**OMNIPOTENT: THE GOD OF ALL POWER**

Introduction:

Probably some of the most amazing displays of God’s power we have seen is in nature - the power of lightning, the devastation of 120 mph winds, the fury of a tornado.

Have any of you ever been in an earthquake or a tornado? See the power of flood waters firsthand?

These are amazing in power, and yet they are nothing to God. In Matthew 8:23-27, the disciples are in a boat in a storm on the Sea of Galilee afraid for their lives, and they awaken Jesus who is asleep, and He rebukes the storm, and it obeys & becomes completely calm.

The disciples ask, “What kind of man is this?” He is the kind of man with power that even the storms obey.

I. The power of God

 A. In Job 26, Job describes amazing displays of creation, and in Job 26:14, he says, “And these (displays of creation) are but the outer fringe of His works; how faint the whisper we hear of Him! Who then can understand the thunder of His power?”

 B. God does not just possess all power; He is all powerful, limitless in power, infinitely powerful.

 C. A couple of weeks ago, we talked about God’s omniscience. If knowledge is power, God possesses all of it.

 D. Unlike us, God never needs to take a break to regain His strength. When I work out, I need to take breaks between sets to try to regain some strength. God never has to do that. “He does not faint or grow weary.” (Isaiah 40:28)

 After creation, God was not drained of one iota of His power. His power is infinite.

 E. What would you say is the greatest of all God’s creation? Man

So far in Psalm 139 we have seen the omniscience of God- He knows our thoughts before we even think them. We have seen His omnipresence- We cannot hide from His presence. And now we see God’s omnipotence.

Psalm 139:13-14

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

II. Our Strong Father

 A. As children, we love to brag about our dad being stronger than your dad. Children find security in the idea that their dad can handle the problems of life & protect us.

 B. Our human fathers have the desire to protect, but they are limited. This is not true of our Heavenly Father. He desires to use His power to protect us & has the power to do it.

 C. As humans, we have a limited amount of power, and we can use that power for good or for evil.

 1. Samson was the strongest man that ever lived. God gave him that strength to use as a judge against the Philistines. Instead, he used it for his own selfish purposes. Finally, in his death, he used it for God’s purposes.

 2. Likewise, we have a choice to make. We can use our strength to serve self or serve God.

 a. Persuasive speech can be used to motivate or to manipulate.

 b. Brawn can be used to protect or to brutalize.

 c. Genius can be used for the common good or for control.

 3. Possessing & using power feels good. But do we see ourselves as stewards of power or as owners of power? Will we use our power to advance God’s kingdom or our own kingdom?

III. Four of the most common sources of power in our culture as presented in four different magazines

 A. Sports Illustrated: physical strength as power

 1. We idolize those in our culture who dominate in their sport with physical strength.

 2. We call them superstars.

 3. We see this in the way we glorify fitness & marginalize those who don’t possess physical strength: the elderly, the disabled & the unborn.

 4. Physical strength that worships self degrades into intimidation & brutality.

 5. In contrast, when we exercise physical strength to glorify God instead of self, we protect the weak.

 6. Because of the way that God has designed women, they are biologically weaker than men. Therefore, they are to be nurtured & protected. (I Peter 3:7)

 7. All of us, regardless of how much you can bench press, are called to love God & others with all of our strength. James 1:27 says that true religion is to look after the weak & vulnerable (orphans & widows).

 B. Glamour Magazine: beauty as power

 1. Our culture gives power to the beautiful.

 2. Because people believe this to be true, they will spend thousands of dollars & hours of time to achieve or maintain physical attractiveness.

 3. The beauty industry feeds us the lie that if we fix the outside, we will fix the inside.

 4. But for believers, how we look doesn’t rank high on the list of factors that help us serve God & others as we should.

 5. True beauty begins internally. External beauty and its power will fade. But internal beauty – the unfading beauty of a quiet & gentle spirit - grows over time.

 6. External beauty is always tempered by getting to know them. Some people grow in beauty as you get to know them, and some fade in beauty as you get to know them.

 7. Whether we slave for external or internal beauty reveals where our treasure lies.

 8. How we treat others also tells a story. As believers, we are charged to show preferential treatment to everyone. We need to see the least among us and see them as beautiful when others don’t. This is true power.

 C. Forbes Magazine: wealth as power

 1. The rich among us often receive our admiration & envy.

 2. Money opens up opportunities.

 3. In our culture, the poor are often powerless.

 4. In America, the American dream is to be a “self-made” success and enjoy the spoils of your labor for yourself.

 5. The Bible tells us to be generous with our money.

 6. The question is, “Do you control your money or does your money control you?”

 7. If you are unable to give to those in need when you are financially able reveals you have lost control over your money.

 8. As believers, we need to use the power of money as stewards to elevate the condition of the financially powerless.

 D. People Magazine: charisma as power

 1. This is a person with a gifted, persuasive, funny personality. They know how to work a crowd & build relationships to forward their agenda.

 2. If we have this gift to whatever degree, the challenge is do I draw people to myself or to God? Do I use this gift to motivate or to manipulate?

 3. This person must use this power to give voice to the voiceless. Remember, our words have the power of life & death. (Proverbs 18:21)

IV. Jesus & Power

 A. Physical strength, beauty, wealth & charisma – some of the sources of power in our culture.

 B. Think about Jesus during His earthly ministry. Jesus did not impress anyone because of His physical strength.

When Jesus’ physical appearance is described in Isaiah 53:2, it says

 “He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him and no beauty that we should desire Him.”

Jesus did not possess any personal wealth nor did He use money to gain privilege.

Matt. 8:20

“Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

And though His ministry & message convinced many, He chose silence rather than persuasive speech when facing His accusers.

 Isaiah 53:7

“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth, he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”

 C. Jesus was rejected by the Jews in large because He did not use power as they had expected.

 D. Rather, knowing that all power belonged to His Father, He walked humbly among us, demonstrating total dependence upon God. (John 5:19,30)

 John 5:30

 Jesus said, “By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.”

 E. Even when God did perform a miracle through Christ, it was always to point people to God & for God’s glory.

 F. The greatest miracle of all – the resurrection – was all about showing God’s power to transform the human heart from dead to alive.

V. Power in the Life of a Christian

 A. Apart from Christ, we can do nothing. (John 15:5) In Christ, we can do all things. (Philippians 4:13)

 B. When we became a child of God, the Spirit of God indwells us, desiring to empower us to accomplish God’s purposes.

 Ephesians 3:16-21

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with **power**through his Spirit in your inner being, **17**so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **18**may have **power**, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, **19**and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

**20**Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to **his power that is at work within us**, **21**to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

 C. God’s power at work within us – it will help us overcome sin & grasp the extent of God’s love for us.

 D. God’s greatest demonstration of His power is the transformation of our heart into His dwelling place.

 1. His power shines in our weakness, conquering the power of sin.

 2. His power shines in my strength, turning it from selfish gain toward humble service.

Conclusion:

The truth of God’s limitless power would be absolutely terrifying if it were not paired with His limitless goodness.

He is no evil dictator. He holds all power and is all love. That is why we can trust He is able to work all things for our good.

Daily we witness the devastating effects of power misused by humans & natural disasters from living in a fallen world. One day, Jesus will come back and utter a final “Peace be still” and make all things right.

Until that day, may we use all the strength that God provides for His kingdom.

Small group questions

1. What is the most powerful act of nature that you have ever experienced? What happened?

2. How does the truth that God is All-powerful make you feel? Why?

3. In what ways have you seen the power of God in your own life?

4. What are ways that you think God wants to work His power through you? What do you need to do? Read Col. 2:28-29