

Why All Believers Must Learn to Live in This Reality

For part one of this two-part article, [click here](#).

The apostle Paul discusses power with the Ephesians, the church his spiritual son, Timothy, was overseeing:

“And [so that you can know and understand] what is the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power (*dunamis*) in and for us who believe, as demonstrated in the working of His mighty strength (*kratōs*)” (Eph. 1:19, AMPC).

For Paul, the greatest display of God’s power, or that the world has ever seen, is confirmed through the resurrection of Christ (Eph. 1:20), and Jesus, who is now enthroned—on the basis of God’s power—over all of the universe.

Therefore, at the center of this prayer for the Ephesians in chapter 1, Paul desires that they would realize and know God’s Resurrection power that is available for their daily use.

“Mighty strength” in this verse comes from the Greek “κράτος (*kratōs*), *krat'-os*; perh. a prim. word; *vigor* [“great”] (lit. or fig.):—dominion, might [-ily], power, strength.”

The word especially signifies exerted strength and power demonstrated in a reigning authority. It primarily refers to God’s kingdom authority, dominion and majesty. It is God’s dominion, manifested power and strength. *Kratos* is also used in Ephesians 3:20 and 6:10.

Too many Christians today, as well as in Paul’s day, are unaware this power is there and available. We are the dwelling place of God, the very temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16), We must learn to live from this reality!

It takes fresh revelation and wisdom to observe God's power. The very fact that so many say they "don't see God's power" at work is even more reason this prayer is needed—the church must see what is occurring now.

Our confidence is in Christ, in His power and dominion. As we recognize our authority as a believer and begin to walk in the fullness of Christ, we impact our world. It is about surrender and consecration to the Lord.

Love

Love is from the Greek ἀγάπη, (*agapē*) "love: esp. brotherly love, charity; the love of God for man and of man for God." It can also mean "love feast."

Paul writes the Ephesians, "I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints" (Eph. 1:15, NKJV).

Notice faith and love in this verse; they are pillars to Christian character and to walking in His power. Faith and love had grown to such a point in the Ephesian church that they were being discussed abroad. There was a great revival and power in that city (see Acts 19), but it was their faith and love that were being discussed.

Paul told the Galatians "but faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6b). Faith needs love to function properly—love fuels faith! Faith working through love overcomes fear and timidity.

As a pastor, I desire a church united, walking in the surpassing greatness of His power. It begins with faith and love. Honor toward each other and to everyone.

Paul wrote Timothy earlier, "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith" (1 Tim. 1:5, NASB).

To walk in His power begins here, with love, purity and sincere faith. The church would be transformed if the body of

Christ resolved to keep this primary goal of growing in faith and love.

A worthy goal is for others to hear of the great things God is doing in our midst as a church; however, we must be known for the right reasons—and it starts with faith and love. We should be known for deeds of love and acts of faith.

Disciplined or Sound Mind

Self-discipline (or sound mind) is from the Greek σωφρονισμός (*sōphronismos*) and means “exercise of prudence, moderation, self-discipline, prudence.” In this verse, the intent is that the Spirit functions in such a way that Christians learn to exercise prudence. To exercise prudence means to use wisdom.

Paul says God gives us self-discipline, or the exercise of prudence or wisdom. Sometimes we say, “Well, I’m not very disciplined!” That’s an ungodly belief! The Spirit empowers us to function in God’s love, power, discipline and wisdom.

An important aspect to possessing wellness of soul is to embrace a lifestyle that is disciplined, operating in prudence and wisdom. In other words, we participate with the Holy Spirit in spiritual disciplines as well as being disciplined in all areas of life. We are good stewards of our time, treasure and talents. We take care of our bodies and minds. We choose to live healthy lifestyles, getting proper rest, nutrition and exercise.

When I was a young Christian, I began to focus more on spiritual disciplines than in maintaining a healthy lifestyle complete with exercise.

“For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable in all things, holding promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Tim. 4:8, MEV).

I read Paul’s instruction to Timothy as “exercise was bad!”

No, Paul is trying to give Timothy, and us, proper balance—both are needed. Making positive lifestyle changes, eating healthy, exercising routinely, refusing negative thinking and so forth all begin with proper thinking and attitude. Paul encouraged the Philippians:

“From now on, brothers and sisters, if anything is excellent and if anything is admirable, focus your thoughts on these things: all that is true, all that is holy, all that is just, all that is pure, all that is lovely, and all that is worthy of praise. Practice these things: whatever you learned, received, heard, or saw in us. The God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:8-9, CEB).

As we choose to keep our minds uncluttered and focus on what is pure, true and admirable as Paul describes in Philippians 4:8-9, we put into practice self-disciplined thinking that will affect our behavior and keep us in wellness of soul!
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