

# God's Power and providence Pt 2

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Date: 12 October 2025

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- [ 0 : 00 ] The late Pastor Hersey. Take your Bibles and go to Hebrews chapter 11.! Hebrews chapter 11. We've been talking about those people that we don't know their names, but they have done things in the cause of Christ that have impacted other people.
- And last week we were in Hebrews chapter 11, verse 36. Hebrews 11, verse 36. It says, And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment.
- They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with a sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy.
- They wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.
- And we talked about the fact that these people, they accomplish things, there are others who accomplish things by faith. By having faith in God and trusting Him, they accomplish great things.
- [ 1 : 28 ] And we talked about the things they accomplish. Go back to verse 33. Verse 33 says, So we talked about all these others.
- We don't know their name. We don't know who they are. But they have accomplished things for the Lord. Job talked about it. And he says, When you go through trials and temptations, which Job faced a bunch of them, he said, Look, in Job 23.10, But he knoweth the way that I take.
- When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. He says, You go through trials and temptations and things for the Lord. But when you go through them and you follow him, he says, You're going to come forth as gold.
- The first thing we talked about last week was the persecution template. And one of the things we talked about is every one of us faces trials and temptations. Every one of us is going to face things that come into our life.
- And sometimes when these trials and temptations come, it helps with the spread of the gospel. We looked at Acts chapter 8, verses 1 through 4.
- [ 2 : 57 ] Acts chapter 8, verses 1 through 4. And it starts off with, And Saul was consenting unto his death, the death of Stephen. Stephen was the first martyr of the church. Paul was there when Stephen was martyred.
- And it says, And at that time, there was great persecution against the church, which was at Jerusalem. And they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.
- And then it talks more about Stephen, talks more about Paul. And in verse 4, it says this, Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

So persecution came. And the people who were there sometimes had to flee for their lives to other places. But wherever they went, they took the gospel with them. So Satan may have been trying to get rid of the gospel.

Might have been trying to get rid of the message of Jesus Christ. But all he was doing was helping us to get it out further and further and further. They talked about the notable past that they had.

[ 3 : 57 ] And there was a common thread that every child of God goes through. And we just talked about temptation and trials. 1 Corinthians 10, 13, There's no temptation taken to you, but such is as common to man.

Paul talked about his thorn in the flesh in 2 Corinthians 12, 7 through 9. Where he talks about he had this thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan. And he asked God three times to take it away.

Verse 9 says, He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. And Paul says, Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

We talked about Isaiah 48, 10. Isaiah 48, 10 says this, Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver. I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

And we talked about Spurgeon had that hanging on a wall in his house. That saying, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. And he said, Let me make sure I get this right.

[ 5 : 02 ] He said, God's choice makes chosen men choice men. We are chosen not in the palace, but in the furnace. We talked about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego being in the furnace.

And the second thing we talked about was that there are some promises in the Bible that are negative promises. In particular, 2 Timothy 3, 12. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Why? John 15, 18, and 19. If the world hates you, ye know that it hated me because it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own.

But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. The world is going to hate us because it hates Jesus. And how did Jesus react to the hatred of the world?

1 Peter 2, 23. 1 Peter 2, 23. 2 Peter 3, 23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

[ 6 : 12 ] He gave it over to God. Let God take care of him. And the example we used for that was Joseph. Joseph, when he was mistreated by his brothers, they sold him off into slavery and everything.

He's now second in command to Pharaoh. What is his attitude toward his brothers? Genesis 50, verses 19 and 20. Joseph said unto them, Fear not, for am I in the place of God?

It's not my job to judge. It's not my job to bring retribution. It's not my job to take care of what you did. I'm not God. That's his job. My job, verse 20.

But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Which brings us to the second thing.

Probable temptation. Every one of us is going to face temptation. It says probable, but I'm guaranteeing you, you have all faced this at one time or another. Temptation.

[ 7 : 17 ] Here in Hebrews chapter 11, look at verse 37 again. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted. They were tempted.

You know, temptation comes in all kinds of forms and things. But there is one temptation that I guarantee you is common to every one of us. Letter A under there, if you want to put, if you're keeping the track.

Now, quitting is easy. We have all been tempted to quit. Throw your hands up and say, you know what? I'm done. It's over. I'm not doing this anymore.

I've been there. You've been there, I'm sure. Just think, you know what? Uh-uh. No more. I give up. And that's the easiest thing to do when we're in a battle with Satan or any kind of battle.

Just throw our hands up and give up. Say, no, I'm not doing it. You know, it takes an extra measure of God's grace and God's strength to stay in the battle, especially when things aren't going well.

[ 8 : 21 ] But what does God ask of us? God asks us to be faithful. He says, look, be faithful in the things you're doing. 1 Corinthians 4.2. 1 Corinthians 4.2.

Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. He says, I want to see faithfulness in you. Even when times are tough, even when things are not going the way you want them to go, even when things are going contrary to what you want, remain faithful in how you handle things.

1 Corinthians 15.58. 1 Corinthians 15.58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

For as much as you know your labor is not in vain in the Lord. He says, keep on going. Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding. 2 Peter 3.17.

2 Peter 3.17. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

[ 9 : 40 ] Beware. People are going to bring you different doctrine. People are going to bring you things and say, oh, this is what you should believe. And this is how you, he says, don't go there. He says, don't fall from your own steadfastness.

Stick to the word of God and what God has given to you. When you stick to the word of God and stay there, you will be safe. You know, most of the martyrs in history were given a chance to recant.

They were given a chance to say, you know, okay, yeah, I don't believe that anymore. I'm going this way. I'm going to follow what you guys say. And a lot of times they face things, you know, before being put to death, they face things that were, you know, cruel, inhumane.

They went through a lot of different things, tortures and stuff. But even though they were tempted to quit, they didn't.

They stuck with it. They didn't throw in the towel. So quitting is easy. Okay, I give up. No, no, I'm not. It's not worth the fight.

[ 10 : 45 ] Letter B, quenching. Quenching is essential. Quenching is easy, but quenching is essential.

One of the keys to remaining faithful in the battle is being diligent to quench the fiery darts that Satan throws at us.

You remember in Ephesians chapter 6 when it's talking about the armor that we're supposed to have, you know, the breastplate of righteousness, the sword of the spirit, and all those different things. Ephesians 6.16 says this, above all, taking the shield of faith wherewith ye are able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

He says take the shield of faith. A lot of times they had shields, you know, made out of brass or things, but they also had shields made out of wood sometimes that they would hold in front of them.

But those wooden ones, a lot of times, they would cover them with leather. And then they would get ready to go into battle. They would soak them in water.

[ 11 : 55 ] Just let them sit in water for a while and let that leather soak up the water. So if somebody's firing fiery darts at them, it hit that leather that's wet and it puts fire up.

It didn't have the effect that it was supposed to have. He says, look, you take on the shield of faith so that you can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And darts come in all sizes and all shapes.

Satan's going to throw all kinds of things at us. It's not always the same thing. He's going to throw all kinds of things. And when your fear becomes bigger than your faith, you will quit.

Just don't quit. Keep faith in that shield that you have. By taking that shield of faith, every one of those darts will be quenched.

1 John 5, 4. 1 John 5, 4. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

[ 13 : 00 ] You want to overcome the world? You want to stay in the fight? You want to stay walking with the Lord Jesus Christ? You do it by faith. You put your trust in him. You follow him.

See, by faith, we focus on Christ. We don't focus on the crisis. We don't focus on the chaos. We don't focus on all the different things that are taking place.

We keep our focus on Christ. Hebrews 12, 2. How does it start? Looking unto Jesus. Never heard that before, have you?

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. He says, keep your focus on Christ.

[ 14 : 00 ] Why? Why? So that you don't succumb to the temptation to quit. You don't realize that, you know what, I can just give up, and it's so much easier.

He says, don't be wearied. Don't faint in your mind. You stick with Christ. You keep your eyes on him. You look at everything he went through. And everything he went through and everything he did, you keep your eyes on him, and you'll know how to take care of the thing that you're facing.

You know, and the faith that we have, it's not in ourselves. You know, I can do this, and I can do that, and I can do the other. No.

Jesus Christ already did it. Jesus Christ showed me the way. Jesus Christ lives in me, so I have the power to do these things. You know, think about when Christ faced temptation.

What did he do? Prayed, but what else did he do? Matthew, yeah.

[ 15 : 08 ] Matthew chapter 4. You don't have to turn there. You probably know it well, but in Matthew chapter 4, Satan's tempting him, trying to get him to do different things. Matthew 4, 4.

But he answered and said, It is written. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that receded out of the mouth of God. It is written.

This is what the word of God says. See, when you're tempted and you're facing things, what does the word of God say? Matthew 4, 7. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Matthew chapter 4, verse 10. Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Three temptations. Three times Jesus answered. Three times he said, It is written. Take the word of God. Are you ready with the word of God when temptation is coming to your life?

[ 16 : 14 ] Are you ready with the word of God so that whether it's fear or lust or anger or whatever, you can go, No, Satan.

It is written. Have you got the word of God hidden away in your heart? See there in chapter 6 of Ephesians, it talks about having that shield of faith. It also talks about having the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

It says have that. Do you have scripture memorized? And I know as you get older, it's a little harder to memorize, but do you have just certain verses? So when Satan comes at you, you ever notice, Satan usually knows how to get at you.

He knows what area you have the weakest points on. And so do you have verses from that, you know, concerning that area memorized? So that when Satan attacks you in that area, you can say, It is written, Satan.

It is written, Satan. It is written. You know, Jesus was ready because he had the word of God. He wrote the word of God, but do we have it in our hearts and lives? Psalm 119, verses 9 through 11.

[ 17 : 26 ] Psalm 119, verses 9 through 11 says, Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way by taking heed thereto according to thy word? With my whole heart have I sought thee.

O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee. What is this thing for the young men?

Know the word of God. Know the word of God. Know the word of God. Have it in your heart. More of them going by. Wow. Have it in your heart.

Like a, what? Psalm 119, 9 through 11. Psalm 119, 9 through 11. Yep.

See, Satan's going to fire those darts, and he's going to fire them at that weakest spot. Are we ready to put them out? Say, no, no, no, Satan. God's word says this. Nope.

[ 18 : 25 ] Can't go there either. God's word says this. Are we ready for him? Have you armed yourself with the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit? Do you have the verses put away in your mind?

Do you have the ammo ready to fire back at him? One guy said this. He says, you can't outrun Satan. You cannot outfight Satan.

You cannot outmaneuver Satan. But you can outtruth Satan. I like that. You can outtruth Satan.

Because who is Satan? This is another verse I memorized a while ago. I think back when I was in college. John 8, 44. College was a long time ago, so I'm still going to look at it.

Year of your father, the devil, and the lust of your father, ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

[ 19 : 29 ] When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it. Satan knows lies. Satan tells lies. He says, look, you know the truth.

You can outtruth Satan. When he comes after you and he starts saying, oh, what about this? What about that? Say, no, Satan. Word of God, the truth, says this.

You know, when Jesus kept coming back to him, it is written, it is written what happened. Satan had to flee. Satan had to go in a different direction.

He had to go away from Jesus, because he could not compete with Jesus when it came to Jesus quoting the word of God. And then the third thing we need to have is a purposed tenacity.

A purposed tenacity. What does that mean? We have to have a purpose. We have to have a goal. We have to have things that we're after. And we have to stick to it. Do we stick to the things that God has for us?

[ 20 : 39 ] It says here, in these verses in Hebrews, these others, the things that they displayed were not accidental. The things that they displayed were things that they had purposed in their heart, and they were going to stick to them and do what God wanted them to do.

These people, we don't know their names. They just say others. But we do know that they had a heavenly fame.

We may not know who they are, but God knew who they were. They had a heavenly fame. Look at verse 37. Verse 37 says, They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, were slain with a sword, wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.

And notice the parentheses. Of whom the world was not worthy. I love that phrase. Of whom the world was not worthy.

These people were willing to stand up, proclaim Christ, do what he asked. Bonnie was showing me, a friend of hers sent her some different clippings from the internet.

[ 21 : 57 ] Europe is, you know, you think of the missionaries and things that came from Europe. Europe right now is under attack.

They showed guys who had been on the street corners preaching, being arrested. They showed different things, you know, different incidences, people being arrested for just proclaiming the word of God.

Not bothering anybody, just quoting scripture. And they were being arrested for it. London, other places in England, Vienna, of whom the world was not worthy.

This is an amazing thing to think about. These, these, yeah, it was interesting because the, the clips that they were showing, you know, the person doing the thing is asking, what are you arresting me for?

And other people who are watching and filming. What are you arresting him for? Never did get an answer. Nope, just, we're going to arrest you.

[ 23 : 14 ] If you don't stop, we're going to arrest you and no answers to why. So, these others, others live apart from the world. Others, you know, they had no, no, no, no, no, um, renown on the earth.

Nobody knew who they were. Nobody really knew that much about them. Their names were never in the limelight. Their names were never, you know, up in, in lights on a marquee or anything, something like that.

They weren't on the news. But they were known in heaven. You know, they were known in heaven. Now, if you're honest with yourself, where would you like to be known?

Here on earth or in heaven? Where do you want people to know your name? Most of you remember the old show, Cheers, where everybody knows your name.

I want my name to be known in heaven. I want people in there to know who I am. Not here on earth. Here on earth doesn't really matter. You know, 1 John 2, 16 says, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

[ 24 : 40 ] I want God to know my name. I want God to know who I am. Micah, 2, 10. He says, Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest, because it is polluted and shall destroy you even with sore destruction.

He says, look, this world, it's polluted. This world, it doesn't matter. He says, I want you to know this is not your rest.

Your rest is going to be on glory, on the streets of heaven, on the throne of God, when he knows your name.

Romans 12, 2, you all know, be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Don't be conformed to this world.

Colossians 3, 2. Colossians 3, 2 says, set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. Put your focus and your goal there.

[ 25 : 49 ] Romans chapter 6, verses 11 through 13. Romans 6, 11 through 13. Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourself unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

He says, yield yourself to him. Do what he wants you to do. What happens when you do that? You become part of the hall of faith.

This chapter 11, we talk of it like a hall of fame. It's a hall of faith. You know, it's interesting as you read through these verses. Well, in my Bible, without having to flip the page, verse 17, by faith, Abraham.

Verse 21, by faith, Jacob. 22, by faith, Joseph. 23, by faith, Moses. 24, by faith, Moses.

[ 27 : 05 ] Everything you see here is people did things by faith. They put their faith in God. When you come down here to this ending part, verse 20, 36 and on, he says, and others did all these different things.

Look at verse 39. And these all had maintained a good report through faith. They did it by having their faith in God.

That's kind of a neat way for us to sum up our life, isn't it? The things that we did, the things that we accomplished, we did it by faith.

What's the goal of every Christian? Matthew 25, 21. His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

Isn't that what we're all shooting for? We want God someday to say, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. People are looking for heroes today. But where are they looking for them?

[ 28 : 12 ] They're looking for heroes in the sports world. Oh, so and so, he's the greatest player ever. He's the goat. I'm not sure I want to be known as the goat.

I understand what it means, what the initials stand for, greatest of all time, but I'm not sure I want to be a goat. There are those in the music industry.

Oh, if we could just, I mean, there's a lot of controversy there. Politics. Oh, a lot of people's names are known in politics. Good and bad. And sometimes the same person can be both good and bad, depending on who you ask.

Hollywood. Oh, yeah, Hollywood and stuff. Just get my face out there on a movie screen and stuff. I'll be okay. He says, No. He says, You want to have it by faith.

You want to have God recognize who you are. You want God to say, by faith, through faith, Steve lived his life. By faith, Chuck, lived his life.

[ 29 : 17 ] Through faith, Nancy, lived her life. We want to know that God knows who we are and that we are pleasing to him. George Whitefield, some of you may have heard that name before.

He was, lived in the 1700s. He was part of the Great Awakening here in America just before the Revolutionary War. He was a preacher here in America and in England.

He and John Wesley, John Wesley, they were used of God to start revival, both here and in England. And, John Wesley went on to start the Methodist denomination.

Others wanted Whitefield to kind of start his own. You know, they got along pretty well, but there were some things they disagreed on and stuff. So others wanted Whitefield to start his own denomination and they would follow him and stuff, but Whitefield said, no, I'm not doing that.

That's not what I'm here for. If you were to find Whitefield's grave, it's in England. This is what it says on it. Here lies G.W.

[ 30 : 25 ] Doesn't say George Whitefield. Here lies G.W. The record is on high. That's the quote.

Here lies G.W. The record is on high. Didn't want people to remember him on earth. Didn't want any recognition for the things he did. He said, I want God to know about it.

I want God to be proud of what I've done. I want him to recognize me. I want him. He only cared about the record in heaven. You know, as we've been going through this over the, I don't know how many weeks now, we have looked at these people and these others who have remained faithful to God.

We've looked at these people who have given themselves over to God and we don't know their names. You know, you and I, we're probably never going to be like George Whitefield.

Preach over 80,000 people one time. 80,000. George Whitefield, he knew famous people. Benjamin Franklin was one of his friends.

[ 31 : 39 ] And he says, you know what? I don't care about this world. The record is on a high. That's what I want. What did Hebrews 12, 2 say?

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Romans 5, 1. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do we have peace with God? 2 Timothy 4, 7. Paul wrote, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course.

I have kept the faith. I have kept the faith. Do you find it an honor to be among and others?

People who, nobody knows our name. We're from a little church in Hancock, Maine. But are we making a difference for Christ in the lives of the people around us?

[ 32 : 41 ] That's what we need to be doing. Pray. I have no idea where I'm going next after this study. This study's done. Going somewhere else next week.

I've got a couple of ideas in mind, but pray that God will show me which one is what we need for right now. So, let's have a word prayer. God bless you.