

# POWER OVER THE ENEMY

MIKE GREIF

In this article most of the scriptures will be taken from the New American Version of the Bible.

We have been given power over the enemy. The Bible tells us this. When Jesus died on the cross, was raised again, and seated at the right hand of the Father, in the place of authority in the heavenly places, we were seated there with Him! Since we are seated with Him in the heavenly places, He has given us authority over the enemy as well. This is what I would like to talk about in this article. The enemy would love to keep us ignorant of what we already possess, in Christ. As a matter of fact, we possessed it the moment we became Christians, and accepted Christ as our Savior. Every born again Christian has authority over the enemy, but many don't realize it. It is like a bank account that someone left us, put it in our name, with a large sum of money in it, but we didn't know about it, or we heard about it but didn't pursue trying to find out about it. The money was ours, and was for a long time, but if we don't know about something, it is hard to take advantage of it. This is what it is like with many Christians and their understanding of their position relative to the enemy. He has power in the world, and the Bible calls him the 'god of this world,' but he isn't our God,

and he doesn't have power over us.

I would like to start in Ephesians chapter 1 to help us to understand our place in Christ. Ephesians has been called the 'Alps' of the New Testament by some, because this book talks about us being *'raised up with Christ in the heavenly realms.'* It would be a good idea if you read Chapter 1:1-14. I will just write some of the highlights of what has been given to each of us, in Christ

- Verse 3: “*God... has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, in Christ.*”
- Verse 4: “*... we have been chosen, in Christ, to be holy and blameless.*”
- Verse 5: “*... we have been adopted as sons (placed into a special relationship with Christ)...*” We are in His family, now!
- Verse 6: “*...His grace has been bestowed on us, in Christ...*” His grace, unmerited **favor**, is now ours.
- Verse 7: “*... in Him, we have redemption, through His blood,... the forgiveness of our sins according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us.*”
- Verses 9-10: “*...wisdom and insight... has been given to us about the ...mystery of His will...the summing up of all*

*things in Christ...in the heavens and the earth..."*

- Verses 11-12: "...we have **obtained an inheritance... that we should bring praise and glory to Him.**"
- Verses 13-14: "...we have been **sealed with Him with the Holy Spirit of promise...who is given as a pledge of our inheritance... to the praise of His glory.**" We have been given a lot, in Christ!

God wants us to realize all we have been given in Christ. Much was accomplished when Jesus came, ministered to the needs of Israel, fulfilled His, and the Father's mission for Him on earth, and was crucified, raised from the dead by the power of God, and was seated at the right hand of God, the Father, in the heavenly places, at the right hand of power and authority over the entire universe! He wants us to know what we have been given, and He says in verse 17 "*...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.* Verses 18 & 19, "***I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know (1) what is the hope of His calling, (2) what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and (3) what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.***"

"What is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe?" I think one of the things He wants us to do is to exercise power over the enemy; his schemes, his lies, and his strategies to hinder the church. This is what I would like to write about.

It says in verses 19-23 of this same chapter Paul states that His power is available to us "*...in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.*" The power that is available to us is God's power over external things - His very energy, force, might, and dominion! It is the same power that verses 20-23 says, "*... which He (God) brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.*" The power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead, and set Him far above all rule at His right hand in the heavens, is the power that verse 19 says is ours!

Chapter 2:1-6 speaks of our former walk in the flesh. Many today are deceived by the enemy, and are walking in the ways of the world and death, but God in His rich mercy, and because of His great love for us, through Jesus, made us alive in Christ. He lavished His grace upon us, as verse 6 says, "*...and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.*" All authority, power, and dominion, in God's created realm now belong to Jesus. Verse 6 also says we are raised up and seated with Him in those same heavenly places! Paul talks about this same power in Chapter 3:16 and 20, "*...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith,*" and verse 20, "*Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly*

*beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus ..."* All these verses talk about the power available to us. We now have power and authority over the enemy because of what Jesus accomplished. Our authority is over the enemy's influence in our own lives, in the lives of our family, and in the lives of those in the church. We don't have authority over him in the lives of others, who either are not walking with God, or who are walking with God but don't want to give up something in their lives that they want to control. Others still have a free will to allow the enemy to control them. However, if we are walking with God, and we are seeking to be led by His Spirit, allowing Him to have control of our lives, thoughts, actions, hopes, jobs, goals, etc., then the enemy's power has been broken in our lives. **The only way he has power over us is if we allow it.**

James 4:7 states, "***Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.***" The Greek for the word submit here, 'hupotasso,' gives the idea that we are to 'arrange ourselves under God's command, in His army, or His military, so to speak. The word submit also means obedience. So, as we walk with Him as an obedient soldier, yielding ourselves to His command, following His leading, and resisting the enemy when he confronts us, then he, the devil, will flee from the Christ within us.

1 Peter 5:8-9 states, "*Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.*"

In a Smith Wigglesworth story I read recently, he tells about a woman he witnessed standing on a street corner somewhere in England waiting for a bus. Her little dog had followed her disobediently to the street corner, and she had pleadingly told the dog to go home. She continued to plead until the bus was about to arrive, at which point her voice rose and she said firmly, "Go home right now!" The dog quickly scurried home with his tail between his legs. Smith Wigglesworth said out loud, without thinking, "That is the way we need to deal with the devil!" Indeed, I believe this is how God wants us to deal with him. The enemy is a defeated foe. The devil's disobedience brought sin and the curse upon the world, but God's plan of sending His only begotten Son into the world brought absolute and complete victory over the enemy! He has given this victory to us!

1 John 3:8 says, "*... The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*"

1 John 4:4 says, "*... greater is He that is in you than he who is in the world.*" We have the power to overcome because Jesus is the One who indwells us, and He has completely destroyed his works.

The paragraph in Ephesians 4:25-32 tells us to not give the devil an opportunity. It mentions quite a few things that give

him opportunity in our lives: anger, stealing, unwholesome words proceeding out of our mouths, bitterness, wrath, clamor (complaining), slander, and malice. When we don't see Christ in one another that gives him opportunity. When we are easily offended by something someone else does or says, that gives him opportunity. Once his foot is in the door, he can more easily influence us, and he isn't satisfied with just that. He would rather shove the door open wide. These are things that we do, and have control over, that give him opportunity.

Disobedience also gives him opportunity. Think of the story of King Saul and how his disobedience to God's command allowed the enemy to harass him, and steal his peace. When we walk in disobedience we deprive ourselves of many of God's blessings.

The enemy is experienced in looking for opportunities to attacking us. He has been practicing this for a long time. I think some of his best tricks, lies, schemes, and strategies are to take advantage of us when we are down, tired, stressed, anxious about something, over-worked, feeling condemned for various reasons, or for simply not trusting God. When we are tired we don't have much ability to be patient. We get easily offended and become angry quickly. The enemy takes advantage of the opportunity. He shoves the door open and shoots arrows through our defenses. We lash out and say something hurtful or disrespectful, which definitely does not build one another up. If we are under stress, tension begins to build, we have a tendency to try harder, depending more upon our own strength. As we do this, the door of opportunity opens to the enemy. He shoves the door open wider and causes us to try harder still. Stress builds in our neck and back, and before we know it we are in a state of disarray. Our life gets out of balance because we are not taking care of ourselves. We may not be getting enough sleep. We may not be spending the time with God that we need to to keep the oil of the Spirit in our lamps. God wants us to walk in fellowship with Him and to be filled with His Son, Jesus Christ. He is our hope of glory. When we are faced with the challenges of the day we can still be in communion with the King of the Universe. His peace and joy are present with us as we face them. When a situation arises where fear and anxiety confront us the enemy wants us to take our eyes off of Jesus, and look at the waves and the threatening storm clouds building. Then is our opportunity to confront him head on and to rebuke him, resist him, demand that he leave in the Name of Jesus. We have been given authority over him. Don't accept his lies. When those thoughts come in, tell him, "NO! GET OUT OF HERE! BE GONE!"

Speaking in tongues is a good way to confound the enemy. It builds us up and confuses him at the same time. I think of it like this. When an army invades they send in the artillery first and bombard the enemies' positions. This is what tongues do for us. A direct line of communication is established between God and ourselves, and our spirit is communicating with God, according to the will of God. Paul says, in 1 Corinthians 14:18, "...I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;". I believe the reason he was able to confidently make a statement like that is because he must have developed the habit of doing it very often, maybe even constantly. The more I speak in tongues the

more I realize there is power in it that is hard to explain.

Walk with God. Do the best you can to enter into the gifts and ministries that have been given you. Try to be faithful to do what He leads you to do each day. Be open and willing to make a stand for Him; to dare to be a Daniel; to have courage as Joshua; **and realize that you will** make mistakes. Don't allow the enemy to condemn you when you make mistakes. Do what 1 John 1:9 says, "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" When you feel condemnation don't accept it. Remember Romans 8:1-2, "*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus... For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death.*" Condemnation is from the enemy, and we have been set free from him, sin, and death. When you err ask for forgiveness, repent of the sin and then go on. If the condemnation persists, then realize that it is just another of the enemy's lies. Don't believe it! Rebuke him firmly!

I still hear my mother saying to me, "Mike, be moderate!" "Slow down." "Go to bed." "Don't push so hard." "Tomorrow is another day." We all probably need to remember the advice of our mothers. God wants us to slow down, to put Him first, to walk with Him and to practice His presence throughout each day. We need to go to bed on time, turn the TV off and not drag the day on. We are His representatives and His ambassadors, His ministers of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5). How can we be pleasing to Him if we are allowing our choices to separate us from Him? Remember, the enemy is always looking for opportunities. He is the father of lies (John 8:44). Do not believe him.

Romans 8:28 says, "*God works all things together for good to those who love the Lord, who are the called according to His purpose.*" He just wants us to believe this! We need to trust Him with all of our hearts and to believe His Word, the Bible, God's "game plan!" "Every promise in the book is mine, every chapter, every verse, and every line!" When the tests and storms of life confront us we need to remember that nothing comes upon us unless it is allowed by God. He is aware of all that we are going through. Remember what 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 says, "*Rejoice always; pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit.*" God wants us to have a good attitude as we go through our day and to go about His business. He wants us to be victorious in the face of adversity and trial, and to be thankful for the tests. He even wants us to learn to praise Him for them. Being thankful and praising Him show God that we trust Him. Thanking Him frees God up and sets Him loose on our problems (shows God that we trust Him to accomplish His perfect will in our lives). Psalms 37:5, Young's Translation, puts it this way, "*Roll upon Jehovah thy way, trust also in Him, and He worketh.*" I really like that. In other words, place all your problems and all your life, on Jehovah. Give Him everything, and then trust in Him. He will then go to work for you. Having a good attitude, seeking God's will in everything, thanking God and praising Him, directs God toward our problems, and allows God's blessings to be shed abroad in our lives. Praise God, and may He help us to enter into and possess what has been given to us. †

## A TRIBUTE TO BROTHER DAVID GABRUCH

The following tribute was given at the memorial service for brother David Gabruch on August 31, 2017 at North Battleford, SK.

David Gabruch served as a local elder in Regina, Rosetown and Saskatoon churches and in later years traveled as an apostolic ministry for the universal church. His fatherly, pastoral ministry was a blessing to many in the local churches as well as to churches throughout Canada, the United States and many of the islands of the Caribbean.

David and Sonja were willing to travel wherever the brethren asked them to go to bring the gospel of the kingdom of God to those in need spiritually and physically. Their diligence in carrying out this mission was evident even during times of physical hardship, particularly in recent years, but that was the kind of person David was. He would go even though it meant personal sacrifice. We are thankful for his dedication to God, to his family and to the church.

David was more than a colleague. He was a friend you could count on. He would go the extra mile. He would take more than his share of the load. His selflessness was apparent in his concern for others more than for himself. Isaiah 1:19 says, *"If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land."* David was willing. He was obedient to God's call and now reaps the reward of the faithful in the realm of the eternal, where there is no more sickness or death. There is only life and that forever more.

David and Sonja were a pleasure to travel and minister with. There were times of laughter and joy, times of weeping with those who wept and rejoicing with those who rejoiced. There were camp meetings in many places, gatherings of young people, trips to other countries and times when prayer was required for those in need. No need was too small nor was there any inconvenience that was too much effort. They took the challenge of ministry with dedication and responsibility. Their non-judgmental attitude was a reflection of their personal relationship with the Lord.

David believed that there was a strong relationship between ministry on the practical level and ministry on the spiritual level. There was a practical side that he did not neglect. There are many who could testify of his helping hand, wise advice, sympathetic ear, sense of humor and words of encouragement. The telephone calls, coffee-shop chats and personal visits were all part of his social and caring nature. He cared about people, whether young or old, rich or poor, educated or uneducated. Their station in life was immaterial to him. He believed, as we all should, that people everywhere are in need of a Savior. Jesus said, *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"* (Mark 16:15). This is the great commission laid on the shoulders of every Christian. The Lord wants us to be His hand extended, reaching out to those in need. Our world is wherever we happen to be at a given time.

A couple of Scriptures that have particular application to David's life include Paul speaking in Romans 8:18, *"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."* Then, we read in 2 Timothy 4:7, *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."*

The universal church grieves with Sonja and the family during this time of deep sorrow, for this is a great loss to us all. But, as we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, we do not *"sorrow as others who have no hope,"* for our hope is in Christ and in the glorious reunion that will one day take place in the realm of the heavenlies.

To have known David is to have fond memories of a life well lived. "When a loved one becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure" (Author unknown).

*"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints"* (Psalm 116:15).

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