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Power in Prayer, John 15:1-8

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Introduction

- E. M. Bounds wrote, “What the Church needs to-day is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use -- men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men -- men of prayer.”
 - We desire to be a church full of men and women who are mighty in prayer.
 - So that we may *know* God.
 - So that Acadiana will *follow Jesus as Lord*.
- We’re closing this series by looking at this striking passage from Jesus on prayer.

What is this power in prayer?

- What Jesus describes here is not for every person who claims his name but it is only for those who *abide in him*.
 - “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you.” -- John 15:7
- Notice that Jesus doesn’t say that if we abide in him, then we will receive spiritual power to accomplish all things. Instead, he says that we will *ask* and receive.
 - Spurgeon: “By prayer you shall be enabled to do, but before all attempts to do, ‘Ye shall ask.’”¹
- Abiding with Christ will mean *the certain exercise of prayer*.
 - Prayer comes spontaneously from those who abide in Jesus. It is as natural as it is from a true planted in soil to reach for the sky.
 - Spurgeon: “As stars shine, so do abiders pray.”

- Prayer will not be a chore or an isolated task in your life.
- Abiding in Christ means that you will feel powerfully *the necessity of prayer*.
- The closer you are to Christ the more aware of your needs and dependance upon him.
- You do not need to be convinced of the necessity of prayer.
- Abiding in Christ includes *liberty in prayer*.
- Jesus says that you will ask for “whatever you want.” Does this text really mean that our desires will be answered?
 - Compare it with Pro. 10:24, Psalm 37:4, and Mark 11:24. Has Christ ever said anything that he didn’t really mean?
 - He sometimes means more than we understand him to say but he never means less.
 - Whatever I want? If your heart is being sanctified by the Spirit and you are following God, then learn to trust the desires he has placed on your heart.
 - He doesn’t say it to all men but only to those who abide in him.
 - This is the gift and privilege we should desire more than anything else.
- Abiding in Christ means *successful prayer*.
- As the vine bears fruit so those who remain in Christ will have their requests answered.

How do we attain it?

- The first line tells us that we are to *abide in Christ Jesus our Lord*.
 - Spurgeon: “But abiding in the Lord Jesus does not only mean trusting in Him, it includes our yielding ourselves up to Him to receive His life, and to let that life work out its results in us.”
 - Take care that you *abide in Christ when you are being purged*.
 - Jesus says that every branch that bears fruit is pruned. If we are to have power in prayer then we must have it even when the knife is cutting everything away.

- Enduring trial is necessary for a faith that grows.
- Hold onto Christ while you are pruned.
- Abide in Christ *as to all your fruitfulness*.
- There is no good work for us to be done outside of Christ. Whatever you must do must be done in Jesus.
- The second qualification is that *Christ's words abide in you*.
- Some believe that as long as they have a warm disposition to the person of Christ then they are fine to ignore doctrines. This is not true. When cannot separate the person of Christ from the words of Christ.
- How dare we call him Master or Lord and reject the truth he teaches.
- If his words do not abide in you, as to belief and practice, then you are not in Christ.

Encouragement to attain it.

- “The gifts of grace are not enjoyed all at once by believers. Coming unto Christ, we are saved by a true union with Him, but it is by abiding in that union that we further receive the purity, the joy, the power, the blessedness, which are stored up in Him for His people.... We do not know all the truth at once. We learn it by abiding in Jesus. Perseverance in grace is an educational process by which we learn the truth fully. The emancipating power of that truth is also gradually perceived and enjoyed. “The truth shall make you free.” One bond after another snaps, and we are free indeed. You that are young beginners in the divine life may be cheered to know that there is something better still for you. You have not yet received the full recompense of your faith.”

End Notes

¹ All Spurgeon quotes are from “The Secret of Power in Prayer,” NO. 2002, preached at The Metropolitan Tabernacle, January 8, 1888.