

In the heavenly realm (Series)

Lesson # 1 “Understanding the surpassing greatness of Christ’s power.” Ephesians Chapter 1

Scripture:

Ephesians 6:12 “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Introduction:

You’ve probably heard the story of Satan watching God, by His power, make man from the dust of the earth. Then Satan said that’s nothing I have the power to do that too. God said ok you don’t have the power to do it but, lets see you try. So Satan bent down to get a hand full of dust and God said hey get your own dust.

Modern day struggles for power:

I was watching an interview with Donald Trump on TV the other day and he was talking about how he has come to be so rich and powerful. He talked for a while about his current show “The Apprentice” and he said the network wanted him to do another show with nothing but board room yelling. You see the network has determined that the American public craves and wants to see power!

When I was in the fourth grade I moved to Inola, Oklahoma. Being new is really hard sometimes. I needed to make friends, figure out what was going on in class and how to find my next class...you know all the important stuff. Finally lunch and acceptance by a couple of people. But, then recess. Oh kids love recess and I can still see myself on the porch of that little classroom building happy as I am headed out for great adventure.

I had only taken a few steps toward the playground area when a boy named Lenny Dirk came up to me and said these words that I’ll never forget “I want you to know that I’m on the boxing team and I run things around here.”

I got a real wake up at that moment, this kid thought he had the power and I couldn’t let him think something that wasn’t true....that wouldn’t be Christian to do would it? ha, ha

No, I felt that whatever this power thing was he didn’t have it. So, I fired back by getting up in his face and telling him if he wanted to fight now was the time and the place.... I was scared to death but I wasn’t going to let anyone else like this guy have power over me. ...Well that obviously wasn’t the right way to handle that

The desire for power

This desire for power and control really comes from a fleshly motive and most all of us have had or are currently struggling with this to some degree or another.

1. It is played out in the homes with husbands and wives
2. It is seen at work with co-workers maneuvering against each other for better pay and position.
4. Some people strive for power in social status and standing
-With friends and family and in communities.
5. And sadly, power struggles are even seen in the Lord’s Church.

In our bibles the city of Ephesus was in a major power struggle also.

1. 1st Ephesus was a place of religions struggling for power
 - A. Greek god Artemis
 - Daughter of Zues
 - They thought her statue apparently fell from the sky (Acts 19:35)
 - *The Romans called her Diana and even minted some of their coins with “Diana of Ephesus” on them.
 - Blending of religions was what Rome did best.
 - I’m glad we don’t have to worry about that today...ha
 - *But Paul taught against this and a silversmith named Demetrius got mad because he was losing business (Acts 19:23)
 - B. Self made religion Col. 2:23
 - C. Angel worship Col 2:18
 - D. Jewish/Christians
 - E. The beginnings of deification of Roman rulers and Rome itself.
2. Power was sought in Magic
 - The Ephesian Grammata ...ei saying a sequence of words to manipulate cosmic forces to get what you desire.
 - Through Paul’s preaching many burned their magic books (Acts 19:19)
3. Mysteries and the ability to understand them was another angle
 - The early stages of Gnosticism...Gnosis meaning knowledge
 - Gave position and power
 - You either know or not!
4. Satan also had a powerful presence
 - Demon possession was also on the scene
 - And when Paul used the power of God to expel those demons
 - That power was sought after.
 - False Jewish exorcist (Seven sons of Sceva) Acts 19:13
5. Philosophy...Wisdom and knowledge Col 2:8,18
6. The Ultimate Power was seen as Rome
 - Rome Authority versus the world...
 - Loyalty was demanded
7. Power Theater
 - A 25,000 seat outdoor theater
 - Their power show wasn’t the “Apprentice”
 - It was Paul versus the wild beasts
 - But it was about power none the less

Propositional Statement:

Today, it is our aim to understand that we are meant to walk in the heavenly realm not the physical realm and when we act like the world around us and try to jockey for position and power, we have stepped away from the spiritual realm and have forgotten that Christ has all power and that He is in control.

This idea of earthly or human power is really just an illusion anyway, it does not exist....
.....Real power and control does not exist outside of God Romans 13:1.

.....That's right Satan doesn't even have power over us except that which we willing yield to him.

This is what Jesus was referring to when he prayed for his disciples in John 17
.....that they would be in the world but not of the world

-That they would walk by faith, not by sight 2 Cor 5:7
.....Trusting in the power of Christ
....Walking in the spiritual and not the physical

Lesson: The Surpassing greatness of Christ Power

Greetings:

Ephesians 1:1-2 "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,
To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

#1. Ephesians 1:3

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,"

* God has blessed us (or made us adorable) in the heavenly places (Eternal, spiritual world) In Christ

#2. Ephesians 1:4

"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love"

* God choose us in Christ before the world was ever made
-To be holy, and blameless, before Him, in Love
-Our lives are to be lived out before Jesus
-For his inspection and approval.

#3. Ephesians 1:5

"He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,"

*God predestined us to adoption as sons
-Through Christ to Himself.
-Not a natural son-ship but through Christ

*According to the kind intention of God's will
-God's will happens through Christ

#4. Ephesians 1:6

“to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

*The honor, praise and worship of God

-Comes not through anything earned

-But, by God’s grace through Jesus (The Beloved).

#5. Ephesians 1:7

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace”

*We have all chosen to sin.

-We became slaves by that choice in bondage.

*But, in Him (Christ) the ransom price has been paid in full

-Through His (Christ’) blood we have forgiveness

*Jesus paid our debt, and purchased us out of slavery

*All this through God’s rich grace.

#6. Ephesians 1:8

“which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight”

*God gave to us, an abundant measure, of understanding concerning Jesus.

-Insight

-Wisdom

#7. Ephesians 1:9

“He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him”

*When we talk about the eternal purpose of God it certainly has to do with the reconciliation of man unto himself.

*But, God had a secret part of his purpose...a mystery

-Here briefly mentioned by the Apostle Paul

*Latter explained in Ephesians 3:3-6

-Where Paul tells us that this mystery is that the gentiles will be included as a part of God’s house and partakers of the promise through Jesus.

*Paul says to the Ephesians you might not be Jew, you may be tempted to think that you really don’t belong, or you might ask where do I fit into all this.

-But, Paul says, you are a part of God’s plan,

-according to his kind intention.

*You are included in the reconciliation of man unto God.

*The secret of God’s choice is revealed in Christ, in that He doesn’t want any to perish but for all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

-Christianity is not an exclusive club.

#8. Ephesians 1:10

“with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.”

- *God says that in Christ the entire religious system
 - (the whole package of God’s intentions) reaches its completeness.
 - This includes the physical realm as well as the spiritual.

#9 Ephesians 1:11

“In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will”

- *God has an inheritance for us
 - That inheritance gift, has been predetermined, that is it wasn’t a last thought, it was planned for by His purpose, that we would be reconciled to Him.
 - For his pleasure
- *And all of this happens in Christ

#10 Ephesians 1:12

“to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.”

- *In a world filled with so much sin, our hope is found in Christ
- *The idea of “first to hope” is that of believing in Jesus coming in advance of any other confirmation. Jesus tells Thomas you believed because you have seen, but blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.
- *The idea is that faith, in Christ, forms a platform or a base for God’s glorification.

#11 Ephesians 1:13

“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,”

- *After hearing the gospel and responding to it.
 - All of us who are Christians have been sealed in Him.
 - Like being stamped with a signet ring by a king for security and preservation.
 - Sealed with God’s own Spirit
- *And this comes in the form of a promise
 - In other words it comes with assurance
- *Here a secure position is given by the King through Jesus.

#12 Ephesians 1:14

“who (Talking about the Holy Spirit) is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.”

- *Having been sealed/stamped we are now given a pledge from God concerning our inheritance.
 - Insomuch as you have responded to the gospel your inheritance from God is secure with a deposit of made by Christ which is the Holy Spirit .
- *All of this with a view of God’s own purpose to redeem us unto himself.
- *To the praise and glory of God

Prayer Eph 1:15-23

Ephesians 1:15

“For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints,”

*Paul heard of their faith in Jesus and their love for all the saints

Ephesians 1:16

“do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers;”

*Paul thanks God for the Ephesians

Ephesians 1:17

“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.”

*Paul prays for their spiritual understanding

*How everything funnels down through Christ and meshes together perfectly.

Ephesians 1:18

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,”

*Shed some light on their understanding so they will know:

-The hope of His calling (Invitation)

-The riches of His inheritance

-The surpassing greatness of his power toward us who believe.

Ephesians 1:19 “and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might”

Ephesians 1:20 “which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,”

-God gave Jesus the place of authority both in heaven and on earth.

Ephesians 1:21 “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”

Ephesians 1:22

“And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,”

*All things are put under Christ’ feet

*God gives Christ as head over all things to the church.

Ephesians 1:23

“which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

*Church is understood to be the body of Christ

*And is the fullness of Him who fills all in all

Conclusion:

NOTE: VERSES 1-14

IN CHRIST:

- WE ARE BLESSED
- WE ARE CHOSEN
- WE ARE ADOPTED
- WE ARE GIVEN GRACE
- WE ARE REDEEMED
- GOD'S PURPOSE REVEALED
- ALL THINGS SUMMED UP
- INHERITANCE GIVEN TO US
- HOPE GIVEN TO US
- WE ARE SEALED WITH HIS HOLY SPIRIT
- GOD'S OWN POSSESSION IS CLAIMED
- AND IN CHRIST,
*GOD IS PRAISED!

The real struggle is in the spiritual realm and Satan will do anything he can to take your attention away from it.

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING FOR POWER?

*Christ is the real power...the dynamite!!!!

*God gave Him as head over all things to the church.

2 Corinthians 4:18 “while we look **not at the things which are seen**, but at the **things which are not seen**; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”