
The Gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.
Rom. 1:16

The Guide

Fear him who has power to throw you into hell.
Luke 12:5

Not Fables but Power!

POWER TO SAVE

“We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about THE POWER and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His Majesty” (2 Peter 1:16).

Some would have us believe that the Bible is just made up of fables or stories. Stories which are untrue and have been made up by men.

The apostle Peter tells us that when they were on the mountain, they saw Jesus transfigured (or changed) before their eyes. They saw His glory and heard the voice of God from the heavens saying: “This is My Son, Whom I love; with Him I am well pleased” (Matt. 17:5).

The apostle Paul tells us that he is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, to the Jew and then to the Gentile (Rom. 1:16). Christ came to save sinners. There is no one too bad nor too good whom He cannot save. He is able to save completely those who



MALETSUNYANE FALLS (194 metres) Lesotho

It was here where Masoebe, the great witchdoctor, threw down his heathen charms, medicines and witch bones after finding a new life in Christ.

come to God through Christ Jesus (Heb. 7:25). He has the power to save the most miserable alcoholic, the gangster, the thief and the liar. He also saved the thief on the cross. He saved the woman of Samaria. He saved the maniac of Gadara who was possessed by a legion of devils. He rebuked the stormy sea and saved Peter from sinking. He saved religious people like Saul of Tarsus who later became the mighty Paul.

Here in Africa, He has saved thousands of souls. Some were drunkards, others immoral and some were powerful witchdoctors. One by the name of Masoebe, was the most powerful witch doctor in his day. He knew how to make use of “Tokolos” (evil spirits) and claimed to have power to make rain. He was a drunkard and immoral man. But one day, when he heard the Gospel being preached and saw how God healed the sick and lame without medicine, he was wonderfully saved. He went back to his home in the high mountains of Lesotho and

collected all his medicines, witchbones (litaolas) and charms and threw them down a high precipice into the deep Maletsunyane waterfalls. He destroyed his tobacco and “dagga” (marijuana) and poured out all his beer, as he was determined never to drink any alcohol or smoke any form of tobacco or dagga again. He became a sincere Christian known by every one as a true man of God. No one could have changed that man’s life but Christ.

I knew another young man who was a real “Tsotsi” (gangster) who just lived by stealing, cheating and robbing wherever he went. He was more in prison than out of it. But the power of the Gospel saved that man thoroughly and changed his whole life and made him a wonderful preacher of the Gospel. Through his preaching hundreds of gangsters, drunkards, thieves and murderers were truly saved among every class of people, rich and poor, white and black.

The same saving power changed my life more than 60 years ago and has kept me all these years. It saved my brothers and sisters and my dear Mother. It will save you if you let Jesus come into your heart. Religion will not save you but Jesus will. For this was the very purpose of His coming into the world.

At one time we stayed with a widow whose husband had, as it were, been living in hell for over twenty years, almost drinking himself to death and making the lives of his wife and children most miserable. But they kept on praying for him and God saved and delivered him from his sinful ways. Not only can the power of the Gospel save the individual, it can save a whole family, a whole village or town and a whole country. The revival in Wales many years ago saved whole villages. The simple preaching of Jonah saved the city of Ninevah from destruction. God can save entire nations. He said: “Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other” (Is. 45:22). The Bible and history of the world is full of true evidences of God’s saving power. This is why the angel said to Joseph, before Jesus was born: “You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21).

POWER TO HEAL

God said to Moses, “I am the Lord who heals you” (Ex. 15:26). God proved the sincerity of His Word for He was their healer for forty years. Not one of the 3 000 000 people was sick or ill. Even when they were bitten by snakes a single look at the sign He provided kept them alive and healed them. Hundreds and thousands of people living today can witness to the healing power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The leper who came to Jesus was immediately healed. The blind saw, the deaf heard and the dumb spoke. The crippled and the lame walked. Even the dead were raised to life again by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. If there were no healing power in the Gospel and in the name of our Lord Jesus, this article could not have been

written, for I myself have been at death’s door several times through serious illnesses, but was healed by the power of His Word. Surely He has borne our sins and sicknesses in His own body on the cross and by **His wounds we are healed** (Is. 53:5).

“Praise the Lord, O my soul . . . He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases” (Ps. 103:2, 3). Jesus the divine healer, not only heals the sick body but also the sin-sick soul. He heals the wounded and broken heart and spirit. “I will restore you to health and heal your wounds” (Jer. 30:17). God who made man out of the dust of the earth is also able to restore health to us and keep us healthy.

I will not forget the son of a chief in Lesotho who injured his back by falling from a horse. He was paralysed from the waist down. He could not move his legs and so lay on his back for more than two years. Through hearing the Gospel message he confessed his sins and found a new life in Christ. In answer to prayer he was instantly healed and was able to ride a horse again.

The healing of Madihotetso, the heiress to the richest Chieftainship of Lesotho, shook the whole country. For years she had been raving mad and had been tied up with chains. No doctor, white or black, could help her. But God set her free after she had been prayed for by one of His humble servants.

I will not forget how the wife of one of the farmers in the Orange Free State became seriously ill after the birth of her first child. During 15 years she had 24 serious operations and was given up to die. She could not move a single limb and could no longer see or hear. Her grave had been dug, the coffin bought and her relatives had been notified to attend the funeral.

But God intervened when one of His servants prayed the prayer of faith. He quoted Mark 16:17, 18 — “Those who believe . . . will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.” God touched the woman and she was healed.

THE POWER OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS

It is only by the power of the blood of Jesus that our hearts can be cleansed from all sin. No soap, medicine or chemical can take away sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, purifies us from every sin (1 John 1:7—10). In Revelation 7:9—17, we read of a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Peter and John tell us about the redemptive power of the blood of Jesus, that not only purifies us from past sins but from sin itself and from the dominion and power of sin. God purchased us for Himself through the blood of His Son. We know that we were not purchased

with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ the Lamb who was without blemish or defect. (1 Peter 1:18, 19). Jesus purchased us for God by His blood from every tribe, language and people and nation to make us priests to serve God (Rev. 5:9, 10).

The blood of Jesus has power to protect us from the evil power of the enemy. It was the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doorposts of their houses that protected the children of Israel in Egypt from the destroyer who killed all the first-born. God said: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Ex. 12:13). It was the scarlet rope in the window which saved Rahab and all her people when Jericho fell (Josh. 2:18—21). Likewise the blood of Jesus has power to save you and your household if you believe. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:31).

The people in the bare and woodless country of Lesotho tied little red ribbons between the wings of their chickens. They knew that a hawk would not attack or take a chicken which had a red ribbon on its back. We also read in Rev. 12:11 that the saints of God overcame Satan by the power of the blood of the Lamb. The following verse is so true —

There is power, power, wonderworking power,
In the Blood of the Lamb;
There is power, power, wonderworking power,
In the precious Blood of the Lamb.

POWER OF PRAYER

Believing prayer has limitless power. Prayer changes things. Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you." (Matt. 7:7). The leper whom no one could help, asked Jesus to heal him — and Jesus did. Immediately the leprosy left him. The blind man cried to Jesus and received his sight. Four men carried a man who was paralysed to Jesus, asking Him to heal him — and Jesus did. There is more power in prayer than in atomic bombs or any other kind of bomb. Prayer not only saves the individual, it can change entire nations.

Elijah, who was a man like us, prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it did not rain for three and a half years. He prayed again and it rained. He also prayed a simple prayer and fire came down from heaven, and burnt up the sacrifice, the wood, the stone and the dust and licked up the water. The whole nation of Israel was brought back to God through one man's prayer. King Hezekiah prayed to God when the enemy came against him. In answer to his prayer the angel of the Lord killed 185 000 soldiers in the camp of the enemy. Jesus prayed until His face shone and His clothing was white and shining. He prayed throughout the night. He fasted and prayed. He prayed earnestly till His sweat was like great drops of blood. He conquered sin and the devil through prayer. He told us to pray at all times.

POWER OF FAITH AND LOVE

Jesus said that if we have faith as small as a mustard seed we will move mountains (Matt. 17:20). Nothing is impossible if we trust and believe in God. Through believing in God the Israelites subdued kingdoms, brought about justice, gained what was promised, shut the mouths of lions, stopped the fury of the fire and escaped the edge of the sword. In times of weakness they were made strong, became brave in battle (as David when fighting Goliath) and defeated the armies of the enemy (Heb. 11:33, 34). Faith is the victory that overcomes the world (1 John 5:4).

One of God's greatest powers is love. Love is strong as death. Love wins over our enemy. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. When we were God's enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son (Rom. 5:8—10). It was the power of love that enabled God to give us sinners His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). This love of God constrains us to serve Him, to keep His commandments, to be obedient and to trust Him. It casts out all fear. Nothing is able to separate us from the love of Christ.

"In all things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35—39).

DRAWING POWER

Jesus is like a powerful magnet who draws all men to Himself. "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself," said Jesus (John 12:32). Jesus does not drive us by fear like the devil does, Jesus draws us like a good shepherd leads his sheep. He draws us away from sin and from the sinful pleasures of the world to follow Him to green pastures and to quiet waters. Soon the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are still alive and are left will be caught up — in the twinkling of an eye — to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever (1 Thess. 4:13—18. 1 Cor. 15:51—58).

CREATIVE POWER

Before closing, permit me to speak about the creative power of the Gospel which makes saints out of sinners. King David knew something of that power when he prayed, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). After all the victories he had won over the enemies of God, he found that the strongest enemy was in himself, his own filthy

heart. The heart is “deceitful . . . and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jer. 17:9). Jesus Himself told us that — “from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean’ ” (Mark 7:21—23).

David realised that he could not change his own heart nor make it clean, therefore he prayed earnestly, under deep conviction, that God Who created heaven and earth, would also create a clean heart in him and give him a new spirit. God answered his prayer, according to His promise in the Old Testament: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezek. 36:26).

Much more could be said about the power of His Word which is living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword. The power of His resurrection and His incomparably great power for us who believe — not in fables — but according to the working of His mighty strength, which is exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion (Eph. 1:19—21).

Jesus said: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.” Through that power the whole of Jerusalem was shaken on the day of Pentecost. That power is still the same today. “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 1:8, 2:39).

POWER IN THE NAME OF JESUS

We could speak of the mighty power of the name of Jesus, the only name given unto men whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). Jesus said, “In My name, they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well” (Mark 16:17, 18). “I will do whatever you ask in My name” (John 14:13, 14; 15:16; 16:23). Peter said to the man who was crippled from birth, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” He jumped to his feet . . . and went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God (Acts 3:1—9). No wonder His name is called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6).

“Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9—11.)

“If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom. 10:9).

Kneel NOW before Him in prayer, believe NOW on Him Who died and rose for you, and confess Him before men and God before it is too late. Whoever believes in Him will not be ashamed.

J.R. Gschwend.



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