

Ephesians 3:14-21

The Fourth Step to Power: Prayer

Ephesians 3:14-21, “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” There is power in prayer. Prayer unlocks the power of God, both within us and in our surroundings and circumstances. **1st Kings 18:20-39, “So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. Elijah went before the people and said, ‘How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.’ But the people said nothing. Then Elijah said to them, ‘I am the only one of the Lord’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. Get two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire--he is God.’ Then all the people said, ‘What you say is good.’ Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, ‘Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.’ So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. ‘O Baal, answer us!’ they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. At noon Elijah began to taunt them, ‘Shout louder!’ he said. ‘Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.’ So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there**

was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention. Then Elijah said to all the people, 'Come here to me.' They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which was in ruins. Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, 'Your name shall be Israel.' With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs [That is, probably about 13 quarts (about 15 liters)] of seed. He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, 'Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.' 'Do it again,' he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time,' he ordered, and they did it the third time. The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: 'O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.' Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, 'The Lord--he is God! The Lord--he is God!'" The Church needs the fire of the Lord. **Romans 12:1-2, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will."** The sacrifice is us now, not bulls and goats. The fire we need is the Holy Spirit. ***Revival is when the Holy Spirit comes upon a group of people simultaneously.***

The Fourth Step to Power:

The fourth step to power encompasses all the other three steps. The true heart of prayer is 1) denying yourself, 2) humbling yourself, 3) seeking God's face, and 4) praying to God. Our prayers to God should include and encompass all the other three steps. **Hebrews**

4:14-16, “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” When we pray we must understand that God is sovereign. We must pray, yes, with boldness and confidence, but tempered with humility, understanding that we are nothing. You can't do any good without the power of God in your life. Ask yourself this question: *‘What's the ratio of your prayer time and your T.V. time?’*

Let's read Psalm 4. It's quite a psalm about prayer and it's benefits. **Psalm 4:1-8, “Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God, give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer. How long, O men, will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods? Know that the Lord has set apart the godly for himself; the Lord will hear when I call to him. In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent. Offer right sacrifices and trust in the Lord. Many are asking, ‘Who can show us any good?’ Let the light of your face shine upon us, O Lord. You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound. I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.”** Paul says we will be strengthened with might in the inner man through His Spirit. Actively pursue God for His Spirit and intervention through that Spirit.

Revival is the Spirit of God coming on a group of people all at the same time. Acts 1:7-8, “He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Read Acts 2:1-4, 5-13, 14-40. Pursue God for his Spirit until it happens, giving us strength and spiritual depth. Our faith is seen in our actions.

Prayer

The Church today needs power. Paul's prayer was for strength, and a deep apprehension and fullness in Christ. Depth is defined as a condition where Christ would settle down and dwell deeply in us.

There is a lighthouse in Scituate which flashes out over the dark waters of the night these three words: "I—LOVE—YOU."

Ephesians 3:16-21, "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." The society today views the Church as right-wing fanatics who want to go out and stamp out sin. Those [in the Church, Body of Christ, straight-laced evangelical types] that are so fanatically inclined are worse than the sinners they seek to eliminate! We are to be deeply rooted in love. Our roots are to go deep into the love of God. Then we'll stand in the worst storm. In building high buildings, you must go deep with the foundation. Power in your life is the power of love. There are four ways to test your love-depth:

1. Love towards God, you want to go to church, get up early to pray and be with God in prayer and study.
2. Do you keep God's commandments because you don't want to hurt God?
3. In your family—how much do you love your family, your husband, wife? Do you want a loving home? Then start praying for one. Do you want your marriage turned around? Pray to God and for God to help your marriage. That's where the power source is. No marriage will falter if it's deeply rooted in Godly love (Agape). Do you want a loving home? **Deny yourself and seek God's face.** Love toward your neighbor as toward yourself.
4. Love toward your enemies—being kind to those who are evil: This love is not just words but in deed and truth. **Romans 12:14-21, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my**

**friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written:
'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. On the
contrary:**

**'If your enemy is hungry,
feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him
something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap
burning coals on his head.'**

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."
If we are deeply rooted in God's love, the following Psalm of David
will apply to us. How wonderful! **Psalm 139:7-10, "Where can I
go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If
I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the
depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I
settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide
me, your right hand will hold me fast."** The Church needs this
kind of love. A Christian robbed of power can't be used by God.
God is glorified through the Church. The Church must exhibit the
love of God through its' members.

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