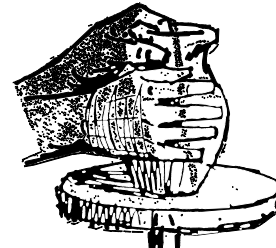


His Workmanship at Westside

*“For we are His
workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus for good works.”
—Ephesians 2:10*



Vol. XXII

September 1, 2013

No. 35

Isaiah 64:8

Paul's Second Prayer for the Ephesians, part 2, by Paul Deffinbaugh

Last week we looked at Paul's second prayer for the Ephesians in Eph 3:14-21. We saw that Paul asked the Father to grant that:

- they would be strengthened with might in the inner man by the Holy Spirit
- Christ would dwell in their hearts through faith
- they would be rooted and grounded in love
- they would know the limitless love of Christ which surpasses knowledge
- they would be filled with the fullness of God.

A. Strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man. Just before His ascension, our Lord gave the apostles (and thus the church) the great commission. This command of our Lord was predicated on a simple fact, that all authority had been given to Him in heaven and in earth. The command to teach and make disciples is the consequence, the outflow, of Christ's authority/power, Mt 28:18-20; Lk 24:49; Ax 1:8. The message which the apostles proclaimed, after the Holy Spirit came upon the church, was that Jesus Christ was risen from the dead and that He was to return to judge His enemies. In order to avoid

God's wrath and judgment against sin and to enter into the kingdom of God, men must believe in Jesus, God's Messiah, and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins into the One Whom God has made both Lord and Christ, Ax 2:28-36, esp. v. 27; 3:14-15. The Lord performed many miracles, signs, wonders at the hands of the apostles, who persistently gave credit for these miracles to their living Lord, Ax 3:5-8; 4:8-10. The apostles were assured not only that Jesus was alive and was performing signs and wonders at their hands, but also that He was in complete control. Look at their confidence in His sovereign control and power over all things as they prayed after being arrested and released by the Jewish authorities, Ax 4:23-30. Later, when arrested and brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin and commanded not to preach again in the name of Jesus, Peter responded, *“We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, Whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross,”* Ax 5:29-30. When Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin, he spoke in God's strength to the Jewish authorities concerning the

stiff-necked rebellion of these men, rebellion against the Holy Spirit (the revelation of God by the Spirit to the prophets) like their fathers before them. As the assembled group were about to kill Stephen, he was comforted, and they were cautioned by the vision which he was given of his risen and ascended Lord, not sitting at the Father's right hand, but standing, poised for action, in His power and strength, Ax 7:54-57.

The New Testament epistles make much of the might and authority of Jesus Christ, granted to Him by the Father when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand. This very same power, which raised Christ from the dead, is that power by which God gives life to our sinful, dead, and powerless bodies, so that we can live righteously, Rm 8:10-11; 7:24. It is His divine power which provides all that we need to live in a way that pleases Him, 2 Pet 1:3. It is not only the power of the risen and ascended Lord which saves us, but this same power also keeps us, Rm 8:33-39; 1 Pet 1:3-5.

The hope of the Christian is based upon the might of the ascended Lord
continued on p. 2

"I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." —Ephesians 3:14-21 (good to memorize, use in prayer)

to raise us from the dead, to overthrow the wicked, and to establish the eternal kingdom of God, 1 Cor 15:24, 42-43; Phil 3:20-21. When Jesus comes again, men of every nation and every created being will praise Him for His power, Rev 4:11; 19:1; see also 5:12; 7:12; 11:17; 12:10; 15:8.

What can we learn here about God's power? **First, God's power and prayer are linked. But the power of God is not a blank check which we fill in with prayer.** The power of God is linked with His eternal purposes. His power assures the saints that what He has purposed and promised, He is able to accomplish. Our hope is therefore certain, our eternal reward secure, see 1 Pet 1:5. There are those like Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8, who wanted to be able to broker the power of God for his own profit. But God's power has not been given for self-serving purposes, and those who seek to use it in this way will be severely disciplined. The power of God does not assure us of present prosperity, but of confidence in suffering, knowing that in suffering we fill up (fulfill) the sufferings of Christ, Col 1:24-29, and that we obtain the blessing of greater fellowship with the One Who suffered for us, Phil 3:10. The power of God is not a guarantee that Christians will escape from suffering, but an assurance that they will endure in the midst of it, 2 Tim 1:8.

Second, God's strength should serve not only as a comfort to those who trust and obey, but as a

warning to those who do not. We know that our Lord will come in power to subdue His enemies and to judge those who have not believed on Him. Those who profess to be Christians should also be reminded that God has invested His glory and reputation in the church. So He will exercise His power to purge and purify His church when it fails to bring glory to Him, Heb 10:26-31; 1 Pet 4:17-18.

Third, prayer should not be viewed as an opportunity for finite men to bend the will and strength of God to serve our own selfish purposes, but as a time to submit our will to God's will and His purposes. How quickly we pervert and distort the truth of God's word, especially in relation to God's power and our prayers. We speak of "the power of prayer," an expression which is not found and is without sanction in the Bible. It is not our prayer which is powerful, it is God Who is all-powerful. We pray because He is powerful. But His power is restricted to things that accomplish His purposes. If we want to pray with confidence, let us pray for what God has purposed and promised, rather than for those things our flesh desires, Jas 4:3. If we prayed like Paul, it would be for what God has purposed and promised. The prayers of our Lord can serve as models for all our prayers, Mt 26:39; see also Mt 6:7-15. **Finally, we should be reminded that the power of God is not grasped by men who are strong, but clung to by those who are weak.** Our Lord

Himself was exalted by the Father because He was obedient to the point of death, Phil 2:8; Heb 4:15-5:2. *"For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you,"* 2 Cor 13:4. At the cross He took on our sins and weaknesses, and God raised Him up and seated Him at the right hand of power. Too many Christians seem to think that they lack power and need to do mental or spiritual gymnastics to get it. We don't get power that way. *"My strength is perfected in weakness,"* 2 Cor 12:9.; cf. Heb 11:34. It is in the recognition of our weakness and of His strength that we must turn to Him Who has all power. It is not our power which matters, but His, 2 Cor 4:7. Let us look to Him, who has all power, and who freely employs it to fulfill all His purposes, for His glory and for our good, Eph 3:20-21.


B. Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. God's strength is administered by His Spirit into the inner man. A Christian's body is *"the temple of God,"* 1 Cor 6:19. One purpose of God for the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us is *"to put to death the deeds of the body,"* Rm 8:11-13. This is strength of character; it is called virtue in 2 Pet 1:5. To the degree God strengthens the inner man by the Holy Spirit, so Christ dwells in his heart. Thus, the Spirit is the instrumental agent by which Christ dwells in the

continued on p. 3



Psalm 133:1

Fill your canteen in 2013
 “May you be filled with all the fullness of God.”
 —Ephesians 3:19



Discipleship Here At Home

change them now!

C. To be rooted and grounded in love.

One work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is to instill the love of God in the heart, Rm 5:5; Gal 5:22. If Jesus takes the first place in our affections we will love and obey Him. Love will be the chief, ruling, and inspirational principle of our lives. Think for a moment what natural love does —what a husband will do for the wife he loves, what a mother will do for the child she loves. Think of the huge sacrifices that love makes. Love forgives, overlooks failings, hopes for the best, serves with no thought of reward, cf. 1 Cor 13:1-8. Jesus said if we love Him, we will love others. Do we forgive our fellow Christians, support and help them, encourage and sustain them, show them affection and respect? This is what Paul prayed would be the basis of the Ephesian Christians' lives.

In the book The Hiding Place, Corrie ten Boom told of her family's life in Holland before and during WWII. They read a chapter the Bible and prayed together each evening. After she, her sister Betsie, and her father were arrested for harboring Jews during the German occupation, they were taken to Gestapo headquarters in The Hague. The interrogator took pity on Mr. ten Boom and said, "I'd like to send you home, old fellow. I'll take your word that you won't cause any more trouble." Mr. ten Boom replied, "If I go home today, tomorrow I will open my door again to any man in need who knocks." That is love in action! Mr. ten Boom was not released from custody, and ten days later he died. He had often said to his family, "When Jesus takes your hand, He keeps you tight. When Jesus keeps you tight, He leads you through life. When Jesus leads you through life, He brings you safely home." Mr. ten Boom was rooted and grounded in love by his faith in Jesus through Bible study, and Jesus brought him safely home. More next week.

Prayer for Ephesians, from p. 2 believer, just as Eph 2:22 suggests that the Spirit is the instrumental agent by which God inhabits His church.

Paul prayed that Jesus might have first place in our affections by faith. If our faith grows, then He will be the One we love the most. Do we believe in what He: a. Has done for us? He died to save us from our sins. b. Is doing for us? He is interceding, advocating, pleading for us in heaven as our Great High Priest. c. Will do for us? He will raise us from the dead to enjoy a life of eternal bliss when He comes again. If we believe in Jesus we know: (a) our past has been changed. Our sins have been blotted out. The slate has been wiped clean. The debt has been cancelled. (b) our present status is a special one. We are children of God and joint heirs with Christ. (c) our future is amazing. We will see Jesus and be like Him, sharing his very nature and glory. If we truly believe in Jesus and know all He has done for us, pleasing Him will be our priority; we will put Him first. Perhaps one of the ways of making this real is to answer the question, "Is there anything I would change if Jesus came to stay the week?" Would it affect the books on my shelf, the TV shows I watch, my conversation, the time spent in prayer, or Bible reading, what I shop for, how often I worship, or the way I work? If there are things I would change, perhaps I should

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Mark Campbell—at Rocky Mtn Brain Injury Svc in CO Springs; cards to Mark at 2535 Brady Dr, CO Springs 80917

Judy Sartin's grandson **Tristen**—autism

Valerie Greenwalt—at Mina Gonzalez's for recovery after successful tumor surgery

Forrest Corray, Jordan's brother—meth addiction has estranged him from family

Larry Campbell—to return Wed from AR; caring for **Pat's** dad, **Delmar Hice**, who had carpal tunnel surgery last week

Eric Perry's co-worker, **Tony Ortega**—stroke

Remember **Megan Aki** and the girls; the **Andrew Tope** family; the **Reames** family

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr;

Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes—asthma

Pearl Chapman—leg pains; pancreatitis

Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain

Rod Green—thyroid trouble

Jonathan Hadders—RA

Autumn Hadders—epilepsy

Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs help around his house

Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak; **Virginia**, worsening rapid macular degeneration; high BP

Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes

Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; severe arthritis

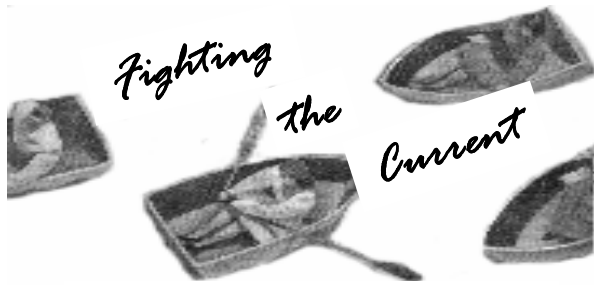
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung

Traveling **Meredith Walker** is in MN visiting family. The **Reameses** are on a Mississippi riverboat cruise. **Pat Campbell** is in FL visiting son Jude and his family. **Sarah McMurray** is out of town.

Job concerns **Megan Aki, Lorenzo Gonzalez, Rod Green, Linda Szymanski, Frank Savarese, and Andrew Tope** are seeking jobs.

Rejoice **Andy** and **Amy Vander Kooi** have a baby boy, **Take James Vander Kooi**, born 4 pm, 8/18, at 7#, 9 oz, 19 3/4"

Expecting **Liz Kosik**, early April



Exposing current thoughts & trends

NM Court Develops the Negative Against Religion

Tacitus wrote: *"In their very deaths they were made the subjects of sport: for they were covered with the hides of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, and when the day waned, burned to serve for the evening lights."* He was speaking about persecution, specifically, the persecution of Christians during the time of the Roman Empire, under the rule of Nero. Christians today are not unfamiliar with persecution, but as Americans living in an advanced country and in a modern time, we often forget just how vile humanity can be. So when we see stories of American Christians being pressured and attacked, we tend to dismiss them as one-off problems. We disregard these things as rare. That's a dangerous mistake, 2 Tim 3:12; Mk 10:30.

The New Mexico Supreme Court recently ruled 5-0 that a photographer Christian was guilty of discrimination because she declined a job photographing a same-sex commitment ceremony in 2006. The owner of Elaine Photography, Elaine Huguenin, at first turned down the job without incident. It wasn't until she was prodded by the potential client, Vanessa Willock, that she said she couldn't do it because it violated her deeply-held religious beliefs. At that point, Huguenin was reported to the New Mexico Human Rights Commission, and then sent to the courts, where the case has been for years. Incidentally, Willock had no problems finding another photographer for the event.

It's shocking to watch a person's First Amendment freedoms trampled in multiple court rulings, but what's even more disturbing is the "extra" opinion submitted by state Supreme Court Justice Richard C. Bosson. In his concurrence, Bosson wrote, *"In the smaller, more focused world of the marketplace, of commerce, of public accommodation, the Huguenins have to channel their conduct, not their beliefs, so as to leave space for other Americans who believe something different. That compromise is part of the glue that holds us together as a nation, the tolerance that lubricates the varied moving parts of us as a people. In short, I would say to the Huguenins, with the utmost respect: it is the price of citizenship."*

Even without his dueling metaphors, Bosson's opinion is horse hooves and oil. Giving up religious beliefs should not be the price of citizenship. Must Christians choose between being involved in the marketplace or living out their faith? Despite the Constitution's protection of speech and free exercise of religion, this ruling demands that followers of Christ pay a "price of citizenship" not required by others. Or will this same payment soon be required of all?

Westside church of Christ

meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
Golden, Colorado 80401
(303) 972-0087

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 462-4987
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
---------------	---------

This morning: "Facing Life with Courage" by Jim Reingrover

This afternoon:

Paul's Prison Epistles Series
Ephesians 4, Jim Reingrover