

Dynamic Christianity

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[0:00] For my strength is made perfect in weakness.

It's still true today! God's strength is made perfect. It's complete. It's full in our own weakness. Our own weakness. And that's where the dynamic of God's person, of God's spirit can be at work. What is a dynamic church meant to look like?

There's lots of churches that say they're on the cutting edge. Or they're taking it to the next level. Or they use all these different slogans and things to make it sound like they're the in place to be.

But what is a dynamic church according to God's definition? According to what He says, His church is meant to be. What is it meant to look like?

[1:07] What does God want to do with His own people? It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Our preaching should be dynamic.

When we open God's Word and proclaim it, it should wake people up. Not put them to sleep. I was looking at you there, Marjorie. I thought you looked a bit comfortable back there.

Now there's some people this morning. I think there's two people who went to sleep this morning. I'm going to have to get my preaching a bit more fiery. A bit more full on. Our preaching should be dynamic.

That no one falls asleep. We should want to be awoken and fired up by the message of the Gospel. In 1 Thessalonians 1 verse 5 it says, For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost.

And in much assurance, as you know what manner of man we were among you for your sake. The Gospel came in power and with the Holy Spirit. Our preaching needs to be in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[2:17] That must be our resource. In 1 Corinthians 1 verse 18 it says, For the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that perish.

But unto us which are saved it is the power of God. This message is powerful. It's life changing. It's earth shaking. It's planet shaking.

This is the message of the Gospel. The power of the Gospel. The preaching of the cross. And our preaching should be dynamic. Our praying should be dynamic.

Brothers and sisters, our praying should be dynamic. God's Spirit ought to be alive and at work within us and within our hearts. You know, an old time preacher said this, When we rely upon organisation, we get what organisation can do.

When we rely upon education, we get what education can do. When we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do. And so on. But when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do.

[3:26] When we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do. And our praying ought to be praying in the Holy Spirit. What does that mean?

In other words, Spirit empowered. Spirit led. Spirit energised. Perhaps we need to let go and let go. I think sometimes we need, and I had one of these holy moments today.

We need a power nap. A power nap. As it were, where we rest in the Lord. You know, as the Lord Jesus said, Come apart and rest a while.

He wants us to sometimes be still. And know that I'm God. You know, have that power nap, as it were. Where we take time. Where we rest in the Lord.

And we're refreshed and recharged and refined. Our praying should be dynamic. When we cease from our own striving and rest in His enabling.

[4:28] When we learn to rest in God's power. And rely on God's power. To be a truly God-dependent church.

You know, I kind of joke saying we're not an independent Baptist. We're a God-dependent Baptist church. We're a God-dependent Bible-believing church.

We need to be God-dependent, brothers and sisters. And trust in His power. Have we forgotten who it is that is at work within us? Both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It's God's mighty power. That's at work within us. This is not some man-made, human-formed kind of organisation. Some manufactured holy club that some good, well-meaning people thought to form.

And to get together and have times of prayer and preaching. But it's a God-ordained organisation, as it were. An organism. God's church.

[5:29] His assembling of His own people together in this area. As much as there's many other such gatherings of God's people. That we can be a people called out for His name.

That's His church. The dynamic, kind of God-dependent church we ought to be. That assembly. And God's mighty power should be at work within us and amongst us.

A preacher said this. It's impossible for that man to despair who remembers that his helper is omnipotent. His helper is omnipotent.

In other words, almighty. All-powerful. When we pray, our helper hears our prayer. And his power is omnipotent. All-powerful.

Perhaps we need to be driven more to prayer, brothers and sisters. Someone said, trouble and anxiety drive us to prayer. And prayer drives away trouble and anxiety.

[6:35] Maybe that trouble, that anxiety in our lives is God-ordained. So that you pray. So that you pray. And pray through. And keep on praying.

Till you get the breakthrough. The early church was dynamic. It was powerful. In Acts 4.31. And when they had prayed. The place was shaken.

Where they assembled together. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. And they spake the word of God with boldness. What was their secret?

When they got together, when they assembled. They prayed. And the place was shaken. The early church prayed together. And prayed often.

Do we tap into that power? I think sometimes we miss that power.

[7:35] There's a story told of a woman who lived in a remote place in Wales. And she went to a great deal of trouble to have the power connected to her little cottage.

And the electrical power was installed one day. And a couple of months later, the electricity company came and knocked on her door. And they asked this woman.

And they said that they've noticed that she's not using much electricity at all. They thought there might be a problem with the connection. With some kind of fault or something or other.

And the meter man went out and he checked things. And he said, we checked your meter and it doesn't seem that you're using much electricity. Is there a problem? And the woman said, oh no. We're quite satisfied. We turn on the electric lights every night to see how we light our lamps. And then we switch them off again. She used the electricity. She used the electric power so she could light her lamp with the oil and lighter.

[8:42] Why didn't this woman make more use of her electricity? She believed in electricity. She believed in the promises of the electric company. They told her much about. And she went to a great deal of trouble to have that electric power connected.

To have her house wired. But she didn't understand the potential of electricity in her home. And so she used that power sparingly.

What about us and the power of prayer? Do we underestimate the power of prayer? Do we neglect to pray? When that great resource is there for us?

That great privilege that we have is sadly an untapped potential for many believers. This great source of spiritual power untapped.

Yet we resort to praying so little. When this great source of spiritual power is there.

[9:45] And we need to pray together. To pray together. Now there's opportunity. We try to make that opportunity at the close where you might seek prayer.

Seek counsel. Seek prayer. Seek prayer. Maybe you might offer to pray for someone. That would be a good idea, wouldn't it? Wouldn't it? We ought to, wouldn't we?

ability when it's beyond our own strength and Moody said of a young convert he got up to say something for Christ in the open air one day and not being accustomed to speak this young convert stammers a great deal and an infidel an unbeliever came right up on his face and shouted out young man you ought to be ashamed of yourself standing and talking like that well the young man replied I'm ashamed of myself but I'm not ashamed of Christ that was a good answer I'm not ashamed of Christ you know we can be ashamed of ourselves none of us well speaking of myself none of us have much to lay credit to him but we must not be ashamed of Christ that's what matters are you feel are you ashamed of

[15:25] Christ or are you filled how can you be filled filled with God filled with his spirit another quote here from a man Roy Hessian he said what then is it to be filled with the Holy Spirit what is it to be filled with the Spirit it's simply to be filled with the one who already is there in our hearts and he gave this illustration he says take up a sponge and while it is in your hands squeeze it and in that condition plunge it in water and submerge it keeping it there it is now in the water and the water is in it but only in a small degree as you hold it in the water you open your hand and as you do so the water fills all the pores which you release in this way it is now filled with the water in the same way when we come to know Christ as Savior and we are born anew we're put into that sphere where the Holy Spirit is operating and the Holy Spirit comes to reside within us now we could be like that sponge pressed and and just touching the water or will we just let it expand and be filled with the water likewise will we just have a a sense of

God's Spirit saving us or will we let him saturate us as a sponge would be saturated for it is God which work could think you both to will and to do with his good pleasure brothers sisters it's God's will that we be filled his will that we be filled in Ephesians 5 verse 17 wherefore be you not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is and they not drunk with wine wherein is excess but be filled with the Spirit speaking to yourselves in songs and hymns and spiritual songs singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord be not drunk with wine wherein is excess but be filled with the Spirit that's God's will for you for me and without his Spirit we are powerless we need the Holy Spirit's power from on high and someone said to be filled with his Spirit is to be filled with Christ it's Jesus having more of us it's our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ having more of us abiding in him so that we can do his goodwill untapped power you know there's a familiar illustration of a couple of people who went to the Niagara Falls and I saw this crashing torrent of water this this world pool and these rapid streaming down crashing down with great force and one said to the other come and I'll show you the greatest unused power in the world now this power could have been tapped into and made some hydroelectric scheme and such things as that and he said there according to the waterfall there is the greatest unused power in the world but this fellow Christian said there is the greatest unused power in the world there, pointing to the waterfall, there is the greatest unused power in the world. But this fellow Christian said, not so my brother, the greatest unused power in the world is the Holy Spirit of the living God. The Holy Spirit of the living God. Friends, the Holy Spirit has great untapped power and as God's people I think sometimes we miss this. And as much as there's some places and people who make much mention of the Holy Spirit and I think they miss the point entirely. Friends, we as God's own people we don't want to miss what God is doing by His Spirit.

What He wants to do in each of us to make us that dynamic Spirit filled, Spirit empowered, set apart people for His glory. Our testimony should be dynamic.

We hear of these folk in other countries and there's graphic sites and pictures of gruesome things going on to our brothers and sisters in other lands.

Of their shining testimony in a very dark place. And what of us? Let's be real here. Let's pray that our testimony can shine brightly where we are.

[20:09] Let us pray for a testimony that is tried and true. It's been said that the brightest crowns worn in heaven will have been tried, smelted, polished and glorified through the furnace of tribulation.

You know, our brothers and sisters in lands where they're doing it tough, they'll have the shining crowns and cast them out of their feet. Friends, even if hardship comes against us, let this be our

finest hour.

You might face that tribulation of sorts in your workplace, in your school place, your home place, in your neighbourhood. As you stand for Christ, be not ashamed of the gospel.

God gives us a power beyond our own. Power for holy living. Power that will break the power of addictions. Vince Habner, an old time preacher, said, the greatest need in America, and you could say in Australia, is an old fashioned, heaven born, God sent revival.

And through the history of the church, when the clouds have hung the lowest, when sin seemed blackest and faith seemed the weakest, there's always been a faithful few.

[21:25] A faithful few. Who've not sold out to the devil, who've not bowed to the need to bail, who have feared the Lord and thought upon his name and have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together.

And these ones have besought the Lord to revive his work in the midst of the years and in the midst of the fears and tears and in wrath to remember mercy. God has always answered such supplication, filling its heart with his love, rekindling its soul with fire from above.

In the history of the church, when things seemed the darkest, God worked in his own people. And he still does today.

He wants us to be that dynamic people, powerful, resilient, overcoming. And to do that, we must have, we must have, we must have God's empowerment.

It must be his working. You may be asking, how can this spiritual truth become a reality in my life? How can it become a reality in my life?

[22:39] One day, Moody, the preacher, held up a glass and he asked, how can I get the air out of this glass? Just a glass. And someone shouted out, you know, suck it out with a pump.

And Moody said, that would create a vacuum and it would shatter the glass. And different people suggested one thing and another and then Moody simply picked up a jug of water and he poured it into the glass.

And he said, all the air is now removed. This glass was full with the water. And he went on to explain the victory that we can have in the Christian life is accomplished not by sucking out a sin here and there but by being filled with the Spirit.

It's when, as it were, the water fills the glass that the air is out. And likewise too, brother, sister, if the sin in our life, it's as His Spirit fills us, there'll be that evacuating, there'll be that taking away of that which is not of Him.

And Moody said further, I believe firmly that the moment our hearts are empty of pride and selfishness and ambition and everything that is contrary to God's law, the Holy Spirit will fill every corner of our hearts.

[24:04] But if we are full of pride and conceit and ambition and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God. We must be empty before we can be filled.

Friends, it's His will that we be filled with His Spirit. It's God's will for us. Don't overlook the power of God.

I urge you, brothers and sisters, get a hold of some good Christian biographies, some good stories of men and women of faith and see that they were fragile and faulty just like you and me.

But there was something that they tapped into that was beyond themselves. You know, there's a woman of God called Mary Slessor, a missionary to Africa.

And people were amazed. Here was Mary Slessor just as they would perceive of her as she was apparently such a weak woman.

[25:08] A weak woman. Yet one who was able to reach into the hearts of heathen chiefs in Africa.

And a great work of God was done. And one of the chiefs explained when someone said she's just a weak woman, he said, you have evidently forgotten to take into account the woman's God.

That's what makes the difference for you, sister. For you, brother. For me. The God that we serve is omnipotent, all-powerful.

And when we're filled with his power, the power of God that transforms the world, the power of God that saw wonders in times past and revivals is the same power that we can tap into today.

The power to resist when temptation comes. The power to overcome. The power to fight with energy. The fight of the faith. The power to get victory is that same power.

[26:19] And Ephesians 6.10 it says, finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. It's the same power that raised the Lord Jesus from the dead.

The person of the Holy Spirit. Do we listen to the Holy Spirit? I've heard someone say, the Holy Spirit is our personal trainer.

He encourages, disciplines, tells us to take a break and keep us on track. We need that coaching, if you like, that personal training and to hear what he wants us to hear.

To do what he'd have us to do. As we touched on this morning, he's the comforter. The one who comes alongside to help. And he's that one who comes alongside us to help us live the Christian life in victory.

It seems in these days with gadgets and technologies, we've got so much machinery and marketing and methodologies, but where is the power?

[27:21] Where is the power? We lack the empowerment of his Holy Spirit. Someone has said, when the Spirit comes into the believer, he makes Christ dearer, heaven nearer and the Word of God clearer.

Christ dearer, heaven nearer and the Word of God clearer. God wants us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

He wants us to be filled with his Spirit. And we're not talking about spooky, gobbledygook stuff. We're talking about the real thing. The real thing.

The real person of the person. God, the Holy Spirit. That's what we need. We need his empowerment. And when we're filled with his Spirit, we'll be filled with Christ.

We'll be filled with that compassion as we talked about earlier today, that pure, unbounded love that Jesus is as he extends his compassion to this sinful, suffering, straying world.

[28:28] And he is merciful, the God of compassion. His great love is powerful and his love fills us and works through us and in us. And we have that same dynamic.

We ought to have the same dynamic that the men and women of God in these pages had, the same power that raised Christ from the dead, the same Spirit should be at work within us in God's own people as those who have gone before us.

Wilbur Chapman was once asked, what was the secret of his power? He was a renowned preacher and he replied, I find that I have power just in proportion as my soul is saturated through and through with the Word of God.

The power is in relation to the saturation with the Word of God. And friends, we ought to be feasting on his Word, feeding on him.

Like it's been said, feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death. Prevent truth decay, read your Bible. That's what we need, brothers and sisters.

[29:42] Our soul is saturated through and through with the Word of God. Colossians 3, 16 it says, let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

There's power in this Word. It's living, alive, lively, powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. And there's power in his Word today. And it's amazing how God's Word can work through the weakest of human vessels. I heard a story of David Brainerd, a missionary to the American Indians. And he was a man of prayer, of great prayer. And he prayed much. And then he went to preach. And the interpreter that they gave him was so drunk that he could scarcely stand.

The American Indian who was translating, interpreting his preaching was intoxicated. And yet, Brainerd preached and scores were converted that day.

[30:58] You know, the human vessel, this drunkard, yet was a means of this powerful message getting through to the hearts of the hearers.

and Brainerd's secret was his prayerfulness. He was a dynamic Christian. And friends, you and I too, you and me, can be such today, now, in this day.

We have heard of power today. We've heard of living out the dynamic Christian life. It should be the normal Christian life, should be the dynamic Christian life. And I know I was talking with a sister this

morning and perhaps she felt inadequate.

She was somewhat limited in her ability to do things, somewhat invalidated. And she was almost crying, thinking, I want to do more, but I'm physically not able to.

But all of us can do something. Every one of you can pray. Every one of you can pray. And in some ways, prayer is probably the most important thing, isn't it?

[32:09] That we can depend on his power. In 1 Corinthians 1.24 it says, Christ is the power of God. The same word dynamite, dynamo, dynamic.

And we have heard of this power today. The power of the Christian life. The power of prayer. The power of his message, his word, preached faithfully, of our gathering together of corporate prayer. The power of that surrender to his will. The power of that dynamic, of that filling, of that empowering, that we'll seek and surrender to God's will today.

That dynamic is a reality still today. His dynamic power for service and for witness. and this power that we can have his word faithfully in our language.

Brothers and sisters, we treat this so lightly. Many men and women of God in the church of old, they never had the whole Bible. They had bits and pieces of it.

[33:18] we've got the whole 66 books and we can hold them and treasure them and believe them today.

There's a dynamic today. God's desire and design is that his people will be such a church, dynamic, not stagnant and ineffective, but flourishing, dynamic, empowered by God's spirit.

Wherefore, my beloved, as he hath always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Be encouraged today. To be continued...