

THE UNDENIABLE LAWS OF LIFE – The Law of Power

God has placed many different types of *power* at your disposal, and there are various natural and supernatural forms of power operating right now on this earth. These include:

- * **The power of the wind [Acts 27:14]**. This power can have a serious effect on conditions both at sea and on land.
- * **The power of the human mind**. God created us and gave us a free will [Leviticus 19:5]. This free will is a very powerful force, and it can be directed toward good or evil [Genesis 11:6].
- * **The power of the supernatural**. This can be God's awesome power [Romans 1:16], or the destructive powers of darkness [Acts 26:18]. God's power is eternal [Romans 1:20].
- * **The power that's invested in the Name of Jesus [Acts 4:12]**. It has complete power in three realms; heaven, the earth and under the earth [Philippians 2:10].
- * **The power of God's infallible word [Hebrews 4:12]**. God's word is living and powerful and, it never returns void [Isaiah 55:11].
- * And finally, **the power of the Holy Spirit**. This power comes on, and lives in, believers [Acts 1:8, Acts 10:38].

All these powers are operating right now, and are accessible to you, but note, they don't necessarily have anything to do with authority - this is a different subject completely. Authority is a positional truth - power is an active / working truth. The kind of power that I would like us to focus on today is the unique power that you can develop yourself to be influential.

It comes from God but is placed within your reach - not in your grasp. You must do something deliberate and intentional to acquire it or use it. It is the power that God has made available in order for you to succeed in life. It is the power mentioned in **2 Timothy 1:7**, "***For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.***"

The Greek word means "manifest power or ability," and notice how it operates and performs alongside love and a *sound mind* [literally, *safe thinking*]. This verse implies a loving, practical and useful application of power! *It is a functional power that gravitates to the person who can use it most effectively to get the desired results.* According to the various uses of the Greek word for "sound mind," this *power* involves; *safe thinking, good judgement, disciplined thought patterns, and the ability to understand and make right decisions.*

Therefore, another way of looking at this law is - *it's the deliberate power or ability brought about by a sound mind.* For instance when you walk in love you consciously release the *power* for people to like and respect you. When you deliberately operate in an ability or skill that you have developed you acquire *power* or influence over people who are average or mediocre. What we are talking about is the power or ability to consciously influence people, money or resources. It exists in all human relationships and situations. It is an essential for the effective functioning of human life and society. And at its source, its neither good nor bad - it just is!

Power can be used in your life in two ways; (1) *to advance the interests of God's kingdom [Matt. 6:33]* or (2) *to advance the interests of self.* When power is used skilfully to advance the interests of God's Kingdom, it is a positive force, and it can improve the situation of all the people who are affected by it. On the other hand, if

power is abused, or used to advance the interests of the individual to the detriment of God's kingdom, then power becomes a negative and destructive force.

Personal power is invariably the "power to do." It is active power! *What have you purposed to do with the power you have?* Your power and influence will continue to grow as long as you demonstrate that you can deploy it more effectively than someone else. This is the Parable of the Talents in action [**Matthew 25:14-29**]. The servant with five deployed his power or ability more effectively than the servant with one and got 100% return.

Faithful use of your power or abilities sets the stage for further advancement and success. Like the good and faithful servant, when you demonstrate your ability to get results [with the power that you have], you will attract to yourself opportunities to expand your power [your influence]. But notice, you are held responsible for your God given abilities because they represent power.

At the end of the parable another aspect of the Law of Power is identified. **Verse 29, "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away."**

"For to everyone who has power and influence, more will be given." Personal power can be increased. But the only way to keep power once you have acquired it is to prove yourself to be the most efficient and effective at getting the right results by utilising that power. Otherwise, even what you have will be taken away! Those who desire to advance the interests of God's kingdom will be given the means. The more they do, the more they are enabled to do. Conversely, you lose what you do not use. Therefore, you must sensibly develop your power.

There are four major types of power you can develop. The first is **expert power** [as demonstrated in the Parable of the Talents]. When you use your gifts and abilities in an excellent fashion, you are then recognised as being very good at what you do, and you acquire greater power and influence. Especially in relation to people who are only average or mediocre. With *expert power* you attract the respect and attention of the important people in your sphere of influence. **Proverbs 22:29** says, **"Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before unknown men."** As you excel, you receive even more opportunities to do what you do well. Doors open for you.

The second type of power you can develop is **intimate power**. This form of power comes from being liked and respected by the people close to you. The more people like you, the greater the influence you will have on them. People you know intimately are more likely to listen to you and be open to your suggestions and ideas. This power is very helpful in keeping your relationships healthy, but it is also the most beneficial ability in the church. When you have gained the love and respect of your family, friends and work mates, you will have a more positive influence over them.

The third type of power is **functional power**. It is the power that goes with your function in family, work or church. Functional power includes the ability to reward or rebuke. And this power is separate from ability and personality. A mother isn't a mother because of her ability or personality! There are many unpleasant and incompetent people with functional power who use and abuse this power. Some people are given a title to describe their function and the title in itself becomes a stumbling block.

Your *functional power* should only be used to build, encourage and inspire others. It should never be used to inflict pain, breed fear or discouragement, or get people to do what they are uncomfortable with doing. Love edifies [1 **Corinthians 8:1**]. In a healthy community functional power places everyone on a level playing field because no one person's function is ever more important than anyone else's.

The forth, and perhaps the best and most desirable type of power is **ascribed power**. This is the power you have when the people around you willingly grant you authority and influence over them because of the person you are. You attract this power to yourself by being trusted, honoured and admired by those close to you. They want you to affect their lives because they know that you have their interests at heart.

Note, you can exercise *functional power* over your family or in the workplace, but unless *ascribed power* is present you will always have people doing things out of duty rather than love. It is the same with God. He is the Almighty - the Great I Am [functional power] and you can obey Him out of fear. But if you truly love Him you will willingly grant Him authority and influence over your life. This is ascribed power. It is giving God all the glory!

The Lord, speaking in **Psalm 91:14-16** said this, ***“Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him, and show him My salvation.”***

The best way of acquiring and keeping personal power is to become valuable.

- Valuable to your family and friends.
- Valuable to your employers and your church.
- Valuable to society.

Keep yourself focused by asking, *“What is expected of me?”* And when you've answered this question, make up your mind to go the extra mile - to do things that are beyond what others might expect. And do everything in love and with integrity.

In order to expand your personal power and influence you must continually seek opportunities to help and add value to others. People are God's business. People are what really matters. All the power you possess should positively influence others and enrich their lives. This is how you enrich the kingdom.

Your greatest rewards will always come through the door of someone in need.

You can apply the Law of Power right now by:

[1] Identifying those individuals in your life who you have power of one kind or another over. What are some of the things you can do personally to develop or use your power to their benefit? Think in terms of:

(a) **Expert power** - the power of your gifts or abilities. If you cannot find anyone who is being influenced with this power, it means you have not developed it yet. So make up your mind to use your gifts and abilities more effectively.

(b) **Intimate power** - the power to be liked and respected. Be honest. How many people love and respect you? And what positive influence are you exercising over the people around you?

(c) **Functional power** - what you really are. What effect is your functional power having on others? Are you abusing your privileges as father, mother, friend or boss?

(d) **Ascribed power** - the power others have given to you. Have you earned the trust and admiration of those close to you? Do you value the authority and influence that others have willingly granted you? And are you acting like Jesus?

[2] Define the most important expectations of those people who you have power of one kind or another over. How can you use your personal power to realise these expectations? Identify the one thing that you could do differently right now that will influence people more positively.