

## What God's Power Can Do For You

“One day Adam was moping around in the Garden of Eden, feeling very lonesome, and so God asked him, ‘What’s wrong Adam?’

And Adam answered that he didn’t have anyone to talk to.

So God said He was going to give him a companion, and that it would be a woman. He said that this woman would cook for you, wash your clothes, always agree with every decision you make.

She will bear your offspring and never ask you to get up in the middle of the night with them. She will not nag, and will always be the first to admit she was wrong in a disagreement.

She will never have a headache, and will freely give you love and compassion.

Adam asked God, ‘What will a woman like this cost?’

God said, ‘An arm and a leg.’

Adam said, ‘What can I get for a rib?’ The rest is history.”

Yes, one person’s act of compromise can have some serious side effects, can it not? Thank you Adam! But that’s right folks, believe it or not, did you know this kind of compromise continues on right on up to today with Christians? Uh huh! And **the One** we’re compromising with **is with God!** And it doesn’t just effect us, it effects the people around us! And that’s because, whether we realize it or not, our lives as Christians are **motivating people** to do something, whether we see it or not. They’re watching us!

And so that's the question, "What are our lives as Christians **right now** motivating people to do because it's motivating them to do something. Are they being motivated to seek God? Or are they being motivated to run away from God? And I say that **again** because I truly believe we are living in a time when we are being served up **by God** with a **golden opportunity** to reach our culture like never before, in our present economic situation. I mean, think about it. While everyone is scrambling to make it through these hard times and they're facing extreme difficulties, losing jobs and homes, and all kinds of things, we have the privilege to **motivate them** towards Jesus Christ! They're hearts are being prepared to receive the Gospel! But the problem is, if we're honest with ourselves, most of the time that's **not** what we're doing! And the reason why is because just like Adam did in that story, we too are compromising with the things of God. And again, I think I know why. **We have simply forgotten Who God is...**

Therefore, if we don't want to miss out on this golden opportunity, I think we better keep on reminding ourselves just Who in the world God is, right? And the **first characteristic** about God that we've been reminding is that **God is Powerful**. And last time we saw that **God Is SO Powerful** that **There's Nothing He Cannot Do**. He can do whatever He wants. And He

demonstrates that by **Saving Anyone He Wants** and **Supplying Any Need He Wants**...He can make biscuits out of thin air!

But that's still not all. It gets even better. You see, the Bible not only shows us what God's Power is like, it also shows us **what it can do for you**.

And the **first thing** God's Power does for us is that **It Gives Us Strength**.

But hey, don't take my word for it. Let's listen to God's.

**Philippians 4:10-13** "I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

Now folks, I don't think Paul could've made it any more plain than that as to where we get our strength from. It only comes from who? From God right? But what you have to keep in mind it that when Paul said this, he wasn't on vacation and he didn't just inherit a million dollars. No! He was in a deep, dark, stinky, rat-filled dungeon, and what did he say? He was **content** in that situation. Why? Because **God gave Him the strength for it!** That was the secret he learned! And people, lest you think this was just some isolated case with Paul, let's take a look at some of the other things he had to endure.

- He worked harder than anyone.

- He'd been in prison more than anyone.
- He'd been flogged more severely than anyone.
- He was exposed to death again and again.
- Five times he was beaten with 39 lashes.
- Three times he was beaten with rods.
- Once he was stoned.
- Three times he was shipwrecked.
- He spent a night and a day in the open sea.
- He was in constant danger from rivers, bandits, his own countrymen and gentiles, and false brothers.
- He labored and toiled often without sleep.
- He often went without food or water and clothing.
- He daily felt the pressure and concern for all the Churches.

Now I don't know about you guys, but I'd say Paul wasn't just having a bad day, he was having a **bad life!** Could you imagine going through all that and **still** being content? How in the world could he survive all that?

Oh, but Paul wasn't the only one. There's examples all over Scripture. How about **Gideon**? He and 300 other men took on and defeated thousands of their enemies. And later, Gideon single-handedly defeated a whole town! Or how about **Samson**? He rips the massive gates off of a city and proceeds to take them up to the hills. And then all by himself he killed 1,000 guys coming at him with the jaw-bone of a donkey! Now how many of you have ever had a day like that? That's kind of rough, don't you think? I mean, I've had some bad days, but nothing like that!

Yet, the point is that somehow those guys not only survived, but they came out on top! Why? Because they realized what we have forgotten that

it's God and God alone Who **gives us strength!** That's what we need to remind ourselves if, amen?

Oh, but that's not all. The **second thing** God's Power does for us is that **It Gives Us Courage.**

**Daniel 3:16-18** “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if He does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

Now folks, I don't know about you, but I'd say, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were having a bad day, how about you? I mean, here they are going up against the world ruler of that day who just happened to be threatening them with **death on the spot** by throwing into a fiery furnace, and what'd they say? In the Crone translation they said, “Take a hike king! We serve the Almighty King!” Now people, that's just a little bit **courageous**, don't you think?

Oh, but Daniel's three friends aren't the only one's who had courage when they needed it most. There's examples all over Scripture. How about **Moses** going up against Pharaoh? Here's an 80-year old guy taking on a world power and giving them orders to let tens of thousands of their slaves go free. Can you imagine doing that today? Or how about David going up

against Goliath? Here's a 12-14 year old going up against a seasoned warrior who's over 9 feet tall!

Or how about **Foster Walker**, who accidentally walked into a bank holdup in Memphis Tennessee? As soon as he walked in the robber pointed the gun at him and ordered Walker to give him his money. So what did he do? He said, "You just go ahead and shoot. I just got through reading my Bible and I've already said my prayers. And Walker, a man in his 60's, just turned and walked away."

Or how about this **Christian grandmother** from South Dakota. They were in their motor home when a 120-pound mountain lion leaped through the window and began to maul her 18-month old grandson. So what'd she do? She said, "All I kept saying was, "Give me a knife! Give me a knife!" And her husband gave her a butcher knife and she jammed it in and twisted it in the lion's heart and killed it. Later she said she prayed to the Lord for the strength and courage to hit the right spot, and He did."

Or how about what **C. T. Studd**, a Christian missionary said, "Some people want to live within the sound of a Church or chapel bell. But I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell!"

Now I don't know about you guys, but I'd say those people were just a little bit courageous, how about you? **Why?** Because they knew what we have long forgotten that it's God and God alone Who **gives us courage?**

Oh, but that's not all. The **third thing** God's Power does for us is that **It Gives Us Protection.**

**Titus 2:14** "Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good."

Now, on the surface, this passage does not seem to speak much about God's **powerful protection** towards His children. That is, until you focus on the phrase, "a people that are His very own." In the Greek, it literally means "a people of His own private possession." And it's made up of two words, one which means "**around**," as a circle, and the other which means "**to be**." And the picture in the Greek is like having a person totally surrounded by a circle. It's like we walk around with a **God bubble** surrounding us, totally protected. Isn't that awesome? Therefore, nothing enters the sphere of our lives without His divine permission. And if God allows it, it must serve a good purpose because He's a good and loving God. That's how powerful God's protection is!

In fact, the Bible shows us that God's protection is not only 2-dimensional, it's **multi-dimensional**. For instance, we have God **before us**

(Isa. 48:17), God **behind us** (Isa. 30:21), God on our **right** (Ps. 16:8), God on our **left** (Job 23:9), God is **above us** (Ps. 36:7), God's arms are **underneath us** (Dt. 33:27), and His Spirit is **within us** (I Cor. 3:16). Now I'd say that's pretty well protected, how about you?

And this brings us to The **fourth thing** God's Power does for us is that **It Gives Us Hope**.

**Romans 15:13** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Now folks, I think it's pretty obvious where our hope come from. It comes from God, right? And when does it fill our hearts? As we **trust in Him**. And people this is the whole key to **experiencing** God's power. You see, we don't get the hope we need to make it through life when we have all the answers and all details figured out. We don't get it after all the problems go away! No! That's not when we need it. We get it as we trust in Him for strength, courage, and protection **during our difficulties**. And people, this is why the Bible says over and over again, that Christians **should not** be filled with worry, anxiety, or even fear. Why? Because even though we might not "see" God's power moving, it's still nonetheless real. **And this should give us hope!** In fact, most of the time we don't even recognize God's power moving in our lives until after the fact, like this missionary learned.



“A missionary on furlough told this true story while visiting his home Church in Michigan. He said, ‘While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, every two weeks I traveled by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies.

This was a two-day journey and required camping overnight at the halfway point. On one of these journeys, I arrived in the city where I planned to collect money from a bank, purchase medicine and supplies, and then begin my two-day journey back to the field hospital.

Upon arrival in the city, I observed two men fighting, one of whom had been seriously injured. I treated him for his injuries and at the same time talked to him about the Lord Jesus Christ. I then traveled two days, camping overnight, and arrived home without incident.

Two weeks later I repeated my journey and upon arriving in the city, I was approached by the young man I had treated. He told me that he had known I carried money and medicines.

And he said, ‘Some friends and I followed you into the jungle, knowing you would camp overnight. We planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. But just as we were about to move into your camp, we saw that you were surrounded by 26 armed guards.’

Well, at this I laughed and said that I was certainly all alone out in that jungle campsite. But the young man pressed the point and said, ‘No sir, I was not the only person to see the guards. My five friends also saw them, and we all counted them. It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone.’

Well, at this point in missionaries address, one of the men in the congregation jumped to his feet and interrupted the missionary and asked if he could tell him the exact day that this happened. So the missionary shared the date and the man who interrupted him told him this story.

‘On the night of your incident in Africa, it was morning here and I was preparing to play golf.

I was about to putt when I felt the urge to pray for you. In fact, the urging of the Lord was so strong, I called men in this Church to meet with me here in the sanctuary to pray for you.

And then he asked if all of those men who met with him on that day would please stand up. And when they did, the missionary wasn't concerned with who they were – he was too busy counting how many men he saw. There were 26.”

People, it really is true. We may never see God's presence or even fully understand His power, but it's nonetheless real. He totally surrounds us at all times. And it's **trusting in this truth** that gives us hope for **today!** You see, in reality there are no hopeless situations. There's only people who've given up hope. How? **By losing sight of God** and His power to do what He says He'll do.

And people this is the awesome message that we have the privilege to tell the people around us, “God not only exists, but through Jesus Christ people **really can** have an intimate personal relationship with the Creator of the universe **before it's too late!** He is the One Who they need! He is the One Who has the **power** to turn all their circumstances around...He is the one Who Alone can **save them** both **now** and **forevermore...****if** we would just **get motivated ourselves** and not get caught up in our own circumstances, and get busy telling them this wonderful good news! Amen?

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To find the way to God, to understand the *truth* of God's Word, and to received the gift of eternal *life*, begin by repentance and faith through a prayer like this:

“Dear God, I understand that I have broken Your Law and sinned against You. Please forgive my sins. Thank You that Jesus suffered on the cross in my place. I now place my trust in Him as My Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”

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