

“Thy Kingdom Come”
Lesson 4. The Power of the Kingdom
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Introduction: Power has always caught the attention of men.

- A. God has manifested Himself by great displays of power.
 - 1. His creation shows His power. **(Rom 1:20)**
 - 2. Miracles also showed God’s power. **(Lk 9:1; Acts 8:19)**
 - a. The greatest of miracles occurred in the resurrection of Christ. **(Rom 1:4; 1 Cor 6:14)**
 - b. We should long for that resurrection. **(Phil 3:10)**
 - 4. He has a wisdom that is manifested in His written word. **(Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 2:4-5)**
- B. Satan, the great counterfeiter, also has a display of power.
 - 1. He uses lying wonders. **(2 Thess 2:9)**
 - 2. He has the power of governments and their officials. **(Lk 22:53)**
 - 3. He has a wisdom that uses the flesh as the basis of decisions. **(1 Cor 1:18-19)**
- C. When power is properly seen then the one manifesting that power receives praise. **(Psa 145:4,10)**
 - 1. This is true in creation and all manifestations of God’s power! **(Psa 139:14)**
 - 2. There are those who choose to glory in the power of Satan. In the end however they will find this too will be a lie!
 - 3. How is God’s power displayed in the kingdom?

I. God’s power is displayed in us by a changed life.

- A. Our conversion is described as a change from one power to another. **(Acts 26:18; Col 1:13)**
 - 1. What is the greatest manifestation to others that the power has worked in us?
 - 2. Consider the change of conduct from one power to the other. **(Tit 3:3-4)**
 - a. Consider what was said of Paul. **(Gal 1:23-24; Eph 3:7)**
 - b. Can the power of God be seen in you?
- B. Consider the strong manifestations of God’s power in us.
 - 1. Our response to suffering and slander. **(2 Tim 1:7-8)**
 - a. This by itself may open hearts by the power of God. **(1 Pt 2:12)**
 - b. Is this easy? Can we do it on our will alone?
 - 2. The joy and peace in our hearts that comes from hope. **(Rom 15:13)**
 - a. The world is startled when its wisdom is rejected.

“All that is not eternal is eternally out of date.” - C. S. Lewis

- b. There will be a few who see the vanity of the world and long for something fulfilling.

“I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast so set eternity within my heart that no earthly thing can ever satisfy me wholly.” - John Baillie (1741–1806)

- c. Will you be the one to display the power of God?

3. The love of God in our lives. (**Eph 3:17-21**)

a. Jesus plainly taught this. (**Jn 13:34-35**)

b. What do others see in you?

“Joy is love exalted; peace is love in repose; long-suffering is love enduring; gentleness is love in society; goodness is love in action; faith is love on the battlefield; meekness is love in school; and temperance is love in training.”

II. God's power must be received.

A. Our conversion is described as a death, a crucifixion. (**Gal 6:14**)

1. Without this death God cannot reign in our hearts.

“A young seminary graduate came up to the lectern, very self confident and immaculately dressed. He began to deliver his first sermon in his first church and the words simply would not come out. Finally he burst into tears and ended up leaving the platform obviously humbled.

There were 2 older ladies sitting in the front row and one remarked to the other, "If he'd come in like he went out, he would have gone out like he came in.”

2. However when this does occur a “new man” will be seen. (**Eph 4:20-24**)

B. It is possible to have a service that is only talk!

1. When our hearts are not under God's control then there is no power. (**2 Tim 3:5**)

2. Who is pleased with the hypocrites in the church? Who gets the glory?

C. We must constantly fight the flesh and yield to the teaching of God. (**Col 1:9-11**)

1. Can a dead man live? (**Rom 6:2; Col 2:20-21**)

2. It is not easy to let the power of God remain in us each day.

III. God's power in us provides the only real purpose for life.

A. We must continually see our proper role in the kingdom.

1. God can use our weakness to His glory. (**2 Cor 12:9-10; 13:4**)

2. To the world this is a great paradox. (**2 Cor 6:7-10**)

“This was the strength of the first Christians, that they lived not in one world only, but in two, and found in consequence not tension alone, but power, the vision of a world unshaken and unshakable.” - Harry Emerson Fosdick

3. What occurs when we decide our personal glory is our purpose in the kingdom of God?

4. For discussion make a list of events in this life where our weaknesses serve to the glory of God. Why is this so?

B. There is no greater purpose in life than to know we have glorified God.

1. We must remember what glorifies God! (**2 Thess 1:11-12; 1 Pt 4:13-14**)

“Eternity will not be long enough to learn all he is, or to praise him for all he has done, but then, that matters not; for we shall be always with him, and we desire nothing more.” - Frederick William Faber

2. This is the eternal plan of God! (**Col 1:27**)

3. Do you realize the great opportunity you have as a Christian?

Conclusion: Whose power are you following?

A. Every man's life tells a story. What is it for you?

B. What a great blessing it is to be in God's kingdom.

State of The Church

Luther Blackmon

I listened the other night to the president's *"State of the Union Message."* As a citizen I am understandably concerned about the state of the Union. But I am more concerned about the state of the church. Earthly governments come and go. No matter how long it may stand, this nation of ours must finally yield to the inexorable demands of time and human imperfections. During World War II, I heard a British sailor say, when asked for his opinion on the outcome of the war, "there will always be an England." But he was mistaken. The great empire on which "the sun never sets," along with the United States, the richest and most powerful single nation on earth, must finally share the destiny of such nations as ancient Egypt, Babylon, Assyria and Rome. They will pass into oblivion and become nothing more than names in history. But the church is here to stay.

A Kingdom Which Cannot Be Moved

From such passages as 1 Cor. 15:52 and I Thess. 4:15 we know that there will be Christians living on the earth when the Lord comes. The writer of the Hebrew letter says we have received a kingdom "which can not be moved" (Heb. 12:28). Whatever benefits earthly governments may be able to bestow, whether lucrative positions or pauper's pensions, they are necessarily temporal and confined to this world. My mother was receiving an old age assistance check each month when it became my sad duty to inform the proper authorities that she had passed from this life. No more checks came. She had passed beyond the reach of any earthly government to either help or harm. But the "kingdom which cannot be moved" knows no such boundary as death. "Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." (Rom. 14:8)

In view of these well known facts, it would seem that members of the church would be more interested in prayer than in politics; more concerned about truth than taxes. But such is not always the case. A sizeable crowd of church members I have known are more concerned about liberalism in the government than they are about liberalism in the church. They will fight about their politics, but they couldn't care less about the error and apostasy that threatens the church. They can get as mean as an acre of snakes with a fellow who disagrees with their political philosophy, but with teachers of error in the Lord's church, they are as gentle as an Autumn breeze.

We need to be concerned about the church in every place, from the largest churches in the largest cities to the tiny struggling group in the far-flung reaches of civilization. Our first consideration should be, of course, to the congregation of which we are a part. And this concern should be positive as well as negative. We don't build and strengthen churches by merely fighting error. Truth has a positive side. You don't grow a garden by merely keeping down the weeds. The seed must be planted and the growth cultivated.

The Word of God is the seed of the kingdom. Let us see that it is planted and nurtured, and God will give the harvest. --- (Feb. 7, 1965)

Questions on Lesson 4

The power of the kingdom

1. What is the common reaction of men to a great display of power?
2. Name some way's that God's power manifested?
3. How does Satan manifest his power?
4. What is the main display of God' power to the world today?
5. How does a changed life manifest God's power? How was it manifested in you?
6. How does the Christian's hope appear to the world?
7. What does God's love in us say to the world? How is the love of God speaking in my life?
8. Why must we constantly see our proper role in God's kingdom?
9. Why must be constantly be reminded about what glorifies God?
10. How is God's eternal plan fulfilled in us?