

WCCC 2022

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Knowing the Power of His Resurrection (1)

Philippians 3:10 'To know Him and the power of His resurrection'. We are thinking of this wonderful verse which so filled me. The key to all of this is knowing Him, of course. And I am asked to share on knowing Him and the power of His resurrection. Now it may not occur to us immediately, but Paul was in the midst of a great battle, in jail, waiting for his fate. Whether he would be free or imprisoned, he was fighting a spiritual battle in there. And so we can understand the request of his to the Lord that he wanted to know Him more and the power of His resurrection. And this is the ground of overcoming in all life. When the Lord raises us up with His great power, it is indeed a mighty name that can overcome our enemies. I want to read a long passage in the book of Ephesians. This morning we just want to get a little glimpse of the resurrection power. Paul was praying for the Ephesians that they could see a revelation of this resurrection power.

Ephesians 1: 15 – 23; 2: 1 - 7

Verse 19 is the verse that we are going to think about this morning.

Paul saw a great revelation – the power of His resurrection in Jesus Christ. And now he wanted to apply it to our lives.

Prayer:

Lord, we come to you this morning and thank you for these precious words. We want to mix these words with faith and belief. And we ask that you give us a revelation, and a spirit of wisdom that comprehend how to apply this power of resurrection in our life. Lord, how we need your Holy Spirit to breathe upon us in these times. We yield ourselves under this throne of Jesus who is above all. We commit this time to you in the mighty name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

The book of Philippians was written towards the end of Paul's life. Most people believe that it was written at the same time as the books of Ephesians and Colossians. And in all these three books, Paul made mention of the power of resurrection and how it applies to us. Philippians is a personal testimony of Paul's pursuits. And in his testimony, he included 'to know Him and the power of His resurrection'. You may ask yourself why after thirty years of service of the Lord as an apostle, Paul still wanted to know more of the power of resurrection.

If Paul is like me, he was praying for it because his body was getting weak. He was an old man like me, beaten up many times. He needed his power of resurrection to get up in the morning and drink his tea. But I think it is much more than that. When Paul wrote to the Colossians, they had all kinds of trouble of the young people getting into strange theologies. But Paul applied the power of resurrection. He said if you died with Him and raised with Him, seek the things above and forget about these kinds of theology stuffs. The pre-eminence of Christ trumps any theology and philosophy.

But this morning we will put our attention on Ephesians. And I want you to notice this one more time, what was Paul praying for? He was praying for us to receive the revelation of the surpassing greatness of His power towards us who believe. Now we know the power of resurrection has its origin in Jesus. Actually, when Jesus walked on this earth, He did not have the power of resurrection. He was the I am. He was the I am the resurrection and the life. At that time all the power He was exercising was given to Him by the Father. You say He raised up Lazarus from the dead. But that was not resurrection power because Lazarus still died. We are talking about the resurrection in that you have an invincible life where you never die again. We know our Lord, after ministering, gave His very own life on Calvary to die for us. Without His death on the cross, there would not be any resurrection for you and me.

Today we are going to look at the story of Ephesians. When Jesus was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit of God, He ascended up and is exalted to sit down at the right hand of God. Once He sits upon that throne, all power and authority are placed in Jesus' hands. After Jesus resurrected, He told His disciples, 'All power has been given to me. Go and make disciples.' This was anticipated for what would happen when He got up to heaven and sit next to the father. And when He sat down, a power switch was thrown at Him. And on the day of Pentecost, He switched on the power of resurrection from heaven and electrified the one hundred and twenty disciples praying in the upper room. They were made alive by the Holy Spirit – flames of fire over their heads. A fire that filled the hearts of these people. And they went out into the street and said, we got something to tell you: Jesus rose from the dead and we are witnesses. And in one day, three thousand people got electrified by the power of the Holy Spirit. It was because the Lord promised in Acts 1 – 'and you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. You shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria to the uttermost part of the world'. Now you know what happened in Jerusalem. Jerusalem got a whole new power grid. Many miracles were done. Many healings and many people were released from evil spirits. But do not forget the disciples had the key because they had been given the mighty name of Jesus.

You remember Peter and John and the lame man by the temple. The lame man was begging there. Peter said, silver and gold I have not, but in the name of Jesus, get up and walk. And the lame man got up and started to walk. The

people came around and said, these men have power. And Peter said, we do not have any power; the power is from Jesus. When He walked through Jerusalem, you killed Him. God raised Him up and this is the result. In the name of Jesus, this man is healed. Another five thousand people were saved. The story in Ephesians was amazing. We reviewed simply how the church in Ephesus got onto the power of resurrection grid. It was of course the Lord Jesus who turned on the power grid in heaven. It became such a spiritually powerful church that when Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Romans, John moved to Ephesus where it became kind of the center. Whenever something happen the power company has to come and lay down the infrastructure. So God sent Aquila and Priscilla to Ephesus to open their house. And then came Apollo who began preaching Jesus in the synagogue in Ephesus. He was so successful in preaching Jesus as the savior that we know at least twelve people got saved and were baptized. Now there were at least fourteen people in the synagogue, the twelve that were saved and Aquila and Priscilla. And then Paul, Silas and Timothy came to town and the switch was switched on. And Paul created trouble everywhere he went. He went to the synagogue and then he met these twelve young disciples. He asked them whether they believed in Jesus as the Messiah and they all said Amen. Paul said there was something missing and it seemed that they did not have power. He asked them whether they knew about the Holy Spirit? They did not know who the Holy Spirit is. Paul brought them to the river, baptized them and then they were electrified by the Holy Spirit and were filled with the power of resurrection. Suddenly Ephesus was on the heavenly map. Paul might be there for a few weeks. But then he caused too much trouble and got kicked out of the synagogue. And then he went to Corinth and preached in the middle of the city and many got saved.

Acts 19 recorded extraordinary miracles done by the hand of Paul. People were getting healed, and evil spirits were being cast out. Then along came the seven sons of Sceva to the synagogue. Sceva was a well-known high priest whose seven sons were no good. If you were a high priest, you have to make your sons into something. So they became exorcists. I do not think they were very effective. They saw Paul casting out demons in the name of Jesus. And they tried to exorcise one who had wicked spirits saying, I adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preached. And the man who was possessed with the wicked spirit leaped upon the seven sons and overpowered them. This was recorded in the book of Acts because this was sort of a turning point.

The Ephesians have been watching Paul preached. And when they saw the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, people became convicted. In the light of the gospel, they saw good and evil. Just like the young people today. They can see what is good and what is evil. When they saw the gospel changing people's lives for the better, they saw more of the darkness and the evil that pervaded throughout the cosmopolitan. The people started to confess that they had been involved with witchcraft and magic. They burnt the magic books whose total worth was about half a million dollar. So powerful was the testimony of

these brothers in Ephesus that it seemed as if the risen Jesus Christ was standing over the whole city and building the church as He toppled the gates of hell.

And through great spiritual opposition, the church was built. The work was so expanded that when Paul finally left, he had established seven teachers and evangelists and sent them all over Asia minor to give the testimony of Jesus Christ as mentioned in Acts 20. The work went on for about three years. Eventually they poked the bear. The church of Ephesus was having such good evangelism that eventually the dark power over the city of Ephesus began to get mad. About one hundred and fifty years ago, a meteorite fell out of the sky and the people thought it was the God Artemis. They built this temple which took one hundred years to build and was one of the seven wonders of the world. And in the temple were all kinds of idols and darkness. The whole city was based upon tourism and people would go there and spend money. The principalities of the city stirred up the business men in the city and they started a riot. They had a big protest in the city arena for a couple of hours. Luke told us that half of the people there did not even know what the protest was about. That was the kind of things the devil stirred up. Paul wanted to walk in there and talk to the people. But the disciples would not allow him to do so. Do not poke the bear.

But through this experience we can clearly said that the Ephesians have experienced the tremendous power of resurrection. And they experienced the power in two fundamental ways. First, they experienced the saving power of Jesus Christ delivering them from their sins and bondages as they found faith in the name of Jesus. And second, for those who were saved, they found the power of the Holy Spirit as they witnessed throughout the city and in the region of Asian minor. I cannot see how today we cannot feel the desire of Paul to know the power of His resurrection to deal with the darkness in this world.

With all the sinfulness going on in the United States, you never hear one word of the word 'sin' being the cause of all these. Another consequence of sin is immorality. Today in this world of darkness, the power of resurrection can still show the people the difference between good and evil. I was wonderfully encouraged when I went to the Christian Family Conference in Richmond. It was in the beginning of this month and there were about five hundred people. Many of those who came are those who have been coming for years. A lot of them are like me, old people. But something touched my heart. About the second night of the conference, there were about fifty-two high school students and about thirty college students. I have never seen them before. They all sat together in the front. My wife and I were sitting behind them. Some of them said, can we sing 'These are the days of Elijah'? Some of these young people stood up and threw up their hands in the air and committed themselves to the witness of Jesus Christ in these last days. I was so encouraged to see yet another group of teenagers and college students in this age who are fervent in their purpose for the Lord. I pray for these young people when they went back to their

old sleepy church. We should be ashamed if our church is off the power grid. Do you know how a whole generation of young people who are not Christians think of the church? It is boring. Young people today are searching for reality. And they cannot find it in reality. And so they are searching for it in science fiction. And this generation who cannot find reality in the spiritual reality are finding their reality in virtual reality. The church now growing in reality right now is a virtual church.

Brothers and sisters, there is a spiritual reality right over our head in the heavenly place. Right over us there is this spiritual war and also the spiritual power who reigns. We can talk about it but our prayer meeting does not seem to be like a war room. Except when we come to pray for all the people who are sick. Then we have a lot of warfare. So while all the world is searching for reality, just show them the reality. But if all we can give them is a form of godliness which denies the power thereof, they will not find the reality among us. If the Lord tarries, I wish to see the torch of the testimony pass on to the generation z before I pass away. As we draw to the end of the age, we have to live in the power of resurrection.

Now I have to show the scriptures that we have talked about. Let us turn back to Ephesians 1. Let us think about this. The church has been established for more than ten years when Paul wrote this letter to them. And of course, they had seen the outward power of resurrection working in the city and in the church. But Paul had the burden that they might see by revelation this great power of resurrection. This spiritual reality is crucial to our growth. It is easy to see the outward anointing in the ministry. In Ephesians 3, Paul prayed that they may be strengthened with power by the Spirit in the inner man so that Christ may dwell in their heart through faith. He wanted the Ephesians to be able to see the power of resurrection. And even in his prayer in Ephesians 1, he already mentioned this. There was a great mystery going on and Paul was revealing it. 'For the administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, in Him.' Let us look at this with a simple picture. God is right now summing up all things in Christ. In the past meetings we have used the words 'heading up all things in Christ'. Here is the importance of the power of resurrection. I will see if I can put this in an oversimplified way. There is a great electric magnet in heaven drawing all things up under Christ. The first thing to be brought up is the church because He is head over all things in the church. By the power of resurrection, things are being brought up into heaven by the magnet. Think of the power of the magnet. It has to overcome our rebellion. It has to bring it under the blood. It has to bring it into submission under the headship of Christ. And it has to bring the whole church under Christ – headed up all things in Christ. This is a powerful magnet fulfilling the eternal purpose of God. And to do it, the power grid has to be on and the power of resurrection has to be there.

Let us look as Paul explained to reveal this power. First, he needs to reveal the power that raised Christ from the dead. Ephesians 1: 19 – 20 ‘and what the surpassing greatness of His power towards us who believe, according to the working of the might of His strength, in which He wrought in the Christ in raising Him from among the dead, and He set Him down at His right hand in the heavenlies’. Many Christians are so thankful that Jesus has died for them. But our eyes need to be opened to see the exceeding greatness that raised Christ up from the dead. Let me ask you, how many gigawatts of energy is needed to raise someone from the dead. The end of mankind is death. Up until the time that Jesus died on the cross, death is irreversible. Yet God raised Him from the dead. Our mind cannot think of how a body that has been dead for three days can be raised up on high. How can the body survive and the heart gets pumping again. How can the blood be filled with oxygen? How can all the nerves get reattached. How can the skin make fresh again. This is a great mystery. But it is all accomplished when the Spirit of the holy God raised Jesus from the grave, never to die again with the spirit, soul and body.

In Romans 1: 3 – 4, we see the details. ‘Concerning His Son (come of David’s seed according to flesh, marked out Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by resurrection of the dead) Jesus Christ our Lord’. The son of man died and the Son of God arose. He was declared, this is the Son of God by the resurrection of the dead. This is the first step of the exaltation of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Brought to life by the breath of the Holy Spirit. The second step is in Ephesians 1: 20, He was raised from the dead and He set Him down at the right hand in the heavenlies. When the disciples stood on Mount Olives and saw Jesus ascending slowly, defying gravity, it was an unforgettable sight. Who can understand this? He was raised up and sat at the right hand in the heavenlies. He was exalted. The power of resurrection changes the whole order of things in the heavens. Ephesians 1: 21 said, ‘above every principality, and authority, and power and dominion’, even the disciples could not see what happened beyond the cloud. In the heavenlies there was a great stir of change. Revelation 5 said, ‘out of the throne of God comes the lamb with the scroll’. Satan’s plan to become the son of God was crushed and he was thrown down out of the heavens, soon to be thrown to the earth and then to the bottomless pit. And all those principalities and power and all the evil forces around were brought down and made a footstool for the Lord Jesus as He sat upon the throne. He was not only far above all principalities and power; His name is far above all names and far above every name not only in this age but also in the ages to come.

Therefore, it is said in Philippians 2:9 – 11, ‘wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and granted Him a name, that which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of heavenly and earthly and infernal beings, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to God the Father’s glory’. There is no reversal to this power that has gone forth. Now He has already been exalted on high. And this power of resurrection has now become His as the exalted Lord. And now He has the exclusive power over everything regarding the

church. (Ephesians 1: 22). Of course He is the head of the church. But not just the type. In the real church He rules. He overrules and sets man free. And it is more than that. He has been given authority not just over the church, but everything around the church and all things concerning the church. He is the head of the church. When the church lives under an open heaven, it cannot be touched by anything except by the permission of this glorious Lord.

A few chapters later, it said He is made head of the church and He fulfills all things with His own life. What kind of power it is. Ephesians 4: 10 'He that descended is the same who has also ascended up above all the heavens, that He might fill all things'. How great is this power. He fills you with the Holy Spirit. He gives you some of His gifts. He raises up men of God to serve. He has unlimited love and power given to the church. You need to see the exceeding greatness of His power given when He was raised and exalted and seated on high. Our fears, our discouragements and our disappointments are there only because we do not see who He is and what has happened. Of course, in Ephesians 1, Paul was not trying to tell us about resurrection of Jesus. What He wanted to have revealed to us is the exceeding greatness of His power for us who believe. Jesus is exalted and He has this exceeding great power.

Ephesians 2 is Paul's continuous thoughts. Ephesians 2: 1 'and you, being dead in your offences and sins'. What is the word that is opposite to the resurrection that has an invincible life? It is dead. Most of us when we first got saved did not realize that we were really dead. Maybe I was on my way to hell but I was not dead yet. Maybe I was convicted of sins in God's eyes and was going to die but was not dead yet. Maybe I can sense my spirit was completely dead to God. Maybe I can see all my sins and know that the wages of sin is death in my body. But I did not realize that I was really dead. When you believe in the Lord, did you know that you were really dead? Why did you not know you were dead? It is because you were walking dead. Ephesians 2: 2 'in which you once walked according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience'. But you thought you were alive. Adam thought he was alive and lived nine hundred and thirty years. But he died in the garden of Eden even though he lived another nine hundred and twenty-seven years. It is because walking dead has its own energy. You were walking according to the power of this world. The world has its own kind of life. It is such a shame if you are saved by the life of Christ and you are still walking according to the force of the world.

Be filled with the Spirit and get onto the grid. There is this whole spiritual world above you. Look at the Corinthians. They were saved but still filled with all the ambitions, prejudices and pride of this world, walking according to the courts of this world. God does not want any of these in His church. No wonder we cannot feel the power of God when the church is walking in the world.

Then Paul led us on to see deeper that it was not just according to the power of this world but also according to the power of the prince of the air. You think

today what is in the world is just something there and that Satan is not behind them? Satan accuses us twenty-four/seven so that we do not know that he is the one hiding behind this evil worldly power. I read an article which said that there are five main lies that Satan uses to accuse us and weaken our spiritual life. One: I cannot. Two: God will not. Three: No one cares. Four: I do not matter. Five: It is too late. He put these five things in our hearts day and night. No wonder the enemy wears us out. If you do not wake up in the morning and get yourself under the precious blood of Jesus Christ, the devil will get on your back all day long with lies and accusations. And in Ephesians it tells us that it is the devil who is behind all these evils. There are so many people rebelling these days. But they do not even know what they are rebelling against, or arguing for, or holding demonstrations for. They are just in a spirit of rebellion. And to be honest with you, I see it among young people as well. The world is very powerful. You can see a young Christian person who behaved so very well in the church. But when he goes out with his friends, he has an entirely different spirit. And you can almost see in their eyes. And this is the son of disobedience. And not only is the world against us. It is not only the devil who is against us. It is our own flesh who has done us in. Ephesians 2: 3 'among whom we also all once had our conversation in the lusts of our flesh, doing what the flesh and the thoughts willed to do, and were children, by nature of wrath, even as the rest'. I do not know whether you see in revelation how sinful you were.

Paul wanted to share with us what the power of resurrection can do in our lives. We then come to Ephesians 2: 4, a wonderful verse, 'but God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love wherewith He loved us'. The end of verse 3 said we were by nature, children of wrath, period. But God with His divine mercy said, let us erase the period and put a comma there to continue the story. But God being rich in mercy raised you up from the dead. God has great mercy and love or else we will never have the chance to know His great mercy and saving love through the Lord, Jesus. God has a heart too full of love and He cannot help it. He breathed on you the breath of life and the power of resurrection upon your dead life. So, we see these three great verbs before us. He quickened us, that is make us alive. He raised us. He seated us together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. But how can He do that? How can He quicken us? How can He raise us? How can He sit us up there? Each one of these three verbs has something in front. Each verb has a little prefix. And in Greek, it has the word 'sun' in front. And that one word means with or together with. How can we possibly be raised up. It is because we are raised up together with Christ. Christ died, you died. When Christ was buried, you were buried. When Christ resurrected, you were united with Christ in His resurrection, never to die again. Quickened together with him. The devil knows you were condemned to death. But Jesus united Himself with you. Took your sins. You became righteous. It said that we are raised up with Him. Whatever energy it takes to raise Christ up from the dead and exalt Him up in the sky into heaven, it is the same power that raises you up.

I cannot imagine the generating power. No power can compare with the energy it needs to raise you up from the dead and seat you in the heavenlies together with Christ. We may think it is not such a big thing to be raised up and be seated up in the heavenlies. But if we can see the revelation of this power, we should be living on a higher level. And it is a shame that we do not live on a higher level. If we can see, then we have a heavenly view from the perspective of the eyes of Christ. We have been taken to a higher ground. This is not a picture of us taking up with Him in the heavenlies just on occasions in prayer meetings or that this may happen sometime in the future. This is a position that has been given to us in Christ where we are seated with Him. This new found position by revelation should transform our bread breaking, prayer meetings and all meetings. That is where you are. There is one more thing. And there we are today, sitting by the grace of God. We are saved, exalted, seated in the heavenlies and here we are given a corporate testimony.

In verse 7 it said, 'that He might display in the coming ages the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus'. The angels forever look at the church and said wow, look at the grace of God. No wonder the power grid changed in heaven and the angels seem to have the lack. The power of resurrection has done it in your life and in mine. This position is the eternal evidence of Jesus' love. The enemies of this world can accuse God when they see the tragedies going on in this world. But the salvation of the sinners who can be saved and exalted and seated with Christ in the heavenlies is a testimony that silence those who said God could not love. All of these are stated in the scripture. Paul said I want you to see this by revelation.

You may hear all of this and said I am outside. If you do not feel part of that which we just described, then I can tell you that there are only two places that you can sense this reality. Are you in Christ? That's where the power is. Are you there in Christ? Is Christ's life united with you? If you have not really come into Christ and this all sounds outside of you, then by faith step into Christ. And you will begin to experience the power of His resurrection. And the second place would be are you under Him? This is applied specifically to Christians. You may be in Him but not under Him right now. You have not submitted to Him yet. You are unconsecrated. And your electricity could be dead. Your batteries worn out. Brothers and sisters, above us in this meeting place, there are many angelic activities. So, when Paul prayed for the Philippians, he really prayed for all of us. Lord, I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection.

Prayer

Lord, we do pray for all who are here today. You have given us so much. You have blessed us so much. O Lord, cover us so that the vital position can be restored in these last days. Yours is the power, the kingdom and the glory forever. Amen.