

LESSON SEVEN POWER

Power...the word can conjure up many things in our minds. The power of the wind as seen in a hurricane or a tornado; the power of the sea in a tidal wave or tsunami; the power of people in the business world; the power of those in government; the power of the effect of words spoken, and even the power of advertisements to influence our minds to purchase something. As Christians, we need power, but what kind of power and where do we get it?

Bible commentator R. Kent Hughes made a statement that we would do well to give credence to: *“When the Holy Spirit comes upon followers of Christ, the most unlikely people become fountains of power.”*

Jesus spent His last 3 ½ years ministering to the people of Israel and teaching the disciples in order to prepare them for the time that He would return to heaven by His ascension. As you can imagine, this seemed worrisome to the disciples, however, He told them He would not leave them orphans but would send the Holy Spirit to be their Teacher and Comforter. This week’s lesson will open our eyes to the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives to influence the world for the kingdom of God and to help us to be effective Christians and disciples.

Day One – The Power of God

God is omnipotent, meaning that He is all powerful, having unlimited authority. God’s power is part of His character. In order to really understand the power of the Holy Spirit in our *own* lives, we need to first look at the almighty power of God and all that it entails.

1. Look up the following scriptures and record what you learn about God’s power.

Genesis 1:1

Jeremiah 32:27

Luke 6:19

Romans 1:20

Ephesians 1:19-20

a. Which of these verses speaks to you the most and why?

2. God has many names in the Scriptures. Some are personal names while others are descriptive of His nature or His character. One of those names is El Shaddai. Look this up in a Hebrew dictionary or Smith's Bible Dictionary (you can find these on blueletterbible.org) and write what you learn.

a. How does this relate to Jesus from the following verses?

Isaiah 9:6

Revelation 1:8

3. It is important for us to understand that there are no limits to God's power. Write what you learn about God and what you learn about yourself from the following verses.

Isaiah 40:26

Isaiah 40:28-30

a. At times, are you guilty of not seeing God as you ought? Is He seemingly small in your eyes? Do you find yourself comparing Him to man's limited power and ability instead of His almighty power? Please explain your answer.

b. Instead, what should our response be to our omnipotent God? Job 5:8-9

4. Read Psalm 62:11 and Ephesians 3:20-21. Based on what you learned from all the verses in this day as well as these verses, what conclusions can you make concerning God's power in your life? How does what you've learned affect you personally?

"God's power is like Himself: infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; it can neither be checked, restrained, nor frustrated by the creature."

Stephen Charnock

Day Two – The Power of the Holy Spirit

As we learned in a previous lesson, Jesus said, “*without Me, you can do nothing*”. At times we may feel inadequate in what He asks of us as it may seem impossible. So, how then are we to effectively live out our lives as a disciple? Jesus knew we would need help in order to live as such, so He promised to supply us with His power.

1. Jesus spoke of the promise of the Father in Luke 24:49, speaking of the Holy Spirit. Read Acts 1:4-8 to further your understanding of this promise of the Father given to the disciples. What do you learn?

The disciples were directed to “tarry” until the promise of the Holy Spirit came, because they needed to learn, as do we, that we can’t do anything without the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Jesus was assuring the disciples that they would have power given by the Holy Spirit to do His work after He was gone. But there is much more to know and understand about who the Holy Spirit is and what He does in the life of a disciple. Carefully read the following verses and record His role.

John 14:16-17

John 16:13-15

Romans 8:15-16

Romans 8:26-27

1 Corinthians 2:12-13

a. Which of the above verses speaks to you the most and why?

3. The Holy Spirit is essential in our lives to better equip us to be more effective and diligent as His disciples. God gives us giftings which also come through the power of the Holy Spirit. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11 and write what you learn.

a. List the gifts of the Spirit given in the below verses.

Romans 12:6-8

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

1 Corinthians 12:27-31

b. Read Ephesians 4:11-16 and explain the purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

c. According to 1 Corinthians 12:7, the Holy Spirit has given gifts to every individual believer. As you review the above gifts, record what you think your gift(s) is. Write a prayer asking God to show you how you can use your gift. If you don't know what your gift is, then use the space below to pray and ask God to reveal your gift to you.

4. 1 Corinthians 6:19 tells us that we are the temple of God and the Holy Spirit dwells in us, but can the power or the work of the Holy Spirit be hindered in our lives? Look up the following verses to answer how this could happen.

Galatians 5:17

Ephesians 4:30

1 Thessalonians 5:19

1 Timothy 6:9-10

1 Peter 5:5c

“The Holy Spirit’s power cannot be harnessed. His power cannot be used to accomplish anything other than the Father’s will. He is not a candy dispenser. He is not a vending machine. He is not a genie waiting for someone to rub His lamp the right way. He is holy God.”

Charles Stanley from The Wonderful Spirit Filled Life

Day Three – The Power for the Mission

Some of Jesus' last words to His disciples are found in Luke 24:46-49. Here we find Jesus giving instructions to His disciples for what He says is to be their mission as He would be returning to the Father. Jesus summarizes this mission in two specific ways: they were to preach repentance and remission of sin, and they were to be witnesses of Him. He instructed the disciples to wait to be endued with power from on high, for they would not be able to accomplish this work without it. As His disciples, we too have the same mission and require the same power.

If our mission is to preach repentance and remission of sins, we need to be sure we understand what that means. Let's take a brief look at this before we study about the power we have from the Holy Spirit for this mission.

1. Jesus began His ministry by preaching that the people needed to repent. Look up the word repentance and write what it means. Use a Greek dictionary or the Webster's 1828 dictionary, if possible.

2. Why is repentance necessary?

Romans 3:10-12

Romans 3:23

3. Remission is not a word that we commonly use today. It means dismissal, or release from debt, and is used of the forgiveness of sins. How do the below scriptures help to enlighten your understanding of remission and the necessity of it?

Matthew 26:28

Acts 10:43

Romans 3:25-26

Hebrews 9:22

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." We deserve death as the punishment for our sins, but Jesus took the judgment for our sins upon Himself and He suspended the due punishment by His sacrifice that we might receive forgiveness and remission of our sins. No charge can be brought against the believer for God has declared him righteous.

Jesus knew that the disciples and we as His future disciples would need the power of the Holy Spirit in order to carry out the preaching of repentance and to be an effective witness of Him. Let's examine what that looks like.

4. The fulfillment of the promise that Jesus made to the disciples of the Holy Spirit came after He ascended, which is recorded in Acts 2. Read this chapter and write all you learn about the extraordinary effect of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

5. It is interesting to note that the Holy Spirit was at work throughout the Old Testament as well. What do you learn when you read Exodus 35:30-35?

6. The following Scriptures in the New Testament are examples of people who were filled with the Holy Spirit. What do you learn about them and what did they do?

Acts 6:1-7

Acts 7:54-60

Acts 9:10-22

7. The Spirit-powered life can and should belong to every disciple. In Ephesians 5:18 Paul says, "*And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.*" This is a command for us today concerning the Holy Spirit. Notice the comparison being made in this verse and explain what you think this means.

8. We, no doubt, have learned that we are weak and need the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. What does the effect of the power of the Holy Spirit look like in our life according to the below verses?

Romans 8:9-11

Galatians 5:16

Ephesians 3:16-19

“The Spirit-filled life is a life of dependency on and sensitivity to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.”

Charles Stanley

Day Four – The Power in the Witness

1. Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.” This verse records the last words spoken by Jesus before ascending to heaven. How is this applicable to you?

2. A witness is one who declares with confidence what he has seen, heard or knows. To be an effective witness of Christ we must ‘walk the talk’. Read the following verses and share what you learn about Paul and why he was such a powerful witness.

Acts 16:24-32

1 Corinthians 9:19, 22b

Philippians 1:12-14

Philippians 3:7-16

3. Our witness of Christ can be through the words that we use to share about Him but more importantly, the witness of how we live our lives. David Livingston was a missionary to Central Africa. Sir Henry Stanley said this about him after spending time with him: *“If I had been with him any longer, I would have been compelled to be a Christian and he never spoke to me about it at all.”* Share your thoughts on the meaning of this quote.

4. What type(s) of things hinder you from being a living witness?

5. One would think that in sharing the gospel with others there would always be a positive outcome or response. This may or may not be true. Look up the following verses and record the positive and negative results which can occur when we share the gospel and live our lives as bold witnesses for Christ.

Matthew 5:10-11

Luke 6:22-23

1 Peter 4:14-16

6. We are called to be His witnesses to others. How can the following verses help you to be confident in fulfilling this mission that Christ has given you?

Joshua 1:9

John 14:26

Acts 4:31

Ephesians 3:20-21

7. As individuals, as well as the body of Christ (the church), we are to be witnesses of Christ to those around us and to the ends of the earth. Would you say that the church today is an effective witness of Christ to the world? Explain.

a. What needs to change for this to be true?

8. While we are called to be faithful witnesses for Christ, we should never take credit for any who come to salvation. What do these verses say about our role versus God's role in this?

Acts 2:47b

1 Corinthians 3:5-7

9. How are we to be true witnesses for Christ?

Matthew 5:14-16

Philippians 2:15

a. Do you feel like your life shines as a light to the world? On a scale of 1-10, rate your witness for Jesus.

10. As we conclude this lesson on the power of the Holy Spirit what have you learned that you will apply to your life? Share the verse or passage that spoke to you the most.

“The Holy Spirit manifests His power in whatever way He deems necessary to enable believers to be effective witnesses for Christ.”

Charles Stanley

