have this? Please read these 17 verses very carefully and make some personal notes as to how you see these power concepts evident in your life . . . and if you see areas of weakness, or non-evidence, I urge you to spend some time talking with God about that, asking Him to show you why! Note also, Galatians 5:16-23 and Ephesians 4:17-32 and Colossians 3:1-17. These are further tangible evidences that you should see in your life, IF you are living empowered!

Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Having just returned from Haiti, the reality of the Spiritual battle with the dark kingdom of Satan is fresh on my heart and mind, of course (I am writing this within hours of getting off the plane).

Let's dig into Ephesians 6:10-18 in the next three days. Do you see God's desire that you be "empowered", 'strong in the Lord and in His mighty power'? Consider Ephesians 1:17-22 or Colossians 2:8-15! Do you see key statements about God's power available to you? Watch the warning in Col. 2:8 . . . the counter to that is the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2 and Romans 8:5-9). Do you think like Jesus? How? When? Why not?

Notice the truth about Jesus being the fullness of God (Col. 2:9) and that He is head over every power and authority! Note those phrases are used in many places in Paul's writings to describe the demonic world (Col. 1:16; Eph. 6:12). Note please Jesus "disarmed" those powers through His victory on the cross . . . remember Jesus took upon Him the full wrath of God for the sins of mankind AND the full hatred Satan has for God, when He hung on the cross paying the full redemption price! Despite his best efforts Satan did not kill Jesus that day . . . Jesus gave up His life as a full sacrifice (John 10:14-18 and Heb. 12:1,2). When Jesus came out of the tomb, resurrected, He defeated Satan, sin and death once and for all! (Heb. 1:1-4; 7:24,25; 9&10).

Celebrate this my friends, for it is the foundation of your ability to stand strong in Christ in the face of all efforts of the dark kingdom to attack you. That's why it is so crucial that your stand is rooted in TRUTH (Eph. 6:14) because Satan's native language is lies (John 8:44) and the dark kingdom will always attack God's truth . . . by outright rejection, by distortion, by denial, by doubt or any other means of drawing you to discount God's truth. It is essential you know and own God's truth. Own Psalm 119!

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Our soldiers in Iraq and policemen in high crime inner city areas wear bullet proof vests. Why? Our "vital organs" need priority protection, right? Ephesians 6:10-18 refers to a "breastplate of righteousness". 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 5 speak of sinful people experiencing a mysterious transformation, as God applies His holiness to us when we trust Jesus Christ's atonement sacrifice to be sufficient to pay our sin debt. In Romans, Paul calls it "justification", a legal declaration by God that He will find us totally "not guilty" of any sin that has been brought under the blood of Christ! Note this carefully . . . the demonic world MUST submit to the authority of the power of the shed blood of Christ for that is what God accepted as payment in full for the sin of repentant humans . . . but NOT the sin of angelic rebellion. This is the reason Satan hates you and me so much . . . we are offered justification and God's holiness. They are not! Their condemnation is sure and secure (Rev. 21). Forgiven sinners are assured that we are "no longer condemned" for we are "in Christ" (Romans 8:1). Use that to reject the efforts of Satan to discourage you! Wear your badge of justification proudly. It cost Jesus His blood! You are HOLY, a 'saint'!

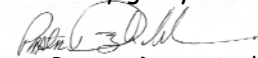
Do you notice Eph. 6:15 and "feet fitted with the Gospel of peace"? Romans 1:16 and 1 Timothy 1:15 tell us nothing is more powerful in the universe than the Gospel of Jesus Christ! This is what reconciles (brings us back into relationship) repentant humans with Holy God! Consider Colossians 1:21 . . . from enemy to friend! 'Fitted feet' suggests we can move to defend ourselves against the schemes and attacks of Satan. Do you remember the Sonny Liston vs Cassius Clay (Mohammed Ali) boxing title fight of four decades ago? No one had ever seen someone "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee"! That's a picture of feet fitted with the Gospel, as you defend yourself against Satan's accusations and as you bring the freeing Gospel to others, near and far! Every rescued person is another great victory for Jesus and defeat for Satan's dark kingdom. You are a powerful force as you live in your authority in the Gospel!!

Friday, February 27, 2009

We're looking this week at the magnificent mystery of living empowered by God! Ephesians 6:10-18 proclaims a dangerous truth, that if ignored, will lull you into great vulnerability. Remember 1 Cor. 10:13? Note please, you WILL face temptation, the devil's schemes and even a "prowling lion" seeking to destroy you! The armor of God is His provided weaponry of defense. The "Shield of Faith" calls us to celebrate the power of Hebrews 11, and the theme found throughout the Bible that those with a strong faith in Christ will find themselves empowered in the battle! True faith is rooted in God's reliability, God's sovereignty, God's faithfulness. Satan loves to attack at our point of frail faith. That's why I urge you to journal, or collect miracle debris . . . to remember! It's why reading the accounts of other Christians who have lived with great faith is so significant. Do you have someone in your life who builds your faith in God? Note Romans 4:18-25 and 5:4,5. What do they tell you about life struggles and faith? What has been your greatest faith builder in recent months?

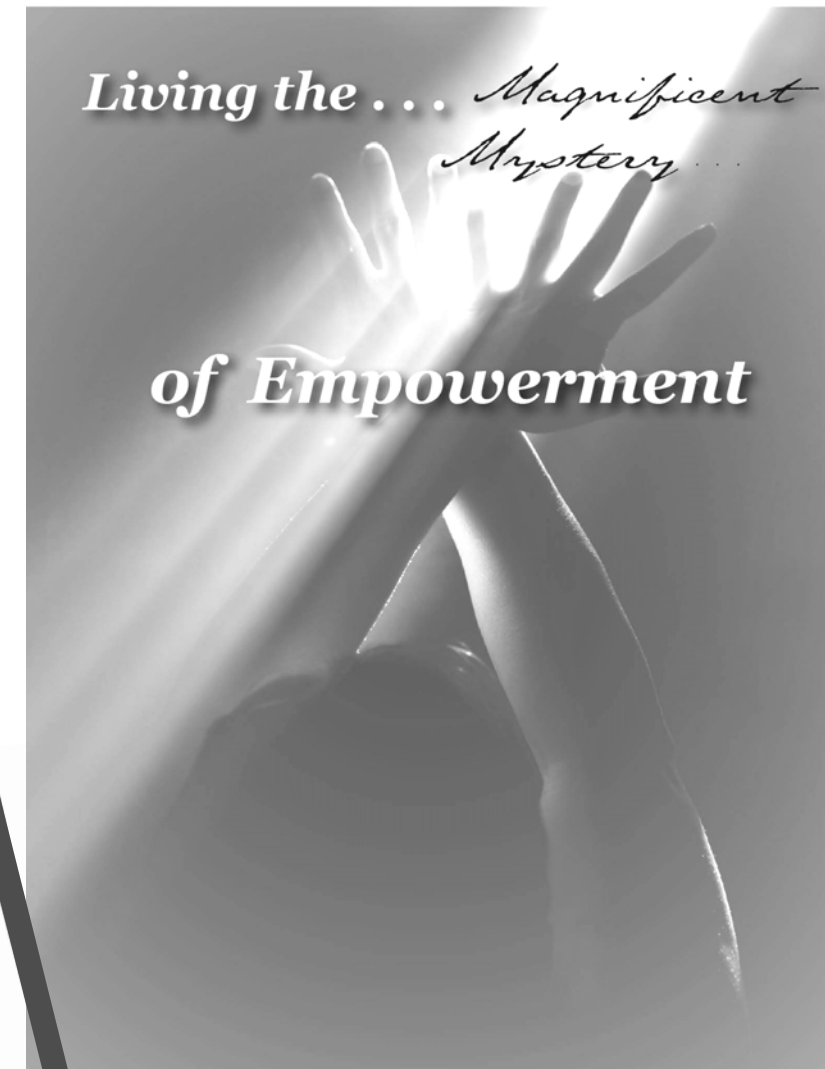
The "Helmet of Salvation" protects your mind against doubt that God may renounce your redemption. John 6:37-40 and 10:27-30 promise that your salvation is eternally secure, just as Satan's condemnation is unchangeable! God invites us to dig deeply into the gold mine of understanding your salvation (Eph. 1). Do you?

The "sword of the Spirit" is your offensive weapon for hand to hand combat with the dark forces that battle in untruth. It is vital that you keep filling your mind and heart with God's truth so you can wield this sword of truth anytime, anyplace against any dark attack. I urge you, learn one new spiritual truth DAILY! Satan MUST submit to God's truth! Finally, note the power of prayer in Eph. 6:18, 19. Empowered by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26, 27) prayer is nothing short of miraculous! It should be as normal as breathing for you. Your level of comfort and proficiency with prayer is a direct measurement of the maturity of your relationship with Jesus Christ! I urge you . . . don't let ANY day go by without developing your prayer character!



Pastor Doug Anderson

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Highway 50 & Harris Road
P.O. Box 1200 • Williams Bay, WI 53191
(262) 245-6294
www.calvarycommunity.net