

POWER



REB

Cover Art: Chris Powers at Full of Eyes

POWER



My Power is Made Perfect in Weakness

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted, he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to those who are bound, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, anointing me with power to do these things. I do not do them out of myself, but under the anointing of the Spirit.

We are all aware that to get anything done in this world you have to have power. Without power you are soon left behind, sitting high and dry, while the world goes on its merry way, leaving you to starve to death, or to die of loneliness.

The world offers its own kinds of power:

The power of money

The power of public opinion

Political power... the ‘right connections’

The power of guns

The world knows nothing about *the power of God*, where it comes from, what it does.

For twenty centuries, whenever professing Christians have lacked God's power in their lives, they have turned to one or another of these four sources of this world's power for support.

We've done it ourselves. How many times have we turned to money for confidence! Or people's good opinion? We've tried to establish the 'right connections'. Some of us have even succumbed to the temptation to arm ourselves with guns.

It's true that we need power to survive, power to accomplish our kingdom purpose....

But kingdom power is power of a different order.

Jesus had power

He was meek, lowly of heart, but when Jesus came out of the wilderness temptation, and began to teach in the synagogues of Galilee, the thing that set him apart from every other teacher in Israel was his *power to heal and to free captive souls* from the principalities of darkness

When Jesus spoke, his word had power. When he stretched out his hand to touch the sick, there was power to heal.

It was not the power of money.

It was not the power of public opinion.

It was not the power of having the right connections.

Nor was it the power of swords and spears and guns.

Yet, wherever he went doors opened and chains broke.

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report concerning him went out to all the surrounding country.

Luke 4:14

What was this power of the Spirit?

He came to Nazareth where he had been brought up and he went to the synagogue as was his custom on the Sabbath, and he stood up to read and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, he has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 4:16-19

The anointing of the Spirit that was on Jesus was without measure. But what's important to see is that this power did not just "zap" him in a capricious manner.

The Lord Jesus would be the first to tell us that this power was not his, but the Father's. It was imparted to him by the Father because he is in total submission to the Father's will.

When Nicodemus came to him by night and said "***Rabbi, we know you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these works which you do unless God is with him,***" he was saying, "I see God's power. I don't understand who you are, but I know that you possess a power which the rest of us lack."

Notice that Jesus did not say to Nicodemus, "Nicodemus, after all, I'm the Son of God. I've got an inside track. I've got something you're never going to have."

No, Jesus said: "***Nicodemus, you must be born again.***" I.e. "When you are born again, Nicodemus, you will understand where this power is coming from and you will have it too!"

When did this power descend upon Jesus?

It began at his baptism. When Jesus came out of the water the Spirit descended on him. He was now the Anointed One, the Messiah.

Why at his baptism? Because his baptism was *an offering of himself to the Father*. His baptism was the beginning of an awesome worship. His baptism was a death to his own will, the beginning of his crucified life, culminating at the cross.

He then was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. There his power was increased and refined. Because in the wilderness, Jesus *denied himself* in favor of his Father's pleasure.

It was a further death, an offering of himself as a sacrifice to the Father's will.

From that point on his ministry was drenched in power, and the source of this power was the *offering up of himself*, which continued daily, until Calvary.

You can only understand Isaiah 61, ***“His Spirit is upon me because he has anointed me...”*** if you see it in the light of Isaiah 53, ***“He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him and by his stripes we are healed.”***

The power comes upon Jesus because he offers himself up.



From the moment Jesus offered himself to his Father at his baptism, until the moment he finally gave up the ghost and died on Good Friday, his entire life was worship.— an offering. He fixed his eye on the goal at the end of the road, where he offered everything up to the Father on the cross.

Jesus never wavered. His eye was single. He saluted no man on the road. He did not allow himself to get distracted. And he shook the dust from his feet whenever anybody tried to get him off the track, whether it was his mother, or the apostle Peter, or the scheming Pharisees. Jesus just kept moving forward.

They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their garments on it and he sat upon it. And many spread their garments on the road. And others spread leafy branches, which they cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed cried out, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed be the kingdom of our Father David that is coming. Hosanna in the highest."

Mark 11:7

It looks like he's got it made.

He's got them eating out of the palm of his hand.

If he wants it, he can have financial power.

If he wants to, he can now exploit public opinion.

With those crowds behind him, he's got political clout.

He can broker this power and take over Israel like Castro took over Cuba.

This is his opportunity.

But he ignores this "opportunity."

He doesn't reach out for money.

He doesn't push to take advantage of his "ratings."

He doesn't become a politician or a general.

He spurns it all for the only anointing that really counts —

— The anointing that brings real power...

- The anointing that's going to take him to a cross...
- The anointing that is going to lead him to offer himself up in an act of consuming worship to his Father on our behalf.



This was the power of Jesus' entire ministry.

This is why he could bring good news to the poor, freedom to the captives, sight to the blind, deliverance to the oppressed. This is why he inspired hope in the hopeless.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come then through the greater and more perfect tent, not made with hands, not of this creation, he entered once for all into the holy place taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood thus securing eternal redemption For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and the ashes of a heifer sanctifies of the purification of the flesh, how much more should the blood of Christ to the eternal Spirit offer himself without blemish to God purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. (Hebrew 9:11)

This is not theoretical power, but very, very practical power. Power that can transform people who are slaves of guilt, victims of dead works, who find no peace... into sons and daughters of the Kingdom, into people who are alive with joy, gladness, wisdom, and freedom, as they serve the Living God.

Yes, this power is in the blood.



“How much more should the blood of Christ...”

There is power in the blood, indeed, but be careful not to make the blood of the Lord Jesus into a fetish.

His blood has power because he offers himself up.

He offered himself at his baptism.

He offered himself at his temptation.

And on Palm Sunday as he rides the donkey down into the city like a king (which he is)

He is on his way to offer himself as the final sacrifice.

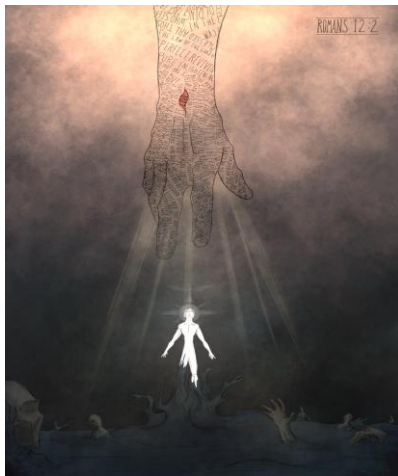
When that offering of himself gets hold of us, when it gets control of us, we are changed by it. When our hearts see the sacrifice and understand it, we are delivered from dead works to serve the Living God.

We are transformed from slaves to sons and daughters of the Kingdom.

We are caught up in worship of the Father as Jesus leads us into the Father's presence.

We are lifted by him into a foretaste of glory, and soon, we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice.

And in this offering of ourselves we enter the Lord's power.



“I appeal to you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, without spot to God which is your spiritual worship.” (Romans 12:1)

"Offer yourselves up." he says to us.

Every day. All the time. Just like Jesus.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may prove (demonstrate, show, manifest) what is the good acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:2)

The world says, “Indulge yourself. Pamper yourself. Coddle yourself. Gratify yourself. Conserve yourself. Take care of yourself.” The Spirit of the Lord says...

“Offer yourself. Offer yourself. Offer yourself”

“Lo, I come to do your will, O, Lord. In the volume of the book it is written of me,” says Jesus and we say it with him.

We're coming to do his will. And to do his will means that we simply give ourselves, all the way, to him. All the time. This is not a single momentary act but a daily practice. The offering of ourselves means that we commit ourselves to live the life that Jesus describes in Matthew 5, 6, and 7—The Sermon on The Mount. The Sermon on the Mount becomes deadly legalism if we just try to make ourselves do it.

But the Sermon on the Mount, *when it is lived as worship, when it becomes an offering*, brings with it tremendous power.

"If you bring your gift to the altar (and the gift is yourself) and there remember your brother has something against you, Go! Leave your gift there and go and get reconciled."

Suppose we're worshiping, and it suddenly becomes evident to me that I'm not treating my wife right or my husband right, I've been walking around and spouting Bible quotes, while treating my spouse like a dog---or my fellow worker...or my employee...or my employer...or my neighbor...or my third cousin...

As I worship, I become aware of this. So, I leave my gift and I go get reconciled—I make up my mind... I'm going to be reconciled to this person. I'm going to start making it up to them—my wife or my husband—I'm going to treat them with honor as the Lord has made clear to me.

Now we offer ourselves up and our worship becomes glorious.



As we are offering ourselves to the Lord, we become aware that our eye is going off to the side. We are looking upon that man or that woman with lust or envy or devising a way to exploit that person for our own ends. Now we take our right eye and pull it out.

**We put it under the blood. We confess it, so our eye is single.
Now we can worship.**

We sing hymns in our worship that contain tremendous truths---with tongues which have gossiped, exaggerated, murmured, complained. And now, we're saying, "Thank you, Jesus!" Yet, as we worship, it becomes evident that this tongue has to clean up its act. So we repent of our evil tongue, and as we cleanse our tongue before the Lord it again becomes possible to offer ourselves up to him.

Perhaps as we worship, we become aware that our attitudes toward the people who have wronged us are destroying us. We're bitter about this group, or that group, this race, or that nationality, the Media, the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, our union, or whoever we're angry with.

With the Spirit's help, we begin to pray for the person, or the group that inspires our wrath. Now we pray God's blessing upon them. Suddenly we are set free to offer ourselves up to God in thanksgiving and praise.

Perhaps we become aware that our faith is actually less in God and more in mammon. So we repent. We know that we can't serve God and money too. We're going to recommit ourselves—we're going to offer ourselves to the kingdom, trusting that God will provide whatever money we need.

The source of our power is the offering of a clean, committed, holy life to God. If we do this, his power becomes ours. It's a daily offering of our life.

When a fellowship offers itself to God in this way, that fellowship is anointed with unspeakable power.

The Spirit of the Lord is calling our churches to present themselves to God as a living sacrifice. To truly take up the cross and follow the Lamb with outpoured lives. To arise and shine in response to his light is to present ourselves in worship to him. To rise up in the flame that comes down from heaven, and to give glory to God as the flame consumes us.

Arise, shine, for your light has come for the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

As we worship with our lives, we will have power.

Power that will move mountains, power that will break chains, power that will raise the dead, power that will heal the sick, power that will bring people from darkness to light and from Satan's bondage into God's glorious freedom.



Prayer- Holy Lord, forgive us for seeking power for our ends.. for recognition, for exploitation, for control. Instead may we be gripped by the beauty, by the holiness of you laying all power aside as an offering of love to the Living God. Oh Lord, get a hold of us, grab us, change us ...help us to understand what your offering truly means. Move us to offer ourselves as well... today, every day, every moment. Transform us, renew our minds so that our offering is sweet worship to you, to your worthiness and sovereignty. And yes, may we arise and shine as your glory falls upon us. May your holy flame consume us so that we may move in the only power that can break the grip of evil on our lives and on this world. Amen.

IF YOU WANT ME TO FLY, GIVE ME WINGS!



If you want me to fly, give me wings.

And if you want me to live like a son or daughter of God, give me God's Spirit.

So many people have heard the gospel backwards.

Love your enemies.

Turn the other cheek.

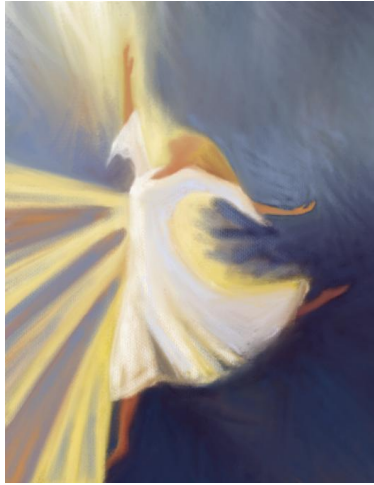
Keep your eye single.

**Nobody can do these things...
until their heart is invaded by God's Spirit.**

... "from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.

May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."

Ephesians 3:16-20



First, Jesus imparts life,

Then, he tells you what to do with this life.

First, he floods you with God's nature,

Then, he shows you how to work it out in daily life.

If you're having trouble living the kind of life you know you were meant to live, don't give up in despair.

Turn to the One who promises to fill you with power from on high.

"If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"

John 7:37-38

***"Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,
They shall mount up on wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint."***

Isaiah 40:31

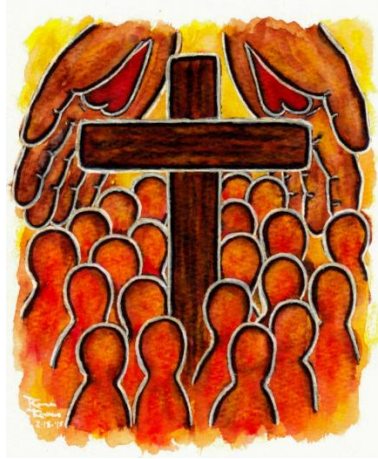


Prayer: Yes lord, we do want to fly. We want to do your divine will. We want to truly live like your sons and daughters. Give us wings to do this, empower us. Fill us with your Spirit, give us the life that comes from you, flood us with your nature so that we can live the lives you call us to, so we can experience the height, length, width, and depth of your love. Help us to continue to come to you and drink of you, so that rivers of living water flow from our lives and hearts. Amen

Message: 2003

Featured Artist: Courtesy of Lisa MD Skinner at lisamds Skinnerart.com

MANIFESTING MY POWER OR MANIFESTING MY LOVE?



"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

His amazing grace comes with an unnerving judgment.

Amazing Grace

His arms are held wide open by the nails as he welcomes you into the Kingdom of Divine Mercy.

But keep in mind that the minute you step through the door of that Kingdom,

**Jesus' mercy not only welcomes you...
It claims you as it's servant.**

You, who have been received by Amazing Grace, are called upon to live in that Grace.

**The Lamb who laid down his life for you---for you as if you
were the only one on earth---**

because he loves you with unspeakable love,

**....now calls you to walk in love in your dealings with people---
all people.**

Jesus' question to each of us...is not.

"Are you manifesting my power?"



But...

"Are you manifesting my love?"



By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if any one has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. (1 John 3:16-18)

"On that day, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you....'" (Matthew 7: 22-23)

Unnerving Judgment.



Prayer: Lord, sweet Lord, Oh how grateful we are for your amazing grace, for your mercy towards us. Such love, such mercy. Help us to live in your grace...to remember it when dealing with others, especially difficult people. Help us to be a servant to your divine mercy, to keep our hearts ever open...ready to pour out the same love you poured into us. Help us to reject any theology, belief, state of mind, even so called words of faith... that sees our relationship with you as a means to manifest power and yet excuses us from manifesting your mercy. Yes, convict us with an unnerving judgment when we claim your power, do mighty works in your namewhen you truly don't know us because our hearts are closed and dark and we choose to not live in mercy. Amen.

2003 originally titled.....Amazing Grace, Unnerving Judgment
Featured Artist: Ramone Romero

TWO KINDS OF POWER



Presidents, Prime Ministers, Parliaments...make decisions that affect our lives.

Multinationals and their well-financed lobbies...influence policies that cost us dearly.

This kind of power corrupts even those who begin with the best intentions.

But there is another kind of power that works amid the chaos of this world:

Redemptive power.

***"You gave the Son power over all people
so that he could give eternal life to all those you have given to him***
John 17:2

The power of the living God.

If you seek this power, it will find you.

**You will not possess this power.
It will possess you.**



**You will not control this power.
It will sustain you.**

The power of the Spirit of God. Given to those who offer up their lives to God.

May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Ephesians 3:19-20

What greater gift could you ever desire than this?



Prayer: We know Lord that your power is like no other power, unfathomable in its mercy and love, full of healing, beauty, wonder, and the ability to overthrow darkness and pain. We submit to your Spirit, fill us so we may live in, move in, and carry this precious redemptive power. Yes Lord, possess us, sustain us with your power so we can accomplish your holy redeeming purpose beyond anything we could ever do on our own. Amen.

Message: 2012

Featured Artist: Chris Powers at [Full of Eyes](#)

HE SHALL STAND AND FEED HIS FLOCK



You pick up the newspaper and they tell you that there are only a few more shopping days left. So get crackin! You check over the headlines and are reminded that, Christmas or no Christmas, things are looking pretty shaking out there. Bombs going off in crowded cities, refugee camps filling up. And, close to home, the economy is shaky, prices going up and up.

So when we get to Christmas Eve and sing, "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come," are we ignoring the real world for a journey down memory lane, or is there something in the gospel of Jesus which applies even to this messy, troubled world as it is right now?

Is it possible to see something in this gospel that will justify our singing, "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come"?

Back in the days of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, there was a man named Micah, who was not only gifted with a prophetic voice, he had prophetic eyes. Every once-in-a-while God enabled Micah to see far into the future. And Micah took what he saw and used it to create hope. Hope, at a time when things were looking bleak, in Israel, and in the world.

But you, O Bethlehem, who are little among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.....And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

Micah 5:2 and 4

Micah sees a time when this world will be at peace.

No more war.

No terror.

No hunger and disease.

A ruler "whose origin is from of old, from ancient days (eternity?)

.....

... will stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God."

Micah sees a day when God's will **will** be done on earth as it is in heaven, under the rule of the Messiah.

As we look forward to another Christmas, we need to see that the arrival of this baby in Bethlehem was only the beginning of the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy. There's more.

All we can see right now as we look around at our world, is a world so out-of-control that no king, no president, no dictator, no "international conference" can set it right. Only God can do that.

So as we celebrate the birth of this baby at a time like the one we're living in, it is important to see the whole picture:

.... That we celebrate, not only what Jesus has already done, but what he is doing now, and, more important, what he is going to do.

Ever since Jesus rose from the dead he has been doing one thing here in this world: he has been gathering his flock. He is preparing for the day when he will "stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God," in a world at peace.

And I have other sheep that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand.

John 10:16 & 27



Across the earth today, the Spirit of the Lord is calling people out of their preoccupations to come into his flock. He is gathering his sheep.

The Lord Jesus gathers his sheep in two ways:

- 1. He causes us to hear his voice;**
- 2. He enables us to feel his power.**

He gathers his sheep in no other way.

Sometimes our churches hinder what the Lord is doing by trying to help him gather his flock by other means. We try to fill our churches by entertaining the folks. Or we bribe them with promises of earthly prosperity. We even do market surveys to find out what the people want; and then we **give** them what they want. Of course, we end up with numbers. But no vision. No life.

We end up with a flock. But it's **our** flock, not his. If we step back and let the Lord Jesus do it his way...

... He will gather his flock even in the smallest of gatherings.

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.
(Matthew 18)



If we are truly gathered in his name, and if he really is in our midst at this moment, the Lord Jesus will make his presence known to us the way he always does it:

1. He will cause us to hear his voice.

2. He will enable us to feel his power.

First, the Lord Jesus causes us to hear his voice.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me.

As we gather, as we pray, a word comes to us. It could be from a hymn, something someone says, a thought that comes into your mind. It's a word that cuts right into your heart. That word is a call to make a change....to get reconciled with someone....perhaps simply to have faith, "Trust me, don't give up. I'm with you." Maybe it's a call to repent of a negative attitude. A word... a living word!

Secondly, if we act on that word, the Lord Jesus then enables us to feel his power.

The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live. (John 5)

Jesus is not talking about those who are dead in their graves.

He's talking about people like ourselves, when we're distracted, preoccupied with ourselves, burning with resentment, driven by fear --- **spiritually dead**. He causes us to hear his voice.

If we perk up our ears and pay attention, and act on his word, we begin to feel his power. He raises us from our spiritual death.

His power may come to us as a touch of healing, or a rush of peace flooding our mind, a flash of insight that strikes like a bolt of lightning and turns us around. One way or another, we will feel his power, if we act on his word, because the Lord is gathering his flock, lifting us out of our worries, our troubles, our petty concerns, into the light of his kingdom.



He is doing this to give us a sample of the glory which will one day cover this earth.

But the blessing we receive today as we call on his name is only the beginning. If we are touched with the life of heaven today, it is only a foretaste. He is trying to get us to look beyond the troubles of the earth at this hour and see what Micah saw: the Day when....

***He shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.***

That's why he came.
That's why he died on the cross.
That's why he is among us now.

To get us ready....

... Ready for the Day when wars and rumors of wars, pandemics, famines, earthquakes, and strife will end. This world will be at peace. And all who answered his invitation to walk the walk of faith will join him in his New Creation on this earth.

Those who belong to him on the other side of death will come with him. Those who are scattered in the far reaches of this planet will be drawn to him.

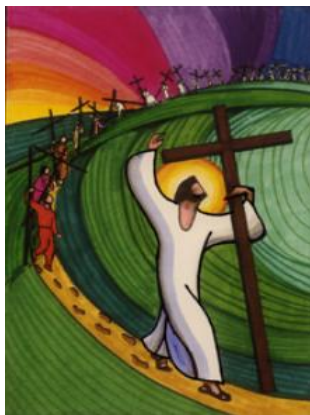
And there will be one Flock, one Shepherd.

***And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.***

This is what justifies our singing "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come!" Only this.

Meanwhile, today as we read this message, this is his word to us: (If it applies to you, you will know it.)

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand.



Prayer: Yes Lord, during this holiday season, especially, may we be fed by you, our loving shepherd. May we lift our voices in beautiful song and truly mean “joy to the world, the Lord has come”. May we experience your presence now as we hear your voice and feel your power. Give us Living Words. Raise us from our spiritual deaths. Lift us into your Kingdom, where we can be freed from the troubles of this world, now. Because you, yourself have fed us, you feed us now, and you will continue to feed us as we join you in your new creation. Amen.

Christmas 2009

Featured Art: By Francisco Borboa (Pancho) a Mexican national born in 1923 who lives in Taiwan. He was formerly a priest, has painted many murals, and has lived a long and very interesting life. No website.

POWER OBSESSION



When Moses married a black woman it was too much for his siblings, Miriam and Aaron.

Who does Moses think he is?

Is he the only one with power in Israel?

Maybe it's time we assert our power and put Moses in his place!

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman; and they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it.

While Moses was the undisputed leader of the vast Israelite camp in the wilderness, his leadership style was unique.

Moses ruled Israel, not from a position of power...

but from a position of meekness.

Through those 40 years as a shepherd, stripped of all his authority as an Egyptian Prince...

Moses had learned humility.



Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all men that were on the face of the earth.

And suddenly the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting." And the three of them came out. And the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the door of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forward. And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream.

Not so with my servant Moses; he is entrusted with all my house. With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech; and he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"

And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and he departed.

Numbers 12:3-9

From the day Moses met the Lord at the Burning Bush until the day of his death Moses was never power-obsessed.

The power of God moved through Moses' meekness.

Moses led Israel, not as a prince, but as a servant.

Miriam and Aaron simply didn't "get it".

"Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?"

Aaron was the one who made the golden calf while Moses was up on the mountain receiving the Law. And Miriam considered herself royalty. Did she not watch over Moses when he was a baby in a basket?

It was time for Aaron and Miriam to learn a lesson.

And when the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, as white as snow. And Aaron turned towards Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. And Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord, do not punish us because we have done foolishly and have sinned.

Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb." And Moses cried to the LORD, "Heal her, O God, I beseech thee."

But the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut up outside the camp seven days, and after that she may be brought in again." So Miriam was shut up outside the camp seven days; and the people did not set out on the march till Miriam was brought in again.

Numbers 12:10-15



Aaron and Miriam have lots of company in Christendom these days.

There are those who still object to Moses marrying that black woman.

And there are multitudes who object to a Moses' leadership style.

Moses was too meek.

Where was his charisma?

Christendom perceives power the way Aaron and Miriam did.

Christendom is power-obsessed.

Christendom is money-obsessed.

But the kingdom of God operates the way Moses did.

The way Jesus does.

***“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,
for I am meek and lowly in heart...”***

Matthew 11



Until we repent of our power-obsession and get under the yoke with the Master, we will continue stumbling in the wilderness with Aaron and Miriam.

***“But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher,
and you are all brethren. And call no man your father on
earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.
Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ.***

He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

Matthew 23



Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive us for our obsession with power and control. Help us to desire and appreciate the meekness, the humility that you so love. Help us to choose servanthood, not for accolades or brownie points, but because you are meek and lowly in heart...and we want to be with you, carrying your yoke. You have lessons for us that we cannot learn, we cannot live, we cannot understand... if we are power obsessed. Lord, we no longer want our pride, our arrogance, and our superiority to force us to continue to stumble in the wilderness, covered in shame outside your camp. Lord, we want to be with you, where you dwell. Help us, help us to lovingly embrace the gift of humility you offer us and let go of our power obsessions. Amen.

August 2021

Featured Artist: James Tissot...public domain

THE AUTHORITY OF BABES



The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

The authority of heaven rested upon these ordinary men.

How come?

Jesus explains:

And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

What qualified them to have such authority?

They were babes.

They were children, looking to Jesus to show them the way.

In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will."

Luke 10

A different kind of power.

This world's power is seized by the ruthless, the arrogant, and the bold.

God's power comes only to babes....

to those who draw near to Jesus....

And listen.

And believe.

And obey.



Across the earth today are many who carry heaven's authority simply because they cling to Jesus with child-like faith.

Spirits are subject to them.

Their names are written in heaven.

The curse of vanity.

When we marinate our souls in vanity the authority of heaven departs from us.

Faith is replaced by suspicion of anything simple.

We are no longer child-like; we're just gullible.

We gravitate toward voices that feed our suspicions and stoke our vanity.

Jesus walks into the room, and we roll our eyes and look at the floor.

We will remain blind until we “turn and become like children”.

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18



To be “great” in this world, we go for money, status, connections in high places---this world’s power.

To be “great” in God’s world, we simply “turn and become like children.”

And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."



Prayer: Good Father, forgive us for our arrogance, our vanity, our suspicions, our quest for being right. All of these draw us away from a simple trust in you, making us miserable and blind to your very presence and goodness. Help us to let go of our need to be right, our need for authority, our so-called wisdom and attitudes. Make us childlike... so trusting in you, so confident in you, so in awe of you, so in love with you that nothing can shake our faith. We ask for this childlike faith that defeats the enemy at every turn, this childlike faith that bring healing, this childlike faith that brings us victory and authority over evil...But most of all this childlike faith that brings us joy in who you are at all times. Amen.

June 2021

Featured Artist: Courtesy of Colleen Briggs at colleenbriggs.com

POWER TO GET THE JOB DONE



It's a dog-eat-dog world out there.

The folks on top are determined to stay on top.

The folks on the bottom are bitter enough to break windows and burn police cars. "What have we got to lose?" they shout.

Democracies are crumbling.

Dictatorships are stumbling.

Chaos is a fire burning across this planet with a will of its own.

"And then many will fall away, and betray one another, and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come.

Matthew 24:10-14

So who's going to "preach the gospel of the kingdom throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations"?

The church? In the shape it's in right now?

And you and I, where do we fit?

Who will proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to this teetering world?

Who actually has the power?

“If only the people up there on the top could be reborn, this world would be changed in a hurry. Convert the top dog, and he will convert the world!”

It’s been tried a thousand times and failed.

It looks like God has other plans.

God always seems to use the underdog to get the job done.



Jesus has been telling us this for two thousand years! So why are we still obsessed with the top dog—the man or the woman who has “power”?

The Top Dog

The top dog is the one with the brains, the savvy, who knows how to make things happen.

The CEO, the General, the President, the Bishop---they didn’t get there by being wimps.

These guys know how to do “whatever it takes.” They know how to take control...

How to increase profit.

How to shave expenses to the bone.

How to crush the competition.

How to weed out the “dead wood.”

How to be hard-nosed and “practical,” and sideline the
“bleeding hearts.”

After all, how can you run a business, an army, a church, without a top-down chain of command?

Yet Jesus keeps telling us that the Father uses the underdog to get his work done.

The Underdog

In the Kingdom of God the underdog is the one with the power.

This upside-down hierarchy is not an option for us; it’s a command from the mouth of the Lord himself.

Even though it has been ignored in Christendom for centuries, this command of the Master still holds...

"You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Mark 10:42-45

In God’s Kingdom the “chain of command” comes from below.

Way down at the bottom is a man wrapped in a towel, washing feet.



“You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.”

John 13:13-15

In God's Kingdom, power rises from the floor where Jesus is on his knees washing feet.

From that place he rules the universe.

Only those who are down there with him share in his power---

---a power infinitely greater than that of any dictator, general, or CEO, or mitred bishop.

“Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.”

Jesus commands us to lay aside our vanity

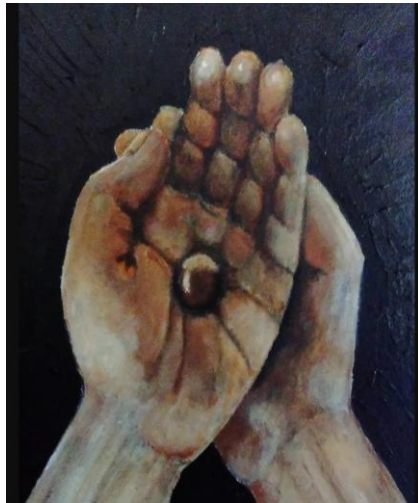
... and start washing feet

... in the shadows of obscurity, leaving the glory to God alone.

Giants of faith have altered the course of history. But the truly great servants in God's Kingdom will never be known on this side of glory.

Their power comes, not from their brains or their status, but from the simple fact that they are crucified with Christ.

These crucified souls are preparing the earth for Judgment Day through their simple obedience, their fervent prayers.



They are the ones who are holding back the powers of darkness until the appointed hour.

They are quietly spreading the fire of the gospel across the earth.

And now the Master invites us to give him our burden of vanity which we have carried for far too long, and join these servants under his yoke.

The Yoke

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:29

Under that yoke is Sabbath Rest. And as we learn from him who is meek and lowly of heart, Jesus imparts to us the power of his death and resurrection—the power that holds the universe together.

Let’s leave the “top dogs” to their vanity games,

... get under the yoke and receive from the Master the power ...



“to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom to the whole world as a testimony to all nations.”

And then the End will come.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, in the coming days where betrayal, lies, and hatred are so prevalent, where false prophets and wickedness flourish and love grows cold...help us to reject any power that takes us out from under your yoke. Lord, bring us back, bring us back to you. Bring us back to you, who knelt on the floor and washed feet. Forgive us for the times we have let go, for the times we see the power of the enemy and quiver in fear and anger. Forgive us for engaging in the swirling hatred. We lay our hearts before you, we lay our lives before you. Help us to stay faithful, focused, and to trust in your yoke, to trust in all you have taught us. May we continue to pray fervently for the powers of darkness to be held back. May we endure without dismay. May we embrace your power, the power of servitude, the only power to get the job done, so that we are your gospel to the whole world, proclaiming it with our lives until the very end. Amen.

LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH



"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Matthew 28

Sprawling refugee camps,
Devastated, war-torn cities,
Incessant bombing of innocent souls,
Corruption in the halls of power,
Suffering and pain everywhere you look!

So who's in charge of this mess?

"Nobody," replies the scientist, who trusts only data he can measure.

"If there is a God, he's blown it, for sure," says the skeptic.

"Artificial Intelligence can't even sort it out" admits the techie.

The atheist gazes at the heavens and declares, "It's all random!"

And yet, there is a mysterious order amid the chaos.

While the universe keeps expanding, history on this tiny planet is moving toward its Climax.

Knowing that its time is short, Evil, in desperation, grows more blatant.

But who is in charge?

Those early followers of Jesus fanned out over the Roman Empire with a simple message:

"Jesus is Lord."

Lord of Heaven and Earth

What did they mean?

The man who stepped out of his tomb in the early dawn of the first day of the week, was very different from the man they nailed to the cross on the eve of the previous Sabbath. This man is no longer confined to the world of time and space. He sits down to a meal with his disciples, and Eternity fills the room. They blink their eyes, and he's gone.



To this day, when we hear the sound of his voice, wind from the world beyond sweeps over our souls.

But who is he?

Everybody knows his name, yet few know who he is.

Up to the moment he died on the cross, Jesus was a man of flesh and blood. Truly human. He had to eat and sleep and look after his bodily needs like the rest of us. He experienced fatigue. He felt the sting of rejection and hatred.

**But when he emerged from the tomb,
Jesus was no longer bound by human limitations.**



This Resurrected One is Lord of heaven and earth.

He makes no effort to convince the skeptics, the agnostics, or the gurus of the East, that he is Lord. They will all find out in due time. Nor does the Lord waste time correcting "Christians" who regard him as their personal genie.

He leaves the arrogant ones to their delusions and continues to move with grace among those who tremble before the HOLY.

Because he is Lord of Heaven and Earth, the day will come when Jesus will sit in judgment over all nations, over every living soul. Even now, as Lord, Jesus allows evil to go only so far, before the fire falls.

He is the one who sees to it that the lost and forgotten ones are finally lifted up and showered with grace that more than compensates for their earthly misery.

Because he is Lord of Time, Jesus is never in a hurry. He vindicates his own at the right moment. He brings down the mighty from their seats with frightening swiftness, when the time is right.

The day is approaching when every soul who ever lived, every demon who ever defied him, will acknowledge that Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth.

***And being found in human form he humbled himself and
became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore
God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name***

which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2

When we pray in Jesus' Name, when we commune with him in the bread and wine, we need to remember who he is.



Not who he *was*, but who he *is* at this moment and forever.

Each time we partake in the mysterious meal of communion, joining ourselves to his dying flesh and blood, the Lord brings us afresh into his new Body. He joins our frail bodies to his Resurrected Body. He fits us, as living stones, into the new Temple which will never be destroyed.

When we approach heaven in his Name, as Lord of heaven and earth, he gives us access.

When we speak words of hope to the forgotten ones, our words are confirmed by his lordly authority.

When we defy the movers and shakers of this world with simple truth, that truth is confirmed by the power of heaven.

We are the salt of the earth ...so long as we are crucified and risen with the Lord of heaven and earth.

We are the light of the world....so long as the Light in us...is his light.

**He is Lord of this universe and worlds beyond---
past, present, and forever.**



**He is Lord of this earth,
the One to whom every knee will soon bow in awe.**

On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 19

Submission to the Father

When he stepped into the dawn light as the Firstborn of the New Creation, the Son of God assumed the divine prerogatives which he had relinquished when he entered the human realm. As risen Lord, he is King in the Eternal Realm. And yet, being the Son, he remains in joyful submission to the Father, who is above all. He is Lord of heaven and earth because the Father has imparted his authority to the Son. Jesus was not exaggerating when he said, "The Father is greater than I." Consider this profound conversation between the Risen Lord and Mary Magdalene.

Saying this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rab-bo'ni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

John 20

Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth, because the Father has made him so.

**His unity with the Father never changes.
His submission to the Father never wavers.**

We can know him, and walk with him, when we behold him, not only as the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world....

.... but also as Lord of heaven and earth.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Matthew 28)



Prayer: Lord, help us to know you as Lord of Heaven and Lord of earth. Help us to know you as Lord of this earth even as evil is ramping up and we feel powerless in the midst of growing wickedness and cruelty. No matter how dark and God forsaken this world looks to us, may we continue to move in your authority... knowing that you are real, knowing that you are not bound by anything, knowing you have defeated evil, knowing that we are yours, and knowing that you will never leave us. Help us to believe in, to bow and tremble before your holiness, so we may live and move in your heavenly power, so we may continue to shine with your light, so we may reach, guide, teach, and baptize the lost...drawing them into your redeeming arms so they may live in your earthly and heavenly power as well. Amen.

*from the unpublished booklet "People Get Ready" 2017 or 2018
Featured Art: Courtesy of Daniel Bonnell at bonnellart.com*

HE'S ABLE --- IF YOU'RE WILLING



Joash Shooting the Arrow of Deliverance (1844)

William Dyce

Now when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to die, Joash king of Israel went down to him and wept before him, crying, "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." So he took a bow and arrows. Then he said to the king of Israel, "Draw the bow," and he drew it. And Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. And he said, "Open the window eastward," and he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot," and he shot. And he said, "The Lord's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Syria! For you shall fight the Syrians in Aphek until you have made an end of them." And he said, "Take the arrows," and he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them." And he struck three times and stopped. Then the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck down Syria until you had made an end of it, but now you will strike down Syria only three times."

(II Kings 13:14-19)

There's a sinister thing going on in the world these days. Masses of people are being persuaded to believe that they have no will of their own.

They are giving up their will like men surrendering themselves to a hypnotic slumber.

They are like a ship plying its way upstream against the current that suddenly cuts its engines and allows itself to drift wherever the current chooses to carry it.

Maybe people are tired of being pushed from every side....

By voices which say, *"Do this!"... "Do That"... Try my product!"...*

Voices that lie: *"If you buy our motorbike you'll have lots of friends."*

Voices that threaten: *"If you don't use our soap, you'll have no friends."*

Voices that cajole: *"If you don't join our church you're going to hell."*

So they give up.

The engineers of the mind behind the commercials go on the assumption that you really have no will of your own. You are nothing but a complex of warring desires. If they can expose you to enough influences to strengthen your desire for what they offer, you'll buy.

They want you to say to yourself: *"I can't help what I am. I am a product of my environment. If I do things that are stupid, don't blame it on me, I'm sick ... If I push and step on others as I go after what I want, don't blame me. I was born with these drives. I've got to satisfy them."*

A man murders his neighbor in cold blood. When they bring him to trial, the experts say, *"Wait a minute!" Don't be so hard on the man! Can't you see he really had nothing to do with what he did? He was driven by a compulsion he just couldn't control. He's not responsible. He has no will of his own."*

More and more people think of themselves no longer as responsible persons, no longer accountable for what they do, heading toward a destiny they choose for themselves, be it Heaven or Hell. They think of themselves as problem---children who really can't help what they are. *"I've got to satisfy this desire, or I'll go out on the sidewalk and scream! I've got to have this; I've got to have that! Don't expect me to keep my promises; I'm too weak."*

And they get away with it, in this world at least.

Because no matter what they do, there's always someone who will stand by their side and say, *"Don't you dare touch Jimmy; He's a sick boy. His father never gave him the attention he needed."* It never occurs to anybody that somewhere down inside his sick little heart, Jimmy might still have a will. That in his sick way, Jimmy is somehow doing what he wants to do. That Jimmy manages to go where he wants to go and to avoid what he chooses to avoid. If Jimmy is ever to be healed, somebody's going to have to talk to that will inside Jimmy.

When our Lord dealt with people, whether they were sick or well, he treated them as people who had power to choose what they wanted to be and do.

Maybe their wills were frustrated.

Maybe they wanted to be good and always ended up being bad.

Perhaps they wanted to be well and were forever getting sick.

But there was will ... desire.

And Jesus spoke: **to their will.**

"What do you want me to do for you?" he said to the blind man.

"Do you want to be whole?" he said to the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda.

"If any one wants to come after me, let them deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me."



Never mind their weakness or stupidity or even their faltering faith. Only one thing had to be settled:

"Is this what you really want?"

"Do you want to walk again? Are you willing to take the responsibility that goes with having two strong legs? Do you want to see again? Do you want to be my disciple?"

When it was clear to Jesus that the man really wanted to walk a different road, the miracle happened.

"Come on, get up----your sins are forgiven."

"Go in peace----your faith has made you whole."

But when he came up against people who were unwilling to make up their minds, Jesus did not waste his time.

"Lord, I'll follow you, but first let me go and bury my father." "Let the dead bury their dead, but you go preach the Kingdom of God."

"Lord, I'll follow you, but first let me bid farewell to those who are home at my house." "No man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God."

When the will was divided, or when it was wishy-washy and listless, Jesus let them lie there and vegetate.

It may seem like a very strange thing for Elisha to tell King Joash to strike the ground with a bunch of arrows. But in telling Joash to do this, he was making Joash express his will. It was not within the power of Joash to conquer the Syrians. The Syrians were too strong. To conquer them would require a miracle. Joash has come to Elisha asking for the miracle. But how badly does he want it? Elisha can tell by watching Joash strike the ground with a hand-full of arrows.

We can picture Joash shrugging his shoulders and making a sour face and wearily tapping the ground three times with the arrows,

"So!" says Elisha. "That's all you care. That's all it matters to you, three times. All right, three times you'll conquer, and that's all. If you had hit the ground five or six times, if you had shown some will, God would have enabled you to consume the enemy, and they would never have bothered you again."

You too are called upon to strike the ground with your arrows to prove whether you really mean business about being a disciple of Jesus

----whether you really want to find the Kingdom of God

----whether you really want to walk as a man or woman of God

----whether you want to conquer this evil that troubles your conscience.

Are you giving the ground a couple of half-baked taps? Or are you taking your arrows and striking the earth like you mean business?

The power is here. The hands of the Son of God are stretched out toward you, and in those hands is power. But the power of Jesus Christ cannot work in you....

.... until you will it to work in you....

.... until you want it.

Sometimes people say, *"If only I could pray; If only I could lift up my voice to heaven and know that God hears me!"* Elisha says to them, "You want to pray? All right, take these arrows and strike the ground. Give me a sample of how badly you want to pray." Soon he finds that most of them are only talking. Oh yes, they'd like to be able to pray. It would be nice. But watch them fooling around with their little bunch of arrows.

They aren't even tapping the ground.

There's no will there.

Tomorrow they'll be on another kick.

**The man who wants to pray
takes those arrows and pounds the earth with them.**

He starts.

He does something... Even if it's just to get down on his knees and weep.

To him the Spirit of the living Christ draws near, opens his eyes to the unseen God, makes him to know that Someone is listening, His prayer is answered.

***"Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find,
knock and it shall be opened unto you"***

Strike the ground with your arrows.



Cache Wayne Forte

**Show that you mean business.
And God will answer.**

Or perhaps there's a certain change you need to make in your way of living, a secret problem you have that nobody knows about. You tell yourself that this thing that you're doing doesn't matter. It isn't hurting anybody. But you know it's destroying you.

"Lord, deliver me from this problem!"

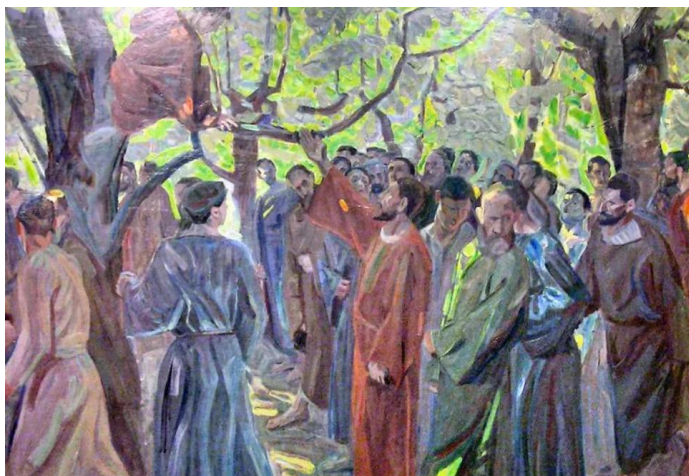
"All right," he answers, "Take your arrows and strike the ground. Let me see how serious you are."

There's some simple thing that you can do that will show God that you really want to change the way you're living.

**The instant you do that, he'll come in with all the
power you need.**

There was this little man who was very rich and whose past was very sinful. He was like the leader of the Mafia. He was the chief tax collector in the city of Jericho.

Nobody knew, to look at him, that this wealthy sinner was troubled. Nobody had any idea that he was yearning somehow to be able to change his life. He stood in the crowd that day waiting for Jesus to come through town, and the desire that was in his heart to be a better man, a different man, caused him to do a strange thing: Suddenly this wealthy leader of the publicans is climbing a Sycamore tree. He's puffing, sweat is rolling from his neck, but he keeps going until he gets up where he can see.



And what is Zacchaeus doing, climbing that tree?

He is hitting the ground with his arrows.

He's expressing his will.

He's shouting in his heart to Heaven, "Help me;"

And Heaven hears.

"Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at thy house," says the Son of God. That day salvation came to Zacchaeus. God changed his life.

No doubt we have a few Zacchaeus's reading these words....

You are looking for the Master. So far, you haven't found him. You're in the crowd, but you don't see him.

One question: How badly do you want to see Jesus?

Do you want to meet him badly enough to climb a tree?

To strike the ground with those arrows with all your strength?

To cry out to God with all your heart?

Jesus Christ is able to reveal himself to you.... able to transform your lifeable to make you into a son or daughter of God, when you prove to him that you are earnestly looking for his help.

"What do you want me to do for you?"

Do you want him to take you by the hand right now and lead you into the kingdom of God?

Now! Not tomorrow. Not the day after tomorrow, Not after you've said goodbye to all your friends.

Now!

If you do, tell him. Show him.

The power is God's.

But the will is ours.

God never violates your will. God is not going to move your will for you. He sends his Son to give you what you want. If you want Heaven, he'll give you Heaven. If you want Hell he won't stop you.

On the day when you are assigned your final place in this universe, don't try to tell God you were sick, that you

couldn't help what you were. God will tell you that on this day....

The nail-pierced hand of his Son knocked on your door.



It didn't force the door. It knocked.

You choose whether to open it or leave it closed.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we open the door to you now. Come in. Come in. We want you with us. We need you with us. Forgive us for allowing ourselves to drift, for surrendering ourselves to whatever comes our way. Forgive us for giving up, for not being serious in seeking you. Lord, we want to find you. We want to know you. We want to follow with all we have. We answer your call.... You are what we really want. Your way is what we really want. Make your presence real to us. Conquer every evil in our lives. Take our undefeatable issues, our helplessness, our anguish, the sadness, and the needs in our lives and work the miracles that only you can do. We strike the ground. We pound the earth with all the strength we have. We know you are able. We know you can do anything. We are willing to be healed, we are willing to see your hand, we are willing to open the door to your power, grace, and mercy. We are willing and you are able. Amen

2015

Art: All art in public domain except for Wayne Forte's piece Cache...with his permission.

WHOEVER HAS EARS...



Some people get it.

Some people don't.

Jesus never wastes time trying to convince those who have no ears for his message.

He says what he has to say and lets the seeds fall where they will.

Jesus is not a salesman.

He is not a debater.

Jesus is the WORD.

Jesus is God speaking.

“Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear!”

Jesus speaks to you.

Because he loves you.

He knows you inside-and-out.

He makes sure you hear what he has to tell you.

Then it's up to you.

“Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear!”

When I hear Jesus speak....

Do his words fall to the ground, or do they burn with fire as they enter my ears?

Do they reach my heart or dry up in my distracted mind?

Jesus’ words have unspeakable power.

But do I have ears?

***The Spirit is the one who gives life; human nature is of no help!
The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.***

John 6:63



Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear!

Prayer: Lord, thank you for speaking to us. Thank you for loving us enough to call us, to guide us, and to lead us to life. May we listen, may we hear, may your words burn with life within us. May we let go of what distracts us from following them. May we live and walk in the power of your words every day of our lives. Amen.

November 2020

Photographs: By Jon Tyson via Unsplash

ALL AUTHORITY



The Jesus who met the disciples for the last time on a mountain in Galilee was the same Jesus they had traveled with for more than three years.

Yet something about him told them he was not the same.

This Jesus was the First-born of the New Creation.

This Jesus was Lord of heaven and earth.

No wonder they worshipped him!

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

All authority.

Jesus sent these men out under that authority.

An authority which set the world on fire.



“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”

Matthew 28

Soon disciples of Jesus were found everywhere in the Empire. Little gatherings of believers sprang up in cities, towns and villages throughout the Roman world.

There was joy, zeal, a love for God and neighbor in these folks which the world had never seen before.

One could say that they gladly sold all they had to buy the field with the treasure---God’s Kingdom.

So what happened between then and now?

Only God knows.

But this much we do know: If God can raise up children to Abraham from stones (Luke 3:8) God can raise up laborers for his harvest out of “stones” like you and me.

He does it without violating our wills.

Jesus calls us each to follow him.

If we say “No” he moves on, and keeps moving on until he finds a “Yes”.

The Lord then takes the “Yeses”, empowers them, and sends them out....

not to build more churches,

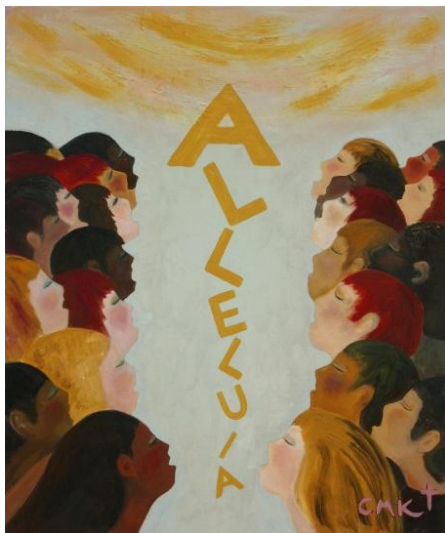
not to change the laws,

not to “take over the world”,

...but to make disciples.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...."



Baptizing them into his death and resurrection.

So that their lives belong to him alone.

Teaching them, by word and example...

---The life Jesus portrays in his Sermon on the Mount

---In the admonitions Jesus gives in his final discourse in John 13-17.

---In the call to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow him.

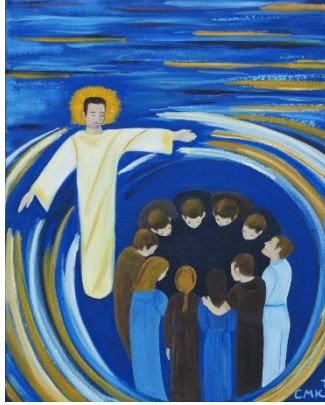
The Lord of heaven and earth will make it happen.

With us, if we answer his call.

Without us, if we choose to say "No".

But it will happen.

It's happening now.



“And lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”

Prayer- Jesus, Lord of Heaven and earth speak to our hearts so we can truly know your lordship, so we are awed, inspired and driven to not only seek you but to teach your commands, to make disciples for you. Help us to rise up and step out in the authority you give us to do this...knowing that we belong to you, knowing we are not alone and knowing we can set the world on fire because you are ever with us.

February 2021

Art: *Step Out and Match Light* by Mindi Oaten at MindiOaten and *Praise the Lord and I am with You* by CMK at Art4prayerUK

Maranatha Mirror Messages

mmirror.net



THE LAMB
WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN