

## The Power at Work Within Us; Ephesians 3:20-21

### I. The Holy Spirit

- A. Power is such an interesting word with many definitions
  - 1. Merriam Webster's has 9 main definitions with sub definitions totaling 21!
  - 2. Potential for functioning, power, might, strength, force, capability (BDAG)
- B. Jesus began His ministry with the Holy Spirit
  - 1. Mark 1:9–11 (ESV); <sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
  - 2. Luke 4:1 (ESV); And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness
- C. Just as Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, so are we
  - 1. The Holy Spirit descended on (filled) Jesus at his baptism
  - 2. Acts 2:38 (ESV); And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
  - 3. The Holy Spirit fills us at our baptism
  - 4. The same Spirit that enabled Jesus to resist the Devil's temptation is the Spirit that dwells in us
  - 5. Ephesians 3:14–19 (ESV); <sup>14</sup> For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, <sup>16</sup> that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith— that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

### D. Strengthened by the Spirit for faith and love

### II. Faith

- A. The dwelling place of Christ — in our hearts
- B. The 'inner being' is not the physical person, but the spiritual person, our soul
- C. The heart is the seat of physical, spiritual, and mental life (BDAG)
  - 1. The source of our whole inner life, with its thinking, feeling, and volition
  - 2. A poet once said that the heart embraces perception, wit (reasoning power), intellect, and reflection
  - 3. It is the spiritual life that Paul is talking about here
- D. Faith should be our whole, complete inner life
  - 1. It should dominate our thinking, our feeling, our volition (will)
  - 2. It should guide our perception of the world around us — we should interpret all we see, feel, and hear through a spiritual lens that focuses on Jesus' sacrifice
  - 3. It should guide our ability to reason — we should see everything in a spiritual light, based on our faith in Jesus and our purpose to proclaim Him and God's Kingdom
  - 4. It should dominate our intellect — our knowledge of Christ should surpass all other things in this life
  - 5. Philippians 3:8 (ESV); Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ
  - 6. We should always be struggling with the text (Scriptures) — reflecting, meditating, digesting the very words of God so that we can reflect the image of His Son
  - 7. This is why faith is more than just belief — it is a way of life, both physical and spiritual

8. This is why we walk in “newness of life” — we are new creatures
  9. Romans 6:4–6 (ESV); <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.
- E. Hebrews 11:6 (ESV); And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

### III. Love

- A. Rooted — firmly fixed (BDAG)
- B. Grounded — to provide a secure basis for the inner life and its resources, establish, strengthen (BDAG)
- C. Love should be the foundation of our lives
  1. Everything we do should be done from a standpoint of love
  2. It is our foundation and we should be firmly fixed to it
- D. The commandment is to love as Jesus loved
  1. John 13:34 (ESV); A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
  2. 1 John 2:7–11 (ESV); <sup>7</sup> Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. <sup>8</sup> At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. <sup>9</sup> Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. <sup>10</sup> Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. <sup>11</sup> But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
  3. Keep in mind, John says this right after he talks about walking in the light versus walking in darkness (vv. 5-10)
  4. 1 John 4:19–21 (ESV); <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. <sup>21</sup> And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.
- E. If there is one command the resounds and echoes from the Old Testament it is love
  1. Matthew 22:37–40 (ESV); <sup>37</sup> And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the great and first commandment. <sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”
  2. “As a door hangs on its hinges, so the whole OT hangs on these two commandments” (BDAG)
  3. God, desiring to show his love for us, allowed Satan into the garden knowing Eve would fall into the temptation — all this so that God could come down in human form (His Son, Jesus) and sacrifice Himself for us
  4. God is love manifested
- F. Is it any wonder that He wants us to be rooted and grounded in love?

### IV. Within Us

- A. The Holy Spirit is at work within us
- B. He gives us power to be steadfast in our faith
- C. He gives us power to love sacrificially