



POWER FAILURE

And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

(Matthew 13:58)



INTRODUCTION

In the natural world, man depends on natural power sources for progress. Natural power may be as simple as a fire over which dinner is cooked. Without the fire, progress on the meal comes to a standstill. Natural power may also be as complex as electricity which is generated in cities by great power plants. When these plants fail, the power they generate fail. An entire city will experience a blackout. When there is a power failure in the natural world, progress comes to a standstill.

The same is true in the spiritual world. When there is a power failure, spiritual progress comes to a standstill.

*Lives are not changed through the power of the Gospel.
The sick are not healed. Demons are not cast out.*

*There are reasons for power failure in the natural world.
It may be a simple reason, like a fire burning out, or a
complex reason, such as a piece of mechanical equipment
breaking. When these reasons for failure are identified
and corrected, the flow of power resumes.*

*There are also causes for power failure in the spiritual
world. When these are identified and corrected, the flow
of spiritual power resumes.*



IS YOUR NAME KNOWN IN HELL?

*One of the greatest examples of spiritual power failure is
recorded in Acts 19:13-16. Read this story of the sons of
the chief priest who tried to cast an evil spirit out of a man
and failed. The spirit cried out. . .*

*. . . Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? (Acts
19:15)*

*Then the man, whom the evil spirit possessed, leaped on
these young men, ripped off their clothing, and injured
them. They fled, naked and wounded, from the presence
of the demon-possessed man. The demon knew the name
of Paul. The demon knew the name of Jesus. But the
names of these young men were unknown because they
lacked true spiritual power in their lives.*

If you are forgiven of your sins, your name is known in Heaven. It is written in the Lamb's book of life spoken of in Revelation 21:27. But is your name known in Hell? Do you have enough of the power of God flowing in your life that demonic powers recognize your authority in the name of Jesus?

These men used the name of Jesus in trying to cast out the demon, but it did not work. The name of Jesus is not a magical charm. You must possess the power behind it. You must recognize and possess the authority of that name.

In the hour of crisis you will face defeat if your name is not known in Hell. These men could not conquer Satan on the basis of Paul's experience and neither can you. Only when you have God's power manifested in your own life can you defeat Satan. If you are so powerless that your name is not known in Hell, you will flee wounded and naked before the enemy.



POWER FAILURE

Here are some reasons for spiritual power failure:

SIN:

Sin separates man from God. When you are separated from God, His power cannot flow through you.

Read Romans 7 where the Apostle Paul describes his struggle with the bondage of sin. Read of his liberation in Romans 8. As a believer, Paul had the same battles with sin which you experience, but he learned to overcome the law of sin which worked in his flesh. Because of this, his life was open to the flow of God's power.

When a sinful man named Simon offered money to obtain spiritual power, Peter answered:

Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

(Acts 8:21-23)

Repentance from sin and forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ is the only way to bridge the gap of this separation. Sin separates from God's power. When Jesus returns again. . .

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(II Thessalonians 1:8)

Those who are in sin will. . .

. . . be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. (II Thessalonians 1:9)

In the end, sin will result in eternal separation from the power of God.



BONDAGES:

Spiritual bondages can prevent the flow of God's power in your life. Bondages are not sin in themselves. They are things or practices that become so important to you that you are brought under their control. Paul wrote:

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. (I Corinthians 6:12)

Anything in your life, other than God, which consumes your thoughts and interests is bondage. You are brought under its power.



It may be a hobby or habit. It may be attitudes of timidity and fear which prevent you from acting in faith and power. Such bondages result in power failure because you are brought under their power instead of the control of the Holy Spirit.



VIOLATION OF POWER PRINCIPLES:

You learned many Biblical power principles in this ministry. Revisit the Kingdom Laws. Violation of these principles results in power failure. Continually examine your life and ministry in relation to these principles, especially when you experience power failure.



REIGNING INSTEAD OF SERVING:

When spiritual power is used to reign instead of serve, power failure results. You learned in Matthew 20:25-28 that God's power structure is not as that of the world. The worldly concept of power is to reign over others and control them.

From childhood, we struggle for worldly power. We try to control and manipulate our parents. We seek power in society, over our environment, and even try to predict and control the forces of nature. Worldly power can become a god that controls us.

Biblical power structure calls for serving and meeting human need through the manifestation of the power of God. Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers on this subject. As the great Apostle of the Church, Paul had authority over this group of believers. But he did not misuse this power. He told them:

If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power: but

suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. (I Corinthians 9:12)

Paul did not abuse his spiritual position. He did not reign over the Corinthians, rather he served them:

Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. (II Thessalonians 3:9)



PERSONAL PROFIT:

Paul also wrote the Corinthians concerning power for personal benefit. He said:

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? (I Corinthians 9:11)

Paul labored among the Corinthians and sown spiritual seed. He had a right to receive from them their "carnal things" in terms of financial support. But he did not abuse this power. He would rather suffer than abuse spiritual power and hinder the work of God (I Corinthians 9:12).

Jesus was tempted by satan to use his power for personal profit. Satan tempted Him to make stones into bread and to prove His power to the people by jumping from the top of the temple. Jesus refused.

When Jesus was suffering intensely on the cross for the sins of all mankind, He could have called 10,000 angels to come and rescue Him (Matthew 26:53). He refused this display of power in order to accomplish the higher purposes of God.



EMULATIONS:

You have learned about the Law of Envy. There is another sin of the flesh that is similar and it is called "emulations" which is a form of envy expressed by imitation of others (Galatians 5:20). This was a problem which resulted in power failure in the early church. In Acts 19:13 it speaks of those who took it "upon themselves" to try to cast out demons in imitation of the ministry of Paul. When you try to imitate the ministries of others, you can experience serious power failure as did these men. God has a specific plan just for you.



WRONG MOTIVES:

Do not conclude that because spiritual power is sometimes misused that it is evil. Spiritual power which flows from God is good, but it can be abused and used for the wrong reasons with the wrong motives.

The original sin of satan resulted from a wrong motive of seeking power. The same is true of man's first sin which was committed while seeking the power that comes with knowledge.

James and John once wanted to call down fire from Heaven to consume those who opposed Jesus. What a miraculous demonstration of power that would have been! But their motive was wrong. Their motive was to take revenge on these enemies. Such a display would have been an abuse of spiritual power. Jesus told them:

. . . Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. (Luke 9:55-56)

Improper motives result in an overbalanced emphasis on power. Jesus instructed His disciple thusly:

Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.