

THE STANDARD OF GOD'S POWER

There is a "standard" (yardstick) of God's power, something that we can measure His power against, and that 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 this miracle is the raising of a dead nation from captivity. They were under the dominion of Pharaoh, which is a type of the devil, and as the Word says, **"God called them with a strong hand. He delivered them with a strong hand and an outstretched arm."** Right through from Exodus to Malachi there is a constant referring to *"Look what God did when He delivered Israel."* Now, is anything bigger than that? Parting a sea and then holding back the waves long enough for God's people to be safe! Can you imagine anything that would place demands on God's power more than that?

In the New Testament the "yardstick" miracle, the "standard" of God's power, is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. I don't think it put any strain on God to make the world. He just created it. It did not put any strain on God to create light. He just spoke the word; *"Let there be light,"* and there was light. But I believe it put a great demand on God's power to raise Jesus from the dead. It tells us in Ephesians 1:19-20 what is ***"the exceeding greatness of His power to us all who believe according to the working of His mighty power when He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand in heavenly places."*** There is an awful lot of energy and power mentioned here! It says: "the exceeding greatness." Therefore, there are different 'measures' of God's power. There may be things that draw on His power more than others. However, it says here: *"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."*

A literal translation may read, *“The unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power towards us who believe as demonstrated and measured against the working of His mighty power and strength which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.”* Look at it this way: when God said, "Let there be light," there was light, but I don't think He said, "let there be Calvary" and there was Calvary! Concerning the work on the Cross we are dealing with principalities, powers and rulers of darkness. Every demon in hell must have descended on Calvary to witness what they thought was their most victorious moment. But they were unaware of the immeasurable, unlimited and exceedingly great power that God was about to demonstrate by using that very power in Christ and raising Him from the dead.

What I also love about this passage of scripture is how it positions us. The ***“exceeding greatness of God’s power”*** is directed toward us and is measured against the very same power the God exerted when He raised Jesus from the dead. Wow! Once the resurrection power of God raised Jesus from the dead, it was then directed toward us. First, so that we may be raised to new life with Him, but thereafter, that we may live an abundant and victorious life. Whatever situation you are facing, and however tragic it may appear, right now, there is a power directed toward you that cannot be denied. It is the unlimited, immeasurable and surpassing power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead. Yes, resurrection power is extended toward you, and it is available all the time! God will never withdraw this power because it demonstrates and expresses His great love for us. The question is, “Do we know this and do we really believe it? For we cannot know the exceeding power of God without first knowing Him! In Philippians 3:10 the apostle Paul says: ***“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.”***

There are four statements made in this verse:

- (1) "That I may know Him."
- (2) "And the power of His resurrection."
- (3) "And the fellowship of His suffering."
- (4) "Being conformed to His death."

Another translation says, "***I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised Him from the dead. And I want to suffer with Him, sharing in His death.***" Paul was in prison when writing this letter to the church in Philippi. I find it very inspiring that here is this ageing apostle, battle-scarred and gaunt, but notice his prayer. His longing never died; his vision never became dim; the fire in his belly never got dull. He was as focused on knowing God as never before. He did not pray to be released from prison - he might have done that. He did not pray that he might have a ministry there - though I am sure he aspired to that. He did not pray that his body may be healed - he was possibly weak from the suffering he'd endured. His genuine aspiration was this: "*That I may know Him.*" Usually the first part of Philippians 3:10 is the main focus, and often the other part; "*the power of His resurrection,*" is overlooked. But the two work together!

Yet, Paul did state first, "***I want to know Him.***" It isn't that Paul does not know Him; rather, there is a fuller revelation of Him that he is now seeking. So Paul says. "***That I may know Him and the POWER of His resurrection.***" There is something in this word 'resurrection' that as yet we have not fully comprehended. Look again at Paul. He has written letters that turned millions of lives around. Starving people have gone to his epistles and found strength. Thirsty people have gone there and have found something to drink. The weak have gone and found energy in them. The hopeless have gone and found hope. What an inspiration!

Yet he implies: "I may have written many epistles, I may have performed miracles, but let me tell you of something I still aspire to do: I want to know Him, and I want to know more about my resurrection life." You see, no other religion in the world has a resurrection. This is the crowning miracle of God. Christ's resurrection is astounding because the same power also raised us from the dead to newness life. This is a completely different life! God perpetuated that miracle in you and in me! When Jesus said, "***I am the resurrection***", He was telling us that the Resurrection is a Person, and that person is Christ Himself. "***All power is given to Me,***" He said, and "***In Him we live and move and have our being.***" Hence, being IN CHRIST not only gives us new life, it gives us authority over the devil and all his evil forces. What's more, "resurrection life" also gives us access to the very same power that made this "new life" possible. How much do you really know about your resurrection life? Are you presently experiencing the mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead in your daily life? Or, are you stuck somewhere between a "new life in Christ Jesus" and the old life under the dominion of sin and death?

Now, if you actually died with Christ - being conformed to His death. If the moment Jesus died, you died with Him. If the moment that He rose, you rose with Him. Then the 'standard' of God's mighty power is being directed toward you. The unlimited, immeasurable and surpassing power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead is intended for you. Sure there are corrections, there are improvements, there is growth in grace. But He died that we might be cleansed, He died that we might be pure, He died that we might lead a victorious life. The resurrection life of Jesus is quickening (giving life) our mortal bodies from glory to glory. Romans 8:11 says, "***But 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 your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.***" Desire to know the resurrection life you have in Christ!

As the apostle Paul desired to know more about Christ in the context of the resurrection power of God that raised Him from the dead; and just as Paul wanted to know more about the life that this power has secured for him. So too, should each of us desire (more and more) to know Him and have a hunger to see and experience the effect that the resurrection power of God has on our lives! You will be astounded at what the Holy Spirit can do when you truly understand this principle. He can bring new-life into every dead situation!

And never forget that the unlimited and surpassing greatness of God's power - as measured against the working of His mighty power and strength which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead - is directed at us! Yes, the very "standard" of all divine power is meant to impact on our lives daily. Hallelujah!