

Citizens & Saints
Power through Surrender • Message 6
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Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- **Pray that we would surrender our lives fully to God.**
- **Pray that we would trust God with whatever we are facing.**
- **Pray that we would experience God's presence in a deeper way.**

Worship Psalm:

See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! ...

1 John 3:1a (NLT)

Scripture Reading:

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:14-21 (NIV)

A. Introduction

I did physical therapy after I dislocated my arm... I quickly learned the more you resist, the less mobility you have; the more you surrender, the more healing you will find.

Most of the time, we try to push through... but I want to show you why you need to surrender to the Holy Spirit, why you need a dependance on Him and not yourself... because when you are surrendered to the Spirit, three things happen.

Don't resist, try to fight, or control the things you're walking through.. the measure of your freedom and healing will be to the measure of your surrender...

Your power comes from your surrender.

You cannot have the power of God without the surrender of God.

How does Jesus have the power to be on the cross and say, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do...*? Because He surrendered...

B. When you surrender ...

1. The power to THRIVE, not survive.

(Ephesians 3:14-16)

I shared this a while ago... but years ago, I was out of ministry, and I told God I wouldn't get back in until He told me I was ready.

And one day, I was walking down the beach, and God spoke to me... and I felt like He said to me, *You've been asking when you are ready... Here's the truth: you are never ready. The reason you were always burned out and exhausted is because you are doing life in your strength.*

Then I was looking at the waves, and He said, *You can't stand out there and fight the waves. After a while, you are going to be exhausted... The waves won't stop coming. You are never ready, but know that you know that you are ready...*

God was showing me that to live well in this world, we need a supernatural strength.

This is the first thing. This is what Paul is begging the Spirit to do...

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.

Ephesians 3:14-16 (NIV)

Kneeling is a posture of surrender... bowing before a king was a sign of authority and surrender.

He drops to his knees. It shows His desperation. In that culture, people would pray standing up, but this was a sign of dependence.

Everyone can have a natural strength, but supernatural power comes from one source... the Father... which is why he says, “from His glorious riches.”

Think about what some of the richest people can do. They can fix certain things. They have the physical means to do something... Here, Paul is saying “His glorious riches” because God has the resources.

Do you know the top three things people have most often repeated to me in the last decade?

1. I am overwhelmed.
2. I am overscheduled.
3. I am exhausted.

Some of you are empty, and your souls are just exhausted... You just don’t have any patience or peace. You constantly feel like you are on edge...

Paul had suffering and discouragement...

Paul’s suffering:

- 1. Perpetual suffering** (2 Corinthians 12, thorn in his side)
- 2. Relational suffering** (Peter in Galatians 2 over Jews/Gentiles and Barnabas in Acts 15)
- 3. Physical suffering** (Paul was beaten over ten times in his ministry)

Yet he talks about being content in good or bad... how? There was a joy...

The power of your strength comes from the power of surrender...

Because Paul had tapped into a power, supernatural power, in his inner being... because we need to be strengthened in our souls... in our inner being, in our soul and in its essence...

Paul shows us that we are broken until God rescues us... born with this frenetic energy... It’s in us; it’s who we are.

Kids fight each other—hit each other with a bat... My sister had to use psychological warfare...

But the Spirit of God untangles all the anger, the rage, the judgment, the lust, the exhaustion, the pain, the worry... only He can do this.

The reason so many people don’t pray, the reason they don’t fall to their knees, is because we honestly think we can fix it... That’s what God spoke to me on that beach: I will never have a power and inner strength apart from the Spirit of God.

We all have problems, obstacles, and storms...

Paul himself was in a storm. He was imprisoned in a jail cell with no window, chained to a guard 24 hours a day. And yet, from this prison, he wrote the books of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

How? Because he had been strengthened in his inner being...

Man, whatever you are in, God doesn't just want you to get through. He wants to strengthen you, empower you, and fill you... but you have to get your eyes on Him.

Peter began to sink when he was looking at the storm... but when he saw Jesus, he had an inner strength that allowed him to conquer...

God wants you to thrive.

2. The power to DEFEAT your giants.

(Ephesians 3:17a; 20-21)

... so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. ...

Ephesians 3:17a (NIV)

Now, this is a very odd thing to say to Christians... why would Paul say this? I understand saying this to a non-Christian, but why the church?

The word "dwell" here means... two words for dwelling... one, resident; complete dwelling... hotel vs. house... that He may live here permanently... Don't use Him for a season...

I was meeting with someone a little while ago, and he said, *I don't think I'm ever going to overcome this struggle in my life.*

And I just quickly said, *You won't.*

And he was thrown off guard... and then he goes, *Aren't you supposed to encourage me?*

And I said, *No, I'm supposed to tell you the truth... and the truth is, you can't overcome this...*

One second, you do it in your strength... the next, you do it in God's...

What giant are you facing?

- Maybe you've got something in your past...
- Maybe you have some struggle or sin you can't overcome...
- Maybe some financial or health giant...
- Maybe you've got fear or anger... anger or some opposition.

But what you need isn't self-confidence; you need Spirit confidence... You need a different kind of power... you need the Spirit of God to break this...

That's why Paul is on his knees. He knows without the Spirit dwelling in our hearts, we can't overcome our struggles.

But when you wake up to this, it moves you from a self-confidence to a Spirit confidence...

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV)

Oftentimes, Jesus is called the Lord and Savior in the Bible. But you know what I've found in American Christianity? We like Jesus as a Savior, but not as much as a Lord.

We like that as a Savior, He saves you from your sin, death, Satan, and hell. But He isn't just Savior. He's Lord.

Lord means you are no longer in control of your life. It means you don't get to say what you want to say or act however you want. He's in charge...

But when He's Lord, He dwells and is at home in your life.

3. The EXPERIENCE of His love.

(Ephesians 3:17b-19. C/R: 1 John 4:18)

... And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:17b-19 (NIV)

But the only way that happens is to know the love of God. That's why Paul goes on to say...

— *To know this love that surpasses knowledge so that you can be filled with the fullness of God.* Paul wants the Spirit to show you the depths of God's love...

This is sobering to me because, for Paul to say this, it means... some people who are Christians spend their entire life only having a knowledge about God, but not an actual experience. (Eyes of the head vs. eyes of your heart.) It hasn't moved from their head to their heart. Why?

Because we don't understand our identity...

John shows what happens when we understand this...

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love.

1 John 4:18 (NLT)

Self-created identity

Lives in performance

Lives in fear

Can change anytime

God-given identity

Lives in perfect love

Lives in peace

Permanent

Listen, everyone is born in the image of God... but only those who have surrendered their lives to God, who've acknowledged Him as King of their life, can become children of God...

So, if you aren't a Christian, you will live out of a self-created identity... but it's also possible to be given a God-given identity and go back to a self-created one.

Satan doesn't want you to live in this God-given identity. He wants you to live in a self-created identity.

The reason a self-created identity is dangerous is that it changes...

So, if you identify as a mom or dad, what if you don't get married? What happens when your kids grow up? Who am I? What's my purpose?

What if your value is in your beauty? I'll tell you this: gravity wins! It always does...

What if your value is in being married? What if you get divorced or become widowed? If you attach your identity to a role, and it changes, your identity is destroyed...

In the Bible, we are called God's special possession...

God's special possession. What does God need? God has everything... Or what's your favorite possession?

Angels are probably like, *Gotta be us!* Creation is probably like, *Gotta be us!* But it's not...

My favorite thing in the whole universe is My chosen people.

Imagine the whole universe going, *You mean Katie in accounting?*

We spend so much time pushing that off... and we wonder why we aren't living in the right kingdom.

We spend so much time talking about politics and theories on this earth that we spend so little time talking about the most important kingdom—our heavenly kingdom.