

# Power! Power!

by James Smith

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*We need spiritual power to overcome our feebleness and accomplish great things for God, and we can receive this power through faith, perseverance, and dependence on God.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:29, Zechariah 4:6, Luke 11:13, Acts 1:8, Acts 4:31, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 4:13, 2 Timothy 1:7, James 4:2

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

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## Description

James Smith emphasizes the crucial need for spiritual power in the present day, highlighting the weakness and feebleness of Christians despite the abundance of means of grace and opportunities for holiness. He stresses the necessity of being filled with the Spirit of power from on high to deepen sanctification, increase comforts, and become more like Jesus and His early followers. Smith urges believers to long for the conversion of sinners, the dedication of all who profess Christ, and the growth of model Christians who glorify God. He reminds the congregation that true power comes from God alone, and encourages them to earnestly seek the Holy Spirit for zeal, benevolence, and devotion to the Lord's service.

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## Transcript

We greatly need spiritual power in the present day. We abound in means of grace, in opportunities to do good, in incentives to holiness; but we are very feeble! Who that hears us pray, sees us work, or studies our characters--but must see that we are weak, and, though Christians, very much like other men! We need to be endued with the Spirit of power from on high. May the Lord impart his powerful Spirit to us in greater measure than we have ever received or enjoyed it before; that our faith may not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The wisdom of men can do little for us in the world in which we are engaged, and, if our faith rests on that, we shall surely fail.

What is it we need? We need to have our corruptions subdued, our sanctification deepened, and our comforts increased! We need to be holier and happier! We need to be more like Jesus and his early followers! We need to be just what his precepts require us to be. But this we shall never be--unless we receive the Spirit of love, power, and of a sound mind, in greater measure than we ever have yet.

Then, what is it we are longing for, and aiming at, as to others? Is it not to see sinners converted and brought to Jesus? To see those who are impressed and seeking the Lord, thoroughly decided for him? And to see all who profess the Savior's name, devoted to the Lord's service, active in the Lord's ways, and

working heartily in the Lord's vineyard?

In a word--to be ourselves model Christians, and to see all around us growing up into Christ, and laboring to glorify his name? O for glowing zeal, active benevolence, and self-denying devotion to the Lord's service!

But to bring about such a state of things--to whom shall we look? In vain we look to man, for the power is not in him. He may be learned, zealous, eloquent, ardent, and devout--but the work is beyond his power! The power of God, and the power of God alone--is able to accomplish it. O what a mercy, that with God, all things are possible; that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us!

Man cannot; God can.

We are feeble; our God is omnipotent.

We are but instruments; the Lord is the great agent in accomplishing all that is good and great.

We are commanded to attempt it, and his strength is made perfect in our weakness. Without Christ we can do nothing; but we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. "Power belongs unto God." But then he has promised to give power to the faint, to strengthen us with all might by his Spirit in the inner man. His power was exerted in his apostles, who became remarkable for holiness and usefulness; and that same power has been given to all in measure, who have ardently desired it, and earnestly sought it. If we have it not, it is because we do not set our hearts on it, and diligently seek it, or because we seek it for some impure and improper purpose. For God was never more willing to give--than he is now. The promise was never more true--than it is now. The throne of grace was never more accessible--than at present. And surely the world and the church never more needed the power of God than now.

It was possessed in fullness once, it has been displayed gloriously in times past; and as Jesus, the giver of power, is the same today, in our need of it, as he was yesterday, when his church possessed and exercised it--then the reason for the deficiency must be sought in ourselves, why we have it not.

Let us then realize our lack of power, and the responsibility that rests upon us on this subject. Let us not blame others--but ourselves. Let us not make God's sovereignty the scape-goat to carry away our sins of neglect, indifference, and lack of faith and fervor in prayer; but let us humble ourselves before God for our selfishness, our love of ease, our conformity to the world, and our worldly minded churches. Let us also take off our dependence from every creature, and from everything in man--and fix it on the power of God alone. Then we shall not draw back because of difficulties, tremble before our foes, or pronounce anything necessary to be impossible. Let us believe the promise of the Savior to his waiting, watching, praying disciples, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you."

Precious Savior, he went to heaven to procure the Holy Spirit for his church, and promised to send that Divine Comforter in his stead to abide with, work in, and work by his disciples--and he kept his word! That word still stands good, that he will give the Holy Spirit unto those who ask him. Let us then believe his promise, and pray with downright earnestness and perseverance for the power of God. It is no use our complaining, finding fault with others, or wishing for a different state of things in the world or the church, without this. This is the great remedy for all our evils, and this remedy may be obtained--but not in the way many people take; no, we must deeply feel our need, deplore our condition, realize our guilt, confess our

sins, and, in dependence on divine grace--make up our minds to give the Lord no rest until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high.

God is willing--are we? God is ready--but not to sanction our coldness, indifference, and worldliness. He will give--but we have no right to expect until we feel our need, believe the promise, and plead it in faith with perseverance. God may deny us--if we are not earnest; but if like Jacob at Peniel, if like Elijah at Carmel, if like the Syrophenican woman, we will not be put off--but show that we are sincere and earnest, he will open the windows of heaven and pour out a full blessing upon us. "Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, therefore will he be exalted that he may show mercy unto you." O Lord, give power to pray, power to believe, power to persevere, and then give the power we need to work with success!

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