

HIS POWER WITHIN US

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,” (Eph 3:20)

The Bible has a great deal to say about power. At least 6 different Greek words are all translated as “power” in the New Testament Scriptures (dunamis, exousia, ischus, kratos, dunaton, and arche). The word translated “power” in our text is “dunamis” which is found 118 times in the N.T. Scriptures. It is the basis of such English words as “dynamic”, “dynamo”, “dynamite”, etc.

John the Baptist went before Jesus in the spirit and “power” of Elijah (Lk. 1:17). Jesus commanded unclean spirits with authority and “power” (Lk. 4:36). Jesus promised that his hearers would live long enough to see the Kingdom of God come with “power” (Mk. 9:1). He commanded His disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they had been given “power” from on high (Acts 1:4 - 8). The Gospel is the “power” of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16) etc. Since “dunamis” occurs 118 times these references could easily be multiplied.

Our text points out that “his power” is at work “within us”! Please try to focus your mental and spiritual energies on this fact. It is significant beyond words!

Take a look, for example, at the dramatic difference between Jesus and His disciples in the upper room. These men already had the “power” to work miracles, but were fighting amongst themselves as to who was the greatest. More than a year before Jesus **“called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.” (Matt. 10:1)** On that occasion He specifically commanded them **“Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.” (Matt 10:8)** THEY COULD COMMAND UNCLEAN SPIRITS OUTSIDE OF THEM BUT COULD NOT CONTROL THEIR OWN SPIRIT WITHIN!

For the last three years there had been a growing conflict between the disciples as to who was the greatest. Remember when Jesus pointed them to a little child to illustrate who is greatest in the kingdom (Matt. 18:1 - 4) Remember when the mother of James and John came to ask that her sons be seated on His right and left hand in the kingdom. When the ten heard this they were moved with indignation with the two brothers (Matt. 20:24). In the upper room on the night before Calvary, of all things, their rivalry seemed to be coming to a head.

- Right after Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper there arose another dispute among them as to who would be considered the greatest. (Lk. 22:24).
- It was at this time that Jesus wrapped a towel around his waist and began to wash His disciples’ feet (Jn. 13:4 - 17).

DO YOU SEE THE DIFFERENCE? THE DISCIPLES WERE ABSOLUTELY SELFISH AND JESUS WAS ABSOLUTELY SELFLESS!

The works of the flesh are obvious (Gal. 5:19). So is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The contrast between Jesus and His disciples on this night was crystal clear. Jesus had emptied Himself and they were full of themselves!

In this egotistical self-serving manner of life they would never be successful ambassadors of Christ. **THAT’S WHY JESUS COMMANDED THEM TO WAIT IN JERUSALEM UNTIL THEY RECEIVED “POWER” FROM ON HIGH (ACTS 1:4 - 8).** This power would operate “within” them! It would transform them from the works of the flesh to the fruit of the Spirit. Their selfish personalities would be so dramatically changed that they would be like a “new creation”. After three years of learning from Jesus they were the same old selfish men they had always been. Only from the “power” of the Holy Spirit would they be able to truly love one another. Love, as you know, is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), and the primary evidence that we belong to Christ (Jn. 13:35).

From “within” come “evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly” (Mk. 7:21 - 22). That’s why we need His “power” at work “within” us!