

Another Aspect of the Kingdom of God: POWER

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We've looked at Romans 14:17 (NKJV - *for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*) Tonight we're going to explore another aspect of the Kingdom of God: POWER

1 Corinthians 4:20 NKJV - For the kingdom of God [is] not in word but in power.

NLT: For the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power.

Power = G1411 = δύναμις *dýnamis*, doo'-nam-is; from [G1410](#); force (literally or figuratively); specially, miraculous power (usually by implication, a miracle itself):—ability, abundance, meaning, might(-ily, -y, -y deed), (worker of) miracle(-s), power, strength, violence, mighty (wonderful) work.

The KJV translates Strong's G1411 in the following manner: [power](#) (77x), [mighty work](#) (11x), [strength](#) (7x), [miracle](#) (7x), [might](#) (4x), [virtue](#) (3x), [mighty](#) (2x), *miscellaneous* (9x).

120x Total

- I. strength power, ability
 - A. inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth
 - B. power for performing miracles
 - C. moral power and excellence of soul
 - D. the power and influence which belong to riches and wealth
 - E. power and resources arising from numbers
 - F. power consisting in or resting upon armies, forces, hosts

NOTE: to understand this verse in Corinthians you need to understand the situation, you need to get this verse in its context, and the challenges Paul was facing with many of the brethren in Corinth.

From the Pulpit Commentary:

1Co_4:19

I will come to you shortly (Php_2:24; 2Ti_4:9). He came soon after writing the Second Epistle. At this time he was preparing to leave Ephesus (1Co_16:8); his actual departure was precipitated by the tumult (Act_20:1-38. 1, 2). If the Lord will. The apostolic use of the phrase was something more than a mere form (Rom_15:32; Heb_6:3; Jas_4:15); it expressed a real and humble spirit of dependence. Not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. He will use his gift of spiritual discernment to discover whether the haughty self assertion and sounding phraseology of these inflated partisans would not collapse when confronted with real authority.

The "speech" was there in abundance; but was there anything genuine, any real spiritual force, behind it?

1Co_4:20

The kingdom of God. The Christian life, with all its attainments and all its hopes. Is not in word, but in power. It is not a matter of profession, or of eloquence, or of phrases, but of transforming efficacy. St. Paul always appeals for the corroboration of his authority to the signs and power of the Spirit (2Co_10:1-18 :45; Rom_15:19; 1Th_1:5), to the "demonstration" of which he has already referred (1Co_2:4).

Romans 15:17 NKJV - Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things [which pertain] to God.
Romans 15:18 NKJV - For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient--

Romans 15:19 NKJV - in mighty signs and wonders, **by the power of the Spirit of God**, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Romans 15:20 NKJV - And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation,

Romans 15:21 NKJV - but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."

Comparison (stark contrast!) of the Corinthians to the Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 1:2 NKJV - We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers,

1 Thessalonians 1:3 NKJV - remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

1 Thessalonians 1:4 NKJV - knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 NKJV - **For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit** and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

1 Thessalonians 1:6 NKJV - And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, **with joy of the Holy Spirit**,

Similar to:

Romans 14:17 NKJV - for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and **joy in the Holy Spirit**.

1 Thessalonians 1:7 NKJV - so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

1 Thessalonians 1:8 NKJV - For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

Matthew Henry Commentary:

III. He lets them know what would follow upon his coming to them: I will know, not the speech of those that are puffed up, but the power, 1Co_4:19. He would bring the great pretenders among them to a trial, would know what they were, not by their rhetoric or philosophy, but by the authority and efficacy of what they taught, whether they could confirm it by miraculous

operations, and whether it was accompanied with divine influences and saving effects on the minds of men. For, adds he, the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. It is not set up, nor propagated, nor established, in the hearts of men, by plausible reasonings nor florid discourses, but by the external power of the Holy Spirit in miraculous operations at first, and the powerful influence of divine truth on the minds and manners of men. Note, It is a good way in the general to judge of a preacher's doctrine, to see whether the effects of it upon men's hearts to be truly divine. That is most likely to come from God which in its own nature is most fit, and in event is found to produce most likeness to God, to spread piety and virtue, to change men's hearts and mend their manners.

So, as we need the righteousness of Christ, we also need God's Holy Spirit to be part of the Kingdom of God.

2 Timothy 1:6 NKJV - Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV - For God has not given us a spirit of fear, **but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**

2 Timothy 1:8 NKJV - Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings **for the gospel [of the Kingdom of God] according to the power of God,**

2 Timothy 1:9 NKJV - who has saved us and called [us] with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

2 Timothy 1:14 NKJV - That good thing which was committed to you, **keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.**

Another set of verses that show that it is the power of God's Holy Spirit and not mere words, similar to what Paul was dealing with (initially) in Corinth.

Colossians 2:1 NKJV - For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and [for] as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,

Colossians 2:2 NKJV - that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and [attaining] to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,

Colossians 2:3 NKJV - in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 2:4 NKJV - Now this I say **lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.**

Colossians 2:5 NKJV - For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your [good] order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

Colossians 2:6 NKJV - As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

Colossians 2:7 NKJV - rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

Colossians 2:8 NKJV - Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

Colossians 2:9 NKJV - For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

Colossians 2:10 NKJV - **and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.**

Acts 1:8 NLT - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere--in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Example of Power:

Acts 2:1 NLT - On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place.

Acts 2:2 NLT - Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3 NLT - Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them.

Acts 2:4 NLT - And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

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Bonus verses that show power is needed - here described by another Greek word translated into the english word "violence".

Matthew 11:12 NKJV - "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

NLT: And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing,[fn] and violent people are attacking it.

Violence = G971 = βιάζω biázō, bee-ad'-zo; from [G979](#); to force, i.e. (reflexively) to crowd oneself (into), or (passively) to be seized:—press, suffer violence.

the kingdom of heaven is taken by violence, carried by storm, i. e. *a share in the heavenly kingdom is sought for with the most ardent zeal and the intensest exertion*; cf. Xenophon, Hell. 5, 2, 15 (23)

The only other scripture using the same Greek word:

Luke 16:16 NKJV - "The law and the prophets [were] until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is **pressing** into it.