

The Spirit of the Resurrection

Over the past few weeks we have been examining the multi-faceted ministry of the Holy Spirit. ***“Each of you should use whatever spiritual gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace, in its various and diverse forms”*** (1 Peter 4:10). Being Easter Sunday I wanted to stay on the subject of the Holy Spirit and look at His role in the **Resurrection of Jesus Christ**. Now, there is no question in my mind about this: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the standard of power in the New Testament.

What is there after that? ... It is the miracle of all miracles! The proof, the measure of God's power in the New Testament, is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The standard of God's power in the Old Testament was the deliverance of the people of Israel through the Red Sea which brought them finally into the land of promise. In the Old Testament the primary miracle is the **raising of a dead nation**. They were in captivity in Egypt, which is a type of the world, and God delivered them. They were under the dominion of Pharaoh, which is a type of the devil, and as the Word of God says, ***“God called them with a strong hand. He delivered them with a strong hand and an stretched out arm.”*** However, I don't think this put any strain on God to rescue the Israelites, or in fact, to create the world. He just did it! Nothing is ever a strain on God. He just stretches out His hand or speaks the Word and it happens. But I am going to suggest to you that in one sense it put a strain on God to raise Jesus from the dead. It must have been the greatest battle ever fought - with the greatest manifestation of God's **mighty power**.

We get a glimpse of this in Ephesians 1:19-20, ***“... What is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places”*** There is an awful lot of ‘energy’ mentioned here! It says: ***“the exceeding greatness.”*** Notice, there are measures of God's power. Until this occasion, God never needed to exert much power. But it clearly states; ***“the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.”*** This was resurrection power at work - which is the working of the Holy Spirit!

“We were buried with Him (Jesus) through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in new-ness of life” (Romans 6:4). The death and resurrection of Jesus are definitely the greatest events in history. For millions of Christians remembering these events continues to be an vital part of every day life. **Resurrection power** is promised to every believer in Christ, and God has given you the ability to experience this through His **Holy Spirit**. However, there is a process that you must go through - you must empty yourself of ‘self’ in order to receive more of Him (His life). This process of ‘emptying’ and ‘cleansing’ yourself is a work of the **Holy Spirit**, which is only accomplished with your full cooperation.

The **resurrection power** of Jesus is given through the Holy Spirit. As we cooperate with Him, this power flows ‘in’ and ‘through’ us as a river of life - bringing constant renewal. ***“If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to (or quicken) your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you”*** (Romans 8:11). The same divine power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you - giving life to your mortal body. And where this “life” exists there can be no sickness or disease (one day there will be no death either).

As the **Spirit of the Resurrection**, the Holy Spirit is the power of the new creation. He is the Person who infuses (quickens) new life into that which has grown fragile, frail and is perishing. In *Ephesians 1.19-20* (which we read earlier), the apostle Paul identifies the “power” of the Holy Spirit that is at work in us, as a “power” manifesting the triumph of life over death itself. And the primary sign that validates this testimony is “resurrection power” at work in the human body - through healings, creative miracles and resuscitations (Acts 3.16). Furthermore, many of the exciting accounts of God's Spirit working in people are descriptions of the **resurrection power** - in which we see His mighty strength is at work in the human body. Wondrous signs and testimonies of miracles help to build **faith**.

Our faith in the **resurrection power** of God in Christ Jesus enables us to put to death anything that is limiting our ability to serve God. Whatever we give up, or put to death, God will resurrect into something far more beneficial. Many of you have developed “outer-skins” of self-protection. You are relying too much upon formerly successful ways that are no longer fruitful. In fact, they are hindering your spiritual walk. You must shed the old and trust that God will give you something much better. You must truly believe that His creativity and resourcefulness is sufficient to provide exactly what we need. You must cooperate with the **Holy Spirit** and allow Him to quicken “new life” into every dead situation.

By living under Christ's authority, and acknowledging His Lordship over all aspects of our lives, we relinquish our pride, our autonomy, our self-will. We know that His wisdom is vast, and that His mighty Spirit is within us, enabling us to live every minute as if we have been raised from the dead. What joy was set before Jesus, enabling Him to go the Cross knowing that He would be raised again to glory. So too, we can face our lives with inexpressible **joy**, knowing that Jesus has given us sufficient “grace” to overcome every trial, and, **resurrection power** to be raised from the various ‘deaths’ we may be experiencing.

The Resurrection is the most important aspect of the life of Jesus. Likewise, living in the power of His resurrection is the most important key to enjoying the **abundant life** Jesus promised. It is also a life marked by the **joy** that comes from being filled constantly with **resurrection power** and the Holy Spirit!