

### Introduction:

- Most of the book of Ephesians is a prayer. In Chapter 1:19 Paul adds another topic to his prayer for the church in Ephesus. That prayer is that we would understand God's power for us who believe in Him.
- *"I also pray that you will understand the **incredible greatness of God's power** for us who believe him. This is the same **mighty power** that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things **for the benefit of the church**. And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself."* (Ephesians 1:19-23, NLT)
- Note: we are to understand the power, might, strength exerted by God to raise Jesus from the dead and how that applies to us. The power that Paul is about to describe is for us/the church. He wants us aware of what is ours and that it is for us to know and live. Three points: The raising of Jesus, the seating of Jesus, reigning with Jesus.

### I. The Raising Of Jesus

- A. Understanding power. The power did two things-raised and seated Jesus. Paul is really excited in verse 19-23 So lets look at some words he uses for power. Four words for power in two verses. I think he is trying to make a point. God's power goes beyond the four words used to describe it...and it is for us.
  1. Dunamyos-dunamis vs. 19-Power! To be able. One who has ability or power.
    - a) As God's essence is power, endowment with power is linked to the gift of the Spirit, and this gift confers on Christ his authority (*exousía*)—an authority which he has the power (*dýmamis*) to exercise in expelling demons or healing the sick (cf. Lk. 5:17; 6:19; 8:46) Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (p. 189). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
    - b) Three things to remember here: No magic attached to these powers. They are done by the Word. They require faith to activate or to release.
    - c) Hyperballo Mega - Gk. For surpassing (Over abounding) mega power!
  2. ischus –mighty, inherent ability -- whether exercised or not; strength possessed
  3. Kratos - strength. Vs 19. This is the strength that one has or possesses. It is never used of humans, only God, or Satan. And this power of God is called mighty strong strength!
  4. energia - vs. 20 NKJV 'he worked' - working power or power in action.
- B. That power of God made the resurrection possible!
  1. The first example of the incomparably great power is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. How much power did that take? No one was visibly there to do that or see it other than Father. The resurrection power was already at work in the sinless Christ. So much so, that death could not keep Him down. At the third day, why the third day? Because the Word said third day!
    - a) Lazarus. Jesus' resurrection was very different from Lazarus being raised from the dead - Lazarus' raising was temporary, he still would have to die a second time. In

- the resurrection of Jesus, we have an eternal life, a resurrected body, a deliverance from the permanence and hopelessness of death!
- b) The power of God which raised Christ Jesus from the dead was a victory - it earned a permanent hope in a new order, it provided a way back into relationship with God which gives us hope for eternity. All because God raised Jesus from the dead! The power that is for us raised Jesus from the dead.
- C. Paul's assertion is that this same power is for us!
1. Jesus was both raised from the dead and ascended.
  2. And he ascended. The ascension was the continuing journey of His exaltation.
    - a) Philippians 2:9 *Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name*, NKJV
    - b) Exalt-Gr. To lift up to the highest power/authority; to raise to supreme majesty. Thayers.
      - (1) To be exalted/raised up is different than resurrection.
      - (2) The antithesis/opposite of exaltation is "humiliation"
    - c) Jesus had been fully humiliated beginning with his birth and climaxing in His death.
    - d) To be resurrected is something to celebrate! But being resurrected is not being restored to that which He left. It was the start of the return of the King!
    - e) The ascension was Jesus' victory parade. He led captivity captive! Eph 4:8.
    - f) The work of Jesus is not completed until He is seated at the right hand of God. The Ascension marks the exaltation of Jesus in taking back all that He humbly gave to redeem us.

## II. The Seating of Jesus

- A. Paul not only talks about the power that raised Jesus but He now declares that power that seated Jesus in the place of honor at God's right hand. And I remind us that in vs 19 he states that this power is for us who believe.
- B. What does it mean to be seated? The word literally means to sit but is most often used with rulers, senators, kings, etc.
  1. In the US Supreme Court there is a time in which the court is referred to as being in 'session'. It is a time in which the supreme authority of the judicial branch of our government meets to consider cases before them. They are in 'session' or are seated in actively exercising their authority.
  2. In theology this is called the Session/seating of Christ-After the ascension comes the session of Christ. It is literally the seating of Jesus, once again, at the right hand of the father.
    - a) Webster's 1828: A sitting or being placed; as the ascension of Christ and his session at the right hand of God.
    - b) Merriam's Dictionary: the period between the first meeting of a legislative or judicial body and the prorogation or final adjournment. The power of God accomplished this!
  3. The seating is the present tense/current activity of the exalted Lord Jesus. It is where Jesus is now! Eph. 4 declares that Jesus ascended (past tense). The apostle's creed declares He has ascended (past tense). But He sits (present tense) at the Fathers

right hand. Therefore the seating of Christ is very important to us. He now has authority over all things!

- C. Again I remind of Paul's words in 1:19 this is *"God's power for us who believe."* But it is critical for us in understanding what is happening now – who is in control – what Jesus' role is and what this means for us. The remaining verses elaborate on this idea of the reign of Christ, and spell out for us what it means that Jesus has been exalted.
1. I love how the excitement of the power of God points directly to Jesus. Think of all Paul had seen and done in his ministry – he had seen people healed in miraculous ways, he had been shipwrecked and delivered from the water and from the bite of a poisonous snake, he had cast out demons. One time, Paul preached "on and on", a young man fell asleep and fell out a window to his death, and Paul raised him from the dead. Acts 19:11-12 tells us that while Paul was in Ephesus, "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them." But here, when He gets caught up in describing the power of God, what does he talk about? Does he list all those miracles? No, he talks about Jesus. All those miracle pale in comparison to Jesus
  2. With Paul, everything is focussed on Christ. It leads to Christ, it exalts Christ, it points people to Christ. That is the point of the power of God – to exalt Christ and lift Him up and to recognize Jesus as the ruler over all...and that power is for us who believe.

### III. Reigning With Jesus

- A. Jesus reigning in heaven is the topic of vss. 21-22. This is where we see the power of God, through the reign Jesus Christ over all things.
- B. Power over all Rulers on earth or in heaven. [ruler, authority, power, leader, anything else.]
  1. Ephesus was filled with other Gods. We know that there was a huge amount of magic practiced at Ephesus. It was home to the temple of Diana/Artimus – one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, and a lot of spiritual rituals and sorcery and divination.
  2. This had to be encouraging to the church/the believers that Jesus was above all of this rule and authority of these false Gods. Not just over them, but *"far above"*. We have no reason to fear them because Jesus is far above them in power and in rule!
  3. "When Jesus Christ truly takes charge of our minds, bringing our every thought captive to Him, we become spiritually invincible. We operate with super-natural power. We walk under God's complete control." "The Renewed Mind." Christenson
- C. Power to be the Head of the Church
  1. God has put all things under his feet. This echoes vs 10. *"And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth."* (Ephesians 1:10, NLT)
  2. Heb 2:8-9 is the same message [not from NLT]: everything is under His feet. Everything is subject to him. And I like what Paul adds vs 8, *"Yet we do not see all things put under Him..."* Why not? Because we don't have the same perspective God does – we can't see 2 weeks or 2 months or 20 years down the road. But we can believe that God does. We can believe that God has everything under control, that God knows what He is doing and that it is for our good, that Jesus is reigning over everything.

- a) I have faith. I believe God is in control. I trust Him.
- b) Like I said last week. "The resurrection takes me back to the future." Back to the garden where no one dies.
3. This faith I have does not mean that I sit idly by and simply resign myself to everything that comes along and just accepts whatever happens in life without fighting it and struggling against it with all my might. On the contrary, knowing that God is in control, that Jesus reigns, gives me the courage and strength to fight against all that is wrong and that causes suffering. **This power is for us who believe.**
- D. Power for the Church. Christ is head over everything for the benefit of the church of which Christ is the head and we are the body.
  1. This is an incredibly high view of the church – and that is how God sees it. We, who are the church, are the purpose of Jesus' reign. Jesus reign is for us, the church. And we, who are the church, are filled with the fullness of Christ.
  2. That is our identity, who we are – filled with the fullness of Christ! I don't think that most of us have as high a view of church as God does according to this verse. What would our church look like if each of us believed and lived the fact that we, the church – the body of Christ, are filled with all the fullness of Christ? What would that look like – what would it feel like – what would our priorities be?
- E. Power for us. Remember we started with this "*incomparably great power for us who believe.*"
  1. Scripture clearly teaches that when we are open to God, letting Him be in control, the result will be the fullest life possible. Maybe it will be strange – may it will be miraculous – maybe it will be "supernatural". Maybe someone will think you and I are fools. Or maybe we will just live lives of quiet yet powerful obedience until the end of our lives. But regardless, it will be full. It will be powerful. Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life, and have it to the full." (Jn 10:10). Acts 1:8 says we will receive power to be witnesses for Christ. Paul taught that the result of a spirit-controlled life is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Gal. 5:22).
  2. The power of God in Christ is to bring us to Christ, to change our lives and make us more like Jesus. I believe, as strongly as I possibly can, that the purpose of the power of God is to change lives in supernatural ways.
  3. That power is also to catch the attention of other and point them to Christ. That is why the power produces '*signs and wonders.*' The power of God is attractive.

### Conclusion:

- The power of God did two incredible things: It raised Jesus from the dead and it seated him at the right hand of the Father, over all things.
- The power of God that did that **is for us** who believe.
  - So that we live with the hope of being raise too.
  - So that we live with the power, authority, energy, to live holy/be conformed to His image.
  - So that we live with the reality of the supernatural signs and wonders following us.
- Invitation to other to receive Christ that you too may live with the hope of eternal life.