

Series: Ephesians
Title: His Power to Keep Us
Date: July 14, 2013
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My subject this morning is: His Power to Keep Us

When a woman is dating a man it is the time when he is proving to you the kind of man he is and the kind of husband he will be.

- When he has proven he has no love for God, no love for God's gospel, no love for God's people.
- He has proven he is without the power of God abiding upon him so that he has no anchor, no godly principles by which he is guided, so that he has no stability, no steadfastness.
- He has proven he is not a man of his word.
- He has proven he is changeable, unstable, unfaithful, undependable, and untrustworthy.
- He has proven his love is meaningless.

If you marry him then he will be the same way after you marry him.

- He will be unable to fulfill all those great and precious promises he made to you
- Unable to provide for you and your children
- Unable to keep you
- Unable to protect you
- He will be unfaithful and untrustworthy.

A woman would be a fool to marry such a man, especially knowing she would be making vows before God.

In like manner, when we are hearing the preaching of the gospel, we are hearing who God is and what kind of Husband he is to us who are united to him by his grace. Our text begins in **Ephesians 1: 19: And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20: Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly places,...**

The great doubt that sometimes troubles God's saints is not whether God has power to raise us up from the dead in the resurrection, it is does our God have power to keep us right now.

Martha knew Christ had power to raise Lazarus in the resurrection. She said to Christ, "I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." It was his power to raise her brother at that moment that she, as well as those around her, doubted. "Some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" (Jn 11: 37) Martha's unbelief caused her to object when Christ told them to remove the stone over her brother grave. She said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days." "Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (Jn 11: 40)

It was that glory—the power of Christ's resurrection—which the Apostle Paul desired for the believers at Ephesus to know. He said that you might know **what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe**. I want for each believer here to know his power to usward who believe, that you might be assured more and more of Christ's power to keep us, who believe, and preserve us against that day.

The God I declare to you is the one true and living God who works mightily to usward who believe in the exceeding greatness of his power: "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (v11) Who "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the POWER that worketh in us." (Eph 3:

20) “Who are KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Pet 1: 5)

Proposition: Believer, the exceeding greatness of power that the true and living God mightily worked toward us—to redeem us, to regenerate us, to convert us—is the same exceeding greatness of power by which he shall KEEP us until that day when he calls us home to glory.

But not every one who professes to believe has cast their care into the hands of this Jesus. So for every professing believer under the sound of my voice, I have some questions for you.

I. HOW POWERFUL WAS YOUR GOD TO WORK REDEMPTION FOR YOU?

Did your Savior **obtain redemption** for you by his death or only make redemption possible? Did the God you believe justify you from all your sins by himself or did he depend upon you to do something to make his blood effectual?

If your god has no power to redeem you by himself, no power to justify you by himself because if your redeemer depended on you to make his blood have saving efficacy then your redeemer will not be able to keep you by himself because he is another Jesus, not the Jesus who is God, revealed in the Bible.

The Power by which God the Savior Keeps His People is the Same Power by Which He Raised Christ from the Dead—**V19...according to the working of his mighty power, 20: Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.”**

That exceeding greatness of power that raised Christ from the dead was not merely God’s omnipotent power; it was the exceeding greatness of the power of his holy satisfied justice working together with his holy faithfulness to keep his promise to his Son.

Above all else, God is holy.

Everything God does is according to, and consistent, with holiness. Everything God does is righteous and just because God is holy. Whatever is not holy, God cannot, and will not do. For instance: God cannot lie.

Likewise, God’s grace to guilty sinners is given freely in harmony with his holy justice. God is gracious to whomsoever he will be gracious. But God’s holiness demands that for God to freely forgive sinners each one of those guilty sinners had to die. The justice of God demanded it in order for God to remain holy and just.

We, being from our conception both mortal and guilty sinners could not satisfy eternal and holy justice. That is why God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. Christ, being holy Man could bear the sins of his people, bear our condemnation and lay down his life AND being eternal God he could satisfy eternal justice.

Romans 8: 3: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Christ was spotless Man therefore fit to be the substitute Lamb—remember the lamb in the old testament must be spotless and without blemish. It pictured Christ. Christ was proven just, under the law, so he was fit to bear the sin of his people. So “he laid on him the iniquity of all” those Christ came to redeem (Is 53: 6) When Christ was made sin then Christ was fit for God to pour out justice on him. So by shedding his blood unto death Christ who is also eternal God, obtained eternal redemption for us.” (Heb 9: 12; Ephesians 1: 1-7.)

Having finished the work the Father gave him to do, that same holiness of God demanded Christ be raised because resurrection and glory was what the Father promised to give his Son after Christ finished the work of declaring God just and of justifying his people. (Is 50: 6-9)

So God's power of holy satisfied justice together with God's power of holy faithfulness is the exceeding greatness of power that raised Christ from the dead. And all for whom he died were raised in Christ when he rose from the dead.

THIS IS THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF POWER BY WHICH OUR GOD PRESERVES EACH OF US WHO HE HAS CALLED BY HIS GRACE.

Romans 5: 6: For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7: For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Application: What sweet assurance you have believer—if your God justified you all by himself—he can keep you all by himself!

II. HOW POWERFUL WAS YOUR GOD TO BRING THE GOSPEL TO YOU, REGENERATE YOU AND CONVERT YOU?

Did your depend upon you to make you to be born again? Did your god do all he could do but then he had to wait for you to let him save you? Did your god have to wait on you to allow him to give you faith and repentance? If so then your god will not have power to keep you, not even when you face that chilly Jordan of death—your god does not even have power to resurrect you by himself because any god that depends upon the sinner for anything is not the god of this bible.

That same exceeding great power of his holy satisfied justice and of his holy faithfulness that demanded Christ be raised from the dead also demands all for whom Christ died must be born of God, given faith to receive this gift of eternal life and kept by God for that is what the Son prays of God the Father. (Jn 17)

Psalm 2: 7: I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee. 8: Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Here is what Christ asks for:

John 17: 1: These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3: And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4: I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5: And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. 6: I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. 7: Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. 8: For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. 9: I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10: And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11: And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be

one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13: And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest KEEP them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17: Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18: As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19: And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20: Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.--[that tells us that the world that God so loved that he sent his only begotten Son are those the the Father gave to the Son whom the Son gives eternal life that we may be one in Christ the Son in God the Father.]--24: Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.--[look back to the end of verse 23: and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me—since before the foundation of the world.]—25: O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. 26: And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Each one whom Christ has redeemed is born dead the first time. (Eph 2: 1-3) But just like when Christ walked this earth and went to each one whom he called by his word—because he “must needs go”, because he had “certain”—chosen, elect, children—in those places.

By his exceeding great power, he sends his gospel to each of his lost sheep wherever they are in this world, as he said—“for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” And through their gospel “Christ will declare the name of God to them,” as he said. And the Holy Spirit regenerates each one and gives each faith and forms Christ in them—“that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”(Eph 2: 4-10 if time)

Paul said,

1 Corinthians 2: 4: And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

And our God and Savior—keeps each of us because the Son in whom he delights—our Advocate with the Father—makes intercession for us praying—“Holy Father, **keep** through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are....I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”

Application: So believer, if your God had power to bring the gospel to you, to regenerate you, and to convert you all by himself—he also has power and shall also keep you all by himself.

If you are hearing this for the first time, be sure to understand this: Believers are regenerated and given faith to believe because God the Father chose us and Christ the Son redeemed us. Regeneration and faith are the fruit of his election and redemption, not the cause.

Free will religion has that backwards, saying, regeneration and faith is the cause of election and redemption. They say the reason their god elected sinners is **because** he foresaw who would believe. Their faith is the cause of his election and redemption—which is contrary to the scriptures—the exact opposite of the gospel.

If you think about it, according to the free will workers doctrine, their god is either blind or he knowingly shed his blood in vain. Because if their god only elected sinners that he foresaw would believe and their Jesus died for all sinners without exception then either he foresaw that all would believe—in which case he is blind since all do not believe. Or their Jesus shed his blood in vain for some he knew would not believe. Either way, that god has no power to save because such a god is at the mercy of sinners to do with him as they will.

Truth says, “I was given spiritual life by God and faith to believe because God the Father graciously chose me in Christ and Christ graciously redeemed me by his blood and the Holy Spirit graciously regenerated me and gave me faith to believe.” That is the sovereign, all powerful God of the Bible.

So believer just as the gift of eternal life and the gift of faith is by the exceeding greatness of God’s power because the power of God’s holy, satisfied, justice and the power of his holy faithfulness to his Son demands it so too he shall keep us for the same reason!

III. ONE MORE QUESTION—THIS CONCERNS YOUR POWER: DO YOU HAVE POWER TO KEEP YOURSELF FROM EVEN CATCHING A COMMON COLD?

Then do you have power to keep yourself in faith? To bruise Satan under your feet? To subdue powers and principalities and rulers of the darkness of this world? Do you have power to keep yourself from spiritual wickedness in high places? If you don’t have power to keep yourself from getting a runny nose what will you do against tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

You may see the foolishness of the woman who marries the man proven untrustworthy but do you see the foolishness of being joined to a god with no power to do as he will!

Those of us whose God and Savior did the redeeming himself, the regenerating himself, the converting himself—we “keep ourselves,” as John said, only by committing all to Christ. Paul said,

“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that **he is able to keep** that which I have committed unto him against that day.” (2 Tim 1: 12)

2 Corinthians 12:9: And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me...13:4: For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

Now, believer, here is the power of our Redeemer to keep us—this is where we are in him—God the Father...**v20:...set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23: Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.**

Paul called this exceeding greatness of Christ’s power—**“the power of his resurrection”** To those called by his grace, the power of his resurrection says:

- The full penalty to offended justice has been paid for you he has called. *“There is therefore now, no condemnation to them who are in Christ.”*
- The power of his resurrection says to us he has called that the righteousness of God is mine; *“he made him sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”* You whom God has called have been made as righteous as God in and by Christ.

- The power of his resurrection says that we have full acceptance with God; *“we are accepted in the beloved.”* When God raised Him, *“he raised us up together with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenlies.”*
- The power of his resurrection says that death has no more power over Christ—he dies no more—therefore, I die no more; Christ said, *“I am the resurrection and the life. He that liveth and believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”*
- And the power of his resurrection says to you he has called that he shall keep us--*“all things are under Christ’s feet”* therefore *“all things are under our feet.”* Preacher, it doesn’t look that we—“but we see Jesus.”

Paul called this exaltation power Christ was given at his resurrection, “the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Philippians 3: 21 The word ‘subdue’ means “to put under, to put in subjection unto himself.”

So rest assured, believer, when God the Father raised Christ and subdued all things under Christ’s feet, doing so, he guaranteed you who commit all to him “that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Php 1: 6) That is His Power to Keep Us!

Amen!