

Sunday worship and attending Sunday School with your automobile. You are going to have to make some decisions.

You are going to have a spiritual shake out and shake loose. And see how much faith you really have. And how committed you are to Jesus Christ.

Now we are going to find out some of the things that go on behind the Iron Curtain, where people are paying to be Christians. They are paying a real price. For there you might lose your job. Your children wouldn't be permitted to go to College because you are a believer and belong to church. They have to pay a great price to be a Christian, and to worship, and to be publicly identified with God's people. But it has made them strong - the ones who are. They live in a dynamic faith. They are witnessing and they are growing.

But one of the most important questions - (the real energy crisis today) is spiritual and moral. It is not physical. As we look at our nation and discover what is happening at Water Gate. This is but a symptom - this is an evidence of moral decay within the society.

Now what about this shortage - is it real. Is the fuel oil short? Is the gas short?

Now there is no shortage - I want to say to you tonight - of the oil of the Holy Spirit. We just haven't had the motive power to do the work of God as it ought to be done. There is a shortage of personnel power and the power crisis is really a spiritual crisis. There is no shortage of power here. There is no energy crisis when it comes to God's work. There is an unlimited power at our finger tips who would tie onto the unlimited resources of God himself.

Now I am talking about God's business and God's power at work in the world

today. This Bible is an account of how God has made himself manifest in history. And in the lives of men and women. That is what the Divine power - Jesus said that you might know that God hath power over this world. That he has power to say arise and walk. Be healed. Go and wash in the pool. There was power that was manifested. There has never been an energy shortage with God. The miracles of the ages - of the Old Testament, are a demonstration of God's mighty power at work in the world. Visible evidence that God is on the throne. The kind of power that let Moses change a shepherd's crook into a snake. The power that was so mighty that the walls of Jericho fell without a shot being fired. The power that let David's sling become a weapon as he slew a giant. A power that caused the widows barrel of meal that had diminished to just a hand full - to be increased and to last throughout a drought. This is God demonstrating his power in the daily routine of human life.

The power demonstrated in the New Testament when Jesus had 5,000 people to feed and only a few fish and loaves of bread. There was an energy crisis there but Jesus multiplied it and fed them all. And tonight, I got good news for you -- that is what the Gospel means. What I have to say to you is good news. The greatest power in this world, came and took the body of Jesus after he had been buried in a tomb three days later. And brought him forth from the grave - alive forever more. Now Paul says this resurrection power is yours and mine. It is this power that will enable us to live victorious over every circumstance of life. The resurrection power. God is at work in this world. How can we tie onto this power.

Let me simply suggest tonight there are two or three things that we might do to solve the energy crisis, that is spiritual with many of you. There are three things that have power in them -- the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and the blood.

I. THE BIBLE

First of all, there is power in this book. And I am talking about the Gospel. It is the inspired word of God. Many figures of speech have been used to describe the power of this word. Jesus talked about a sower who went forth to sow his seed. He sowed it on rocky ground, hard ground, shallow ground, and finally fertile ground. In the parable, the seed is the word of the Gospel.

He promised it would not return unto him void. This is a great source of strength and encouragement to every preacher and Sunday School teacher. When you stand before your classes - you can say, God's word, not my word when you sow the seed in the Sunday School Class - it is going to bear fruit.

When the Preacher goes out to preach and sow the good seed of the word of God in his preaching, if there is one thing - he must commit himself too - it is to preach the word of God. There is power in the word of God. He cannot preach his own notions and his own ideas - because that will avail nothing. But he can stand there and sow the seed of the word of God in the hearts of people and it is going to bear fruit. Sometimes, it may be years later - when it will bear fruit.

Sometimes I am discouraged with the results of the services, on Sunday. You might preach and feel and know that some decision may be made - and yet, no one makes a decision. And of course, in the preacher's heart there is disappointment. He has prayed for someone - and some of you perhaps have felt the same way, that I have felt. But God knows - I am the sower. And I have seed to sow. And God has to give the harvest. Paul said, some have to sow, others water, and still others reap. There is power in the word. To be buried in the hearts of men and it will bring forth a hundred fold.

Now this is the hope of missions. That is why we send missionaries to the

mission field. It seems to be hopeless - but if you will go to different sections, it seems that the missionary might not be getting much accomplished. But he will tell you - I keep sowing the seed. It will take root and grow. In other sections, missionaries have labored without results. But this is the hope of missions - to plant the seed.

A missionary from Alaska last week told of the experience that had taken place among the Eskimos. One Eskimo woman who is now about 115 years of age, was finally led to Christ when she was 102 years old. She was not baptized until she was 105. They convinced her that the water in the church pool was warm. But following her conversion, she wanted to know something about the Bible. And the missionaries have taught her the word "Jesus". She recognizes the word Jesus when she sees it on the page. And so that is the way that she reads her Bible. She gets her Bible and turns the pages, and looks for the word Jesus. That is reading the Bible to her. And then one day, through some mysterious way, she discovered the word John. And she told the missionary that God showed her that word. And she wanted to know what it was. So planting the seed - sometimes it may take years. And yet that aged grandma in that North country has found Jesus in her heart and testifies to it by her attendance at worship. Christian friends, look upon the word of God as the sword of the Spirit. There is power in this book - The Bible. There is power.

A preacher was talking once with a young soldier from Ft. Knox. He knew that he was a zealous Christian - and he said to him, what is that bulging in your pocket. That is my secret weapon, he said. The preacher asked him what did he mean, he said they spent about \$25,000 training me - they put me out there running equipment worth about a million dollars. But this 25¢ secret weapon that I have is my real defense. And he pulled out a little Bible out of his pocket - he said everytime I am tempted to be weak, everytime I am tempted to

do some dishonorable thing - I just pull out my Bible and start reading. And you should see Satan run. Jesus uses Scripture - when Satan came in and Satan ran. He couldn't cope with this weapon. This is power - and there is power in the word of God, to strengthen you against temptation. To give you guidance in your daily life and to solve your problems.

I want to say there is no shortage of power here.

Romans 1:16 - Paul said I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ of God. For it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

And that is what we have in our text tonight. How great is his power.

There is nothing so unstoppable as the power of growth. We have seen a tree crack a concrete pavement with its growth. In London during the war there was a church prepared for harvest festival Sunday. On the Saturday came the first of the great blitzes and that harvest festival was never held because the church lay a heaps of ruins. On the table there had been sheaves of corn. The autumn passed and the winter. The spring came and there was a bomb site with little green shoots all over it. The summer passed and the autumn came again and on that bomb site there was a flourishing patch of corn. Not even the fire and the bombs could keep the corn from sowing its seeds and growing.

So this parable tells us that if we follow the right way we can leave the rest to God, for in the end the triumph is sure.

power that we discover the mighty
ing in us who believe.

s a glorious truth. There is not

II. THERE IS POWER IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

There is no shortage of energy or a real crisis when it comes to the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. We need to get the picture here - that the Bible tells us that the whole Spirit came upon the virgin Mary and that he shall be called Immanuel which is God with us. So Jesus came down in the flesh. And as God with us - in person.

But this God with us in person, said later - I must leave you. His Disciples did not understand this when he was hanging on the cross.

They really didn't understand it until Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came and suddenly they understood. Now we understand today. It is better for Jesus to leave us in the flesh that he might come back to be with us in the spirit.

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In the flesh, he could only be one place at a time. He said, this is God with you in the flesh. But this is not the way it is intended to be. God intended for me to be in the heart of every believer. That the power of the Spirit might be made known to him. Now the reality of God is available to everyone. God can be in our lives in the Holy Spirit. For example, it is better for a mother to be in her child, with her child. Isn't it better for a mother to be in my heart in ideals and purposes than with me. She is not with me physically now. But she is with me except she may be with me on special occasions. But she cannot be with me all the time. And that is what Jesus is talking about. He said it was better for him to be in you and in us,

That is why he went away. It is the will of God that we have

the Holy Spirit.

11 The Spirit Empowers

Wednesday, January 16

Acts 1:1-8

Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.—Verse 8

In the community where I grew up there was a small sawmill. As a child, I spent much of my time following Cousin Charlie Thompson as he kept everything around the mill running smoothly.

This sawmill got its power from steam pressure coming from a huge black boiler of water that was heated by a wood furnace from underneath. Everything was at a standstill around the mill until the furnace was fired up and the steam reached a certain pressure. The saw was run by the power made available from the steam in the boiler. As long as the steam pressure was up, the saw would run; but when the steam got low, the saw had no power from which to run.

As Christians, we stand helpless and powerless to do God's will without the power of the Holy Spirit.

is is that we don't realize this. We don't pretend to claim the spirit. We don't depend upon in terms of a historical figure. We think of ical event. Now this is the full Gospel. We fact that took place in the past. But there is an this. There is a presence and a power of the ork in our lives daily. Pray that the Spirit will it will use you.

III. POWER IN THE BLOOD

Now this means that when you come to the cross of Jesus and see him giving his life for us - we are cleansed. Our sins are covered. It is at this point that my name has been covered by his blood. Every sin I have committed.

It is like a bad record here and someone paints it out. And here is Jesus who takes the whole record and cleanses it and makes it white as snow.

That is what covered by the blood means. This life flow is available for us - for you and for me. We get the cleansing that comes from his life. There is power in the blood. So when we accept this basic concept that Christ died for me - then I am cleansed. Then I am made a new creature.

We are like a dead man in a coffin. Here comes Jesus - the source of all life to give us anew a second birth. Jesus said you must be born again. A committment of the heart to him. It is this committment that makes us saved. It is not going to church but it is the committment of the heart. Then we make a public acknowledgement of that committment.

There is power today if you will but use it.

There is power in the Bible, in the Gospel.

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is quick and powerful. He said.

There is power in the spirit for daily living. I Cor. 2:4 says, Here is a demonstration of spirit and of power.

And here is power in the blood to cover your sins. Your life may have been

defeated. You may have been discouraged. And you may have a feeling that there is no way out. *Here is a fountain*

Let me revert back to my text. In Eph. 1:19 - when he speaks of the exceeding greatness of his power to us that believe. He is pointing to the past and then he refers to the future. The limitless source that is available to believers. It concerns the present. Paul wants to inform the leaders of the passing greatness of God's power. It is a power that operates.

Now this is a remarkable text because it is the accumulation when he says, exceeding greatness of power. The working of power. That is the dynamite of power. The energy of power - which is strength. The might of power - he heaps all of this up in one idea.

Now even if this power is beyond description, Paul can never the less point to the supreme demonstration of it in the person of Jesus Christ. And he tells us that the realization of the power of God has supreme proof in that next verse. In the power of God in the resurrection. When sin had done everything in its power to destroy Christ, when men had gone the limit and given action to eliminate Christ, God's power is proof that in the resurrection God is strong^{er}-than man's sin. That God's purposes cannot be stopped. And so, God raised him from the

A volcanic eruption is more powerful than an H-Bomb; an earthquake is one hundred thousand times more powerful than an Atom bomb; a hurricane lifts sixty million or more tons of water and generates more power every ten seconds than all the electric power used in the United States in a year! One flash of lightning would keep any home lit for thirty-five years. Two years ago, Hurricane Carla, three hundred and fifty miles in diameter, one of the most violent hurricanes in recorded weather history, whirled in from the Gulf of Mexico onto the coast of Texas. She had ninety times as much energy as Russia's fifty megaton bomb and pushed forty-six million tons of water before her.

power is at work today in his believers, and it is none other than power that raised Jesus from the dead. And seated him on the throne was raised - he was made to sit on the right hand of God, and all things in submission unto him. So these two things are important.

The resurrection of Christ needs to be proclaimed to the Disciples of Jesus. And having raised Christ from the dead he further exhibited this power by setting him on his own right hand.

The obvious meaning is that here is a name which is above every name.

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