

Treasures from Our Heritage: God Empowers Us
The Power of God Living Within Us: God Gives Us Possibilities
Eph. 1:19; 3:7-20
By Bob Young

Introduction

What do you think of when you think of potential? Two biblical possibilities, one from the OT and one from the NT are Samson and the parable of the talents.

In Eph. 1, Paul writes, “we will all come to know the immeasurable greatness of God’s power that lives in us by faith.” Immeasurable—you cannot measure it because God’s power is so vast. Greatness—the word is giganticness. We humans do not know the immeasurable greatness of God’s power that is in us. Power—because that is today’s sermon.

In Eph. 3, Paul talks about God’s great power that is within us. We have “the power to grasp the length and width, and height and depth of the love of God for us.” This is the power to grasp, know or comprehend the vastness of God’s love for us. We then are able to do far more than we think, imagine or ask. God’s power does more with our lives than we can ever think, imagine or ask.

What have you dreamed that is unbelievable? Only with dreams in mind can we hear the Word; he wants us to know this immeasurable power of God that lives inside us who believe. He wants us to know about what we do not fully comprehend, that we do not know this enormous power inside us. Paul wants us to have the power/ability to grasp the length and width, the height and depth of the love of God. Paul wants us to know that God’s power within us can do more with our lives than we can ever imagine, think or ask. That means we do not get it; we do not grasp the power within.

Illustration

Ollie the Oyster was swimming along one day in the ocean and he was having a wonderful time, with the sun out and weather warm. He was cruising along at the bottom of the ocean happily and joyfully when suddenly, a piece of sand, a piece of ocean grit, got into his skin. Oh, what pain. That piece of sand hurt! Ollie didn’t necessarily do anything wrong to get that sand in his life; it just happened. But oh, how it hurt! And so Ollie the Oyster cried. How he cried! He cried and cried and cried, tears and tears and tears, so much so that the ocean slowly rose over the days, weeks and months and years. After he had cried for two or three years, Ollie stopped and...and...the sand was still there, causing him pain. What to do? Ollie the Oyster started to cuss. He used every cuss word that he learned in grade school and junior high school. He cussed and cussed and cussed, so much so that a plume of blue smoke came up from the ocean where he lived. When Ollie the Oyster was finished cussing, he stopped...and...and...the sand was still there in his side, causing him immense pain. So Ollie the Oyster started to pretend. He would pretend that the piece of sand was not in his side. He pretended and pretended and pretended. He repressed and repressed and repressed. When after all those months and years of repression had passed, he woke up to reality enough to realize the sand was still there, causing him pain. What to do? And slowly, ever so slowly, it began to dawn on Ollie the Oyster. Slowly he remembered that he had a special power within, and so he grunted and groaned and groveled and slowly an excretion of goeey oil came out and surrounded the piece of sand, insulating the sand and the pain went away. What a miracle! The pain was gone. And ever so slowly, over time, that goeey substance began to harden around the grain of sand, and in time, it became a pearl. Yes, a pearl, for that is the way that pearls are made.

The story of Ollie the Oyster is true for many today. We are trying to escape the sand in our lives, the painful and piercing grains of sand which cause so many tears and heartaches. We cry and the pain is still there. We cuss and the pain is still there. We repress and the pain is still there. We try all the tricks and none of them work. We Christians, like the oyster, have a miraculous power within us. That Inner power goes to work and slowly the pain is transformed into a pearl, the piercing problem

is transformed into a healing. Many friends and acquaintances have developed pearl earrings and pearl necklaces and pearl bracelets. Many have tapped into this Inner Spiritual Power and now they have jewels, valuable jewels in their possession.

With God's power, we have the power to turn problems into victories

A lot of people have turned the pain in their lives into jewels

Maurice and Marie Hall, Jerry and Fern Hill, "I will be a pivot person," a hinge person

With God's power we can do what we could not otherwise do, and understand what we could not otherwise understand

We as human beings consist of three parts: mind, body and spirit. We use very little of our cranial capacity; we use only about six percent of our brains. What would happen if we learned to use nine or ten percent of our brain power? What would we accomplish?

We humans have bodies; muscles, skin, tissues and bones. We do not realize the wonderful capacities of the human body; we use very little of our body potential. Cirque de Sol is a gymnastics group from Montreal, Canada, and the human body does all kinds of things the human body cannot do. People climb ropes with their hands and not legs, with their bodies stretched straight out from the ropes, and their muscular arms and bodies climbed the ropes perpendicular to those ropes. How could the human body do such a thing? A juggler with the greatest eye-hand coordination can juggle seven balls so fast that the balls are a blur. We humans barely tap the potential within the body.

With God's power, we can win spiritual victories

The third part of the human being is spirit. Human beings consist of mind, body and spirit. We do not realize the immense, enormous potential of the human spirit when God lives in our spirits. The greatness of the human being comes, not from mind or body, but from the spirit. The greatest human beings have great spirits inside of them, enlarged and expanded by the indwelling of the Spirit of God. That is where human greatness is found. There is an inner spiritual power within us that we do not use.

What is this spiritual power within us? The Bible says the spiritual power is God working in us. The Bible gives us core values, solid principles, a moral and spiritual compass. The power inside us is more than values, principles and compass. The power is God's work. Paul writes: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; not I but Christ who lives in me." Christ lives in us; not only the principles and values of Christ. Inside us is the power of God, not simply good evangelism principles. Christ lives in us. Paul, Luke and John experienced this inner Power of God living inside of them, and they tell us that we too can experience and know and grasp the immeasurable greatness of God's power inside of us, whereby we can do much more than we ever imagined, thought or asked.

Conclusion

There are at least three consequences of God's inner power: (1) the power to dream; (2) the power to accomplish the dream—a lot of people dream, but God gives the power to accomplish; (3) the power to dream and act amidst the burdens in life; (4) the power to do far more than you thought, imagined or asked. These things: the power to dream, the power to accomplish the dream, the power to carry burdens, and the power do more with your life than you ever imagined, I have experienced. [Give personal examples]

It is not mind; it is not body; it is the Spirit of God living in his people. It is incredible what he is doing, far more than we ever imagine, think or ask for.