

GOD IS ABLE

Dear Friends,

As we get older and our bodies get weaker it become increasingly critical that we know in every area of our lives that God is able. Moses had to learn this as He was called forth at the age of eighty to deliver the children of Israel from captivity. Abraham had to accept the fact that God was able to make him the father of a great nation when he was over ninety years of age. Romans 4:21 says that Abraham was “being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised.”

If you are going to accomplish that which God has called you to do you also must be fully persuaded that God is able. You must accept the words that Paul declared in Eph. 3:20 when he stated, “now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or image, according to His power that is at work within us.”

In order to understand this power at work in us we must know what it means to be in Christ Jesus. II Cor.5:17 says, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” This power is a result of repenting of your sins and committing your life to Jesus and living daily under His direction. As a result you are not just reformed, rehabilitated or reeducated, but you are recreated (a new creation) living in union with Jesus Christ. “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Col.2:6,7).

The time has come for us to arise and know in the depths of our being that God is able. This will happen as we renounce the god of this age who blinds the minds of those who refuse to believe the Word of God. As a result, “they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness, made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us” (II Cor.4:4, 6, and 7). If you believe this there is no limit to what God can do through you. Sure, we encounter difficulties but “we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly

we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen, is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”(II Cor.4:16-18) Now let the word of God go down deep into your heart until you know without a doubt that God is able to meet every need you are facing.” Remember we live by faith, not by sight” (II Cor.5:6). “In the power of God: with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left;”(II Cor.6:7) “For we are the temple of the Living God. As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them and I will be their God, and they will be my people’” (II Cor.6:16). As a result of the fact we are a new creation through Christ Jesus we will see that God is able to help us overcome these addictions and sin as we “purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God”(II Cor.7:1).

Growing in God through Jesus Christ means that, “Just as you excel in everything, in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”(II Cor.8:7). In other words let God’s grace flow through you in order that He may use you to help meet the needs of others. Remember, “God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work” (II Cor.9:7, 8). As new creations, alive in Christ Jesus, we are now abounding in God’s grace and as a result we should abound in every good work. There are so many opportunities to serve.

II Cor.9:12-14 tells us the results of such service, “This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.”

Remember, by being in Christ we are “a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”(II Cor.5:17). That verse is our theme here at the New Life Evangelistic Center. As a community, “though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have the divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the

knowledge of God and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (II Cor.10:3-5) As we do this we will see that no matter how impossible things may appear, God is able to meet the need. He did this for Daniel, David, Moses, Joshua and so many others and He will do it for you.

Now you are challenged to, “examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless of course you fail the test?”(II Cor.13:5) Each day is a test. Don’t give up. Continue to trust God’s love for you. “For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live shall no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and was raised again” (II Cor.5:14).

Christ is Risen. “Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you” (II Cor.13:11). Let us continue to live daily in the reality of the resurrection. II Cor.9:8 tells us, “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”

How we need this grace of God particularly when someone we love suddenly walks out on us, or sickness strikes our body and no matter how hard you pray nothing seems to change. It’s hard at those times when you really believe that everything comes from God and God is able, to praise him. It is so much easier to feel cheated, let down and even angry when day after day passes and there seems to be no let up in the pain and loneliness. Paul’s response is to take us into a deeper level of faith by declaring, “Therefore, I urge you, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.”(Romans 12:1NIV) This is no easy matter particularly in this age of pop theology where we are conditioned to believe that if we just name it and claim it; suddenly God will provide an instant solution for all our problems. How we love to quote Romans 8:28, but oh how we hate to wait as our bodies are offered to God as living sacrifices. It’s so much easier to say “I love you Jesus, You are the love of my life,” than it is to engage in the spiritual act of worship Paul is calling for here.

The true realization that God is the source of all things (Romans 11:36) and we exist as a result of His mercy should be reason enough for us to make such a sacrifice. Yet knowing what we should do and then actually doing it often seem worlds apart. That is why in Romans 12:2 Paul goes on and says, “Do not conform

any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

My mind tells me that this terrible thing that is happening to me should not be happening. I must take control of this situation before it controls me. Yet here I am in the midst of this overwhelming problem that only seems to get worst the harder I try. Surrendering this body, as a living sacrifice in service to God just doesn't make sense particularly in a culture intoxicated with greed and self-service. That is why we need to be reminded, “Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what He wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.” “I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you. Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what He does for us, not by what we are and what we do for Him”(Romans 12:2,3 The Message Bible).

As I meditate upon these verses, I can't help but think of Phoebe Palmer, who after her eleven-month-old child Eliza had died in a tragic accident, struggled with anger and grief. This had been her third child to die in infancy. As she cried out to God, in her despair, she heard an answer. Although it seemed harsh, it gave her comfort. She came to believe God had taken her children because she had loved them too much and that “No other gods before Me” was His command. At that moment, she resolved she was going to surrender everything she held dear to God. In that year of 1836 Phoebe wrote in her diary, “Never before have I felt such a deadness to the world, and my affections so fixed on things above. God takes our treasures to heaven, that our hearts may be there also.” From the time of the declaration to the time of the total consecration I am sure the battle raged within her like it does me. Then a year later on July 27, 1837, Phoebe wrote, “Last evening, between the hours of eight and nine, my heart was emptied of self, and cleansed of all idols, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and I realized that I dwelt in God, and felt that He had become the portion of my soul, my ALL in ALL.” Phoebe and her husband Walter went on to be used by the Lord to help 20,000 people experience salvation and sanctification. Christian History and Biography goes on to report that, “Dr. and Mrs. Palmer's efforts were part of a movement of the Spirit that brought over a million people into the various churches

in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.” Oh may God help me to be that “living sacrifice,” daily laying aside my own desires as I put all my energy and resources at His disposal. My prayer is that He may completely transform me through the renewing of my mind in order that I might trust Him to guide and direct every area of my life. I also pray that I may know in the midst of every adversity that God is able and that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him”(Romans 8:28).

I want to encourage you to trust God now knowing that He is able to save you and answer your prayers. Remember God is able to deliver you from the fiery trials and strengthen you. Scripture is filled with one promise after another along with example after example of how God is able. Now let him show you now “how He is able to do exceedingly above what you can even ask or think” (Eph 3:20).

Yours in Christ

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