

Ephesians 1:19–23 | “Now That’s Power!”  
*Preached on April 6, 2025 by Pastor Matt Brown*

Please turn in your Bibles to Ephesians 1, verse 19. *[pauseeeeeee]*

*We are all astonished at amazing displays of power. [pause]*

Let me give you two examples of amazing power that come to my mind...

*A couple weeks ago, we had a bad storm come through Clearfield, and lots of trees fell down. [pause]*

Well my neighbor had a couple of his trees knocked down from the storm, and one of the trees was very large and thick. *[pause]*

*The borough came to clean up some of the trees, due to them laying across the street, and they brought a backhoe to do most of the heavy lifting. [pause]*

Well as I watched them work, this backhoe easily picked up this huge, heavy tree trunk that weighed probably thousands of pounds. *[pause]*

*No person could just walk up and pick that tree trunk up by himself, but a backhoe makes it look like picking up a twig. [pause]*

My kids were *amazed* watching this happen—it was *power* on display. *[pauseeeee]*

*Another example of power is something that I witnessed years ago. [pause]*

I was at my parent’s house and we had just gotten a bunch of snow, and my parent’s neighbor has a driveway that is long and steep. *[pause]*

*Well I looked out and the neighbor was in his pickup truck and he kept trying to make it up the snow-covered driveway, but couldn’t do it. [pause]*

Everytime the truck zoomed up the driveway to try to make it up, it would slide off to the side. *[pause]*

*Well a little later, I looked out and here I think he called his friend over who had a huge diesel truck.*

So I watched out the window, wondering what would happen when this diesel truck tried to get up the snow-covered hill. *[pause]*

*I’m watching, and what happens?*

The diesel truck just drives right up the driveway like it wasn’t even covered with snow at all.

And I remember hearing that truck's loud engine and seeing it easily conquer that hill, which other cars were defeated by, and thinking, "Now *that's* power!" *[pauseeee]*

Paul in our passage this morning wants us to feel that way, but in a much, much bigger way when we hear about the *Lord's* power. *[pause]*

He wants us to really dwell upon and know the power of God, so that our hearts stand amazed and proclaim, "Now that's power!" *[pause]*

*That's really the main point of the text that we are looking at this morning...*

### **Know the surpassing greatness of God's power on our behalf!**

After explaining to the Ephesians that he prays for them, Paul goes on to describe what he prays for...

And one of things he prays for is that God would open the eyes of their hearts to know "what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe." *[pauseeee]*

As we discovered last week, the *way* to know the greatness of God's power is to pray for God to open our eyes to its greatness. *[pause]*

So knowing God's power can't just come from us—we must pray to God for it.

And the way that Paul frames the recounting of his prayer is by highlighting that God's power is already working towards us, but we must grasp the greatness of it. *[pauseee]*

Paul wants them to not just know God's power in a basic, mere factual way, but to know it deeply.

Don't just know it, but truly *know* it. *[pauseeee]*

Well all know that it's one thing to know something, it's another to truly *know* something. *[pause]*

Let's use white water rafting as an illustration...

It's one thing to look at the rapids from the shore, and to know that the rapids are powerful.

But it's another to get into a raft, and actually go through the rapids. *[pause]*

When you actually go through the rapids, you feel and experience the power of the rapids, and now you truly *know* the power of the rapids personally. *[pause]*

That's what Paul is wanting for us this morning...

He doesn't just want us to know the power of God from a distance, and say, "Yes, God is powerful."

But he wants us to truly and deeply know the greatness of God's power towards us. *[pauseeee]*

Let's READ the passage to see how Paul words it. *[READ]*

*To communicate God's power, Paul first explains...*

## **I. The nature of His power.**

In verse 19, Paul says that he wants us to know “what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might.” *[pause]*

Here Paul just packs a pile of power words together into one mighty statement. *[pauseeee]*

When Paul talks about God's power, he can't just leave it basic or bare, but he can't help, but add word-upon-word of how great it is. *[pause]*

Consider this pile of power words—he talks of God's power, and the word used is “dynamis” which is where we get the word “dynamite”.

But that's not all, for Paul must also emphasize the “greatness” of God's power. *[pause]*

God's power is not ordinary or normal, but it rises above and beyond any power that there is in the world.

If there's anything that God's power is NOT, it is NOT ordinary, basic, or typical. *[pause]*

In fact, that word translated as “immeasurable” is really the idea of “surpassing.” *[pause]*

His power exceeds all others.

This is a word that can be used for when someone casts a spear beyond all the others in a spear-throwing contest.<sup>1</sup> *[pause]*

God's power surpasses and goes beyond any and every power of the universe.

So if there was a competition with the powers in the universe...

God's power would be so great, that it would blast infinitely beyond the bounds of the competition field, while everyone stood in wonder. *[pauseeee]*

Stand amazed at the surpassing greatness of God's power—it is beyond anything that you could ever imagine.

It's truly powerful, and any sort of power we see in this life is a mere miniscule fraction of His immeasurable power. *[pauseeee]*

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<sup>1</sup> William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1032.

That's not all, for Paul explains that this power is "toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might." [pauseeee]

So God's power is not something that sits idle. [pause]

Think about a massive power plant that didn't supply power to anybody, what good would that be?

But thankfully, God's power isn't like that, rather, He is a God who uses His power toward us who believe. [pause]

It was "according to the *working* of his great might."

And that word used for "working" is "energia" where we get the word "energy." [pause]

God's power doesn't sit there, but it's like He's that massive power plant that actually *works*, the power goes somewhere, it is seen. [pauseeee]

Aren't you grateful not only that our God is all-powerful, but that He uses that great power toward us who believe? [pause]

God harnesses His power for our benefit—it is for those who believe in Christ! [pauseeee]

It's all "according to...his great might." [pause]

He is mighty, He is strong, He is powerful, He is capable of anything, and yet we so often doubt Him. [pause]

Why do so many Christians live defeated?

Why do they live so powerless?

Why do Christians live enslaved to sins, feeling incapable of getting out? [pause]

Why do Christians live feeling like they lack the power to evangelize, persevere, or serve?

Where is God's mighty power?! [pauseee]

I believe that one of the main problems is that we forget about and neglect the power of God. [pause]

Just think about the times that you worry...

Isn't that evidence that you lack confidence in the power of God? [pause]

You're looking to the future, realizing that there's a lot that you can't control, and then you despair. [pause]

Or maybe you are facing a hard temptation...

What makes you feel like you can't resist it and what makes you feel hopeless against the power of it?

Isn't it because you are looking inward for power, and underestimating the power of God?  
[pauseeee]

Paul was reaching for superlatives and every word that conveys power to try to get us to truly know His power towards us. [pauseeee]

We have such a small view of God's power that we are barely tapping into it.

Many of us are scuba diving in the kiddie pool of God's power when there are endless ocean depths to be experienced! [pauseeee]

Whenever you are feeling weak, whenever you are overwhelmed by what's going on, remember the nature of the Lord's power.

He is truly all-powerful, and He uses that power on our behalf, but do you believe it? [pauseeee]

*After explaining to us the nature of God's power, Paul goes on to give...*

## **II. The prime example of His power.**

Let's say that someone claimed that they were super strong physically. [pause]

You've never really seen them do something strong, so it's hard for you to understand how truly strong they are. [pause]

So what's helpful? [pause]

One way is to tell you about ways in which they proved their strength in the past...

They could walk you over to their "world's strongest man" trophies and say, "Look, I won this one last year and this one the year before." [pause]

Their amazing demonstrations in the past help you to grasp how truly strong they are. [pauseeee]

So also, in a way, Paul is somewhat doing that for us when it comes to God's strength.

He's reminding us of how God has manifested His strength in Christ. [pauseeee]

This is helpful for us because it reminds us that God's power is not some abstract idea, but His power has been manifested in clear, compelling ways.

And the most compelling way that Paul can point to is how God's power towards us was shown in Christ. [pause]

Paul says that this great might of the Lord was “worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead.” *[pause]*

So do you want evidence for the power of God? Look no further than the resurrection of Christ. *[pause]*

God took Jesus, who was dead, and raised Him to life—you can’t get more powerful than that! *[pauseeee]*

We see some glimpses of power in our world with powerful machines, powerful feats of strength, and things like that, but to take something dead and make it alive—now *that’s* power! *[pauseeee]*

We may be able to conquer things like big projects, some diseases, and things like that, but none of us can conquer death in our own power.

That accolade belongs to the Lord alone. *[pause]*

He beat death, making it look easy.

It was no struggle for God Almighty to raise Jesus. *[pause]*

He didn’t have to roll up His sleeves, try to muster up the strength, and then say, “Here goes nothing!”

No way, He raised Jesus up as easily as we raise up our arms, if not easier! *[pauseee]*

So the fact that Jesus lives today is a continual display of the power of God.

And it reminds us that God’s power is not some theoretical idea, but His power has been displayed *in history*. *[pause]*

God has not simply declared that He is powerful, but He has *shown* that He is powerful by doing mighty acts, like the resurrection of Christ that was attested to by hundreds of witnesses. *[pauseeee]*

The same power that raised Christ from the grave is the same power that is used on our behalf!

And if He has resurrection power, what can He not do? *[pauseeee]*

We sometimes think that we don’t have enough power, or we think that God’s power must be supplemented with something else.

But that’s not true—trust Him, whose power raised Christ from the dead! *[pauseeee]*

Not only has God shown His power in raising Christ from the dead, but also by raising Him up into Heaven and seating Him at His right hand. *[pauseeee]*

When Christ ascended, He was then seated in the heavenlies next to God the Father, and that shows God's power, for only He could do that. *[pause]*

Not anyone can just cause someone to ascend or be seated in Heaven, only God can. *[pauseeee]*

Christ is in the place of prominence next to God the Father, and He rules there. *[pause]*

His seat is in the heavenlies, and that means that He is high up above all earthly thrones.

So no wonder Paul says that he is seated "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named"! *[pause]*

He is not only above all other powers and authorities, but *far* above them all. *[pause]*

He has the highest throne along with God the Father—no other throne, no other power, no other authority comes close...

The Lord Jesus Christ has no other competition! *[pause]*

God's surpassing power is displayed in Christ's surpassing authority far above all other power. *[pauseeee]*

By using all of these different terms for people in authority, Paul is showing that Christ's rule is comprehensive...

His rule is over them *all*. *[pause]*

Any earthly authority or ruler that you can think of, Christ is over them.

But what's interesting is that the terms "rule, authority, power, and dominion" are actually terms that often describe the spiritual forces of darkness, like Satan and his demons. *[pause]*

So Jesus isn't just over the earthly world leaders that we know of and see, but He is even far above the spiritual, evil rulers of darkness that we don't see. *[pause]*

In fact, any name that is named is below Christ.

No matter their reputation, title, or so-called "power", they are under Christ. *[pauseeeee]*

So many of us have such a low view of Jesus! *[pause]*

We certainly see Him as Savior, and He certainly is! *[pause]*

We may even know that He's coming again someday, and He surely will! *[pause]*

But how do you view Jesus *now*? *[pause]*

Do you truly know and believe that He is seated at the right hand of God above every single authority of the Universe? *[pauseeeee]*

Anytime that we tremble at the rulers of this age, we are ignoring this reality!

Anytime that we quiver at the evil forces of darkness, we are neglecting this glorious truth!

We serve the One who is seated far above every other power “not only in this age but also in the one to come”! *[pauseeee]*

That power that raised Christ above every authority is the same power that is used towards us who believe.

And yet we are fearful of the leaders of this world, and yet we fret and worry that things won’t turn out for good in the end. *[pauseeee]*

Remember: God’s power towards us is the same power that raised Christ above every authority.

So if He can raise Christ above every authority, then why fear any power, but God’s? *[pause]*

If He can raise Christ above every authority, don’t you think He will raise us someday to rule and reign with Him?<sup>2</sup> *[pauseeeee]*

When God seated Christ above every authority, we are told here that he also “put all things under his feet,” and made him “head over all things”. *[pause]*

This is an astonishing statement!

Everything has been subjected to Christ, it’s *all* under His feet, and now He is the head over all. *[pause]*

He is the ultimate ruler and leader, superior to everything and everyone in the world. *[pauseeeee]*

So many times as we go through life, we don’t remember this truth...

As we encounter evil in this world, as we see corrupt world leaders, and chaotic events, we think that they are ruling.

But it’s not true, for they are actually under Christ’s feet—they have been put there by God the Father. *[pauseeee]*

Now the subjection of all authorities under Christ is not always evident right now, but they are subjected to Christ nonetheless. *[pause]*

At this time, He is permitting evil and wickedness to continue, but someday it will be a different story.

Yet the spiritual forces of darkness *are* subject to Him even now, for their subjection is seen anytime that a sinner is snatched out of Satan’s grasp and redeemed. *[pause]*

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<sup>2</sup> See 2 Timothy 2:12 as one example of this truth.



Anytime that we utilize His power to resist the Devil, and anytime that we choose to live for Him although the world is telling us to go the opposite way, their subjection is on display.

And the full realization of their subjection will be manifest clearly in the future when Christ returns. *[pauseeee]*

Do you worry about the power of the evil, spiritual forces at work in the world? *[pause]*

Do you worry about the power of the media, the power of the government, or the power of an individual?

Don't fret because Christ is above them all—God's power has placed Him there, and they are placed under His feet. *[pauseeee]*

This is why we aren't lacking any power when it comes to going to battle against spiritual forces, for we have the power of God at work in us. *[pause]*

We have the power needed to defend ourselves against the onslaught of Satan's schemes because the power at work in us is God's very Christ-resurrecting, Christ-exalting power. *[pause]*

So we don't fear them! We don't tremble in our boots!

We have the immeasurable power of God available to us! *[pauseeee]*

People wonder, "I don't know if I can go up against Satan. I don't know if I'm powerful enough."

And God is saying, "You're not in yourself, but you have My power, and with My power, you can resist the Devil and He will flee from you."<sup>3</sup>

The same power that has subjected them to Christ is at work in you. *[pauseeee]*

So Paul is emphasizing God's power, and it's like he's saying, "Do you want to know a prime example of His power on display? Look at Christ's resurrection and exaltation." *[pause]*

*Now all of this would be enough in itself, but Paul adds something more to what he says about God's power, for he shows us...*

### **III. The church's relationship to this power.**

Look at what verses 22–23 say, "And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all." *[pauseee]*

The One who has all authority and power was given to us, the church.

Isn't that amazing to think about?! *[pause]*

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<sup>3</sup> A reference to James 4:7.

The highest authority over the universe has been given to us, and that means that He works for our good and our benefit. *[pause]*

The exalted Christ over all uses His power to lead, care, protect, and intercede for us—the church.

So Jesus Christ is really then a gracious gift of God the Father to the church, for Christ was given to us. *[pauseeee]*

Let's never take it for granted that we have Christ as our leader and head!

The One who rules the Universe is our good, gracious, loving Leader, who works on our behalf! *[pause]*

He doesn't rule us with an iron fist, but with tender care, for we are His precious flock that He died for.<sup>4</sup> *[pauseeee]*

We didn't do anything spectacular to merit this, but we simply repented and believed in Him.

It's all of grace—what a gift! *[pauseeee]*

We have a special relationship with the Lord of the Universe, for we are told here that the church is His body. *[pause]*

Our relationship with Jesus is not distant or detached.

He didn't save us, and then say, "OK, now go on your way, I have other things to do." *[pause]*

No, He saved us through His shed blood to purchase us for Himself. *[pause]*

Through faith in Him, we are united with Him in a special way. *[pauseeee]*

In a unique way, the church is actually the body of Christ, and He is the head. *[pauseeee]*

So think about a body and a head—there is a vital union between those parts.

To separate a body from a head is to destroy a person, and so they are vitally connected. *[pause]*

They work together and go together, so to say.

So also, the church has a vital union with Jesus Christ—never sever the two! *[pauseeee]*

And we are told that the church is "the fullness of him who fills all in all." *[pause]*

We represent Him and do His work in the world.

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<sup>4</sup> A reference to John 10:11–16.

The church is really then the expression of Christ in the world, as He gives us all that we need.  
[pauseeee]

Talk about an essential, close, vital relationship!

The church's relationship with Christ is so close that it can be said that we are His body, and He the head. [pauseeee]

As believers in Christ together, we have a vital, close relationship with the head over all things.

And that means that we have access to Christ's power, and we are beneficiaries of His powerful authority over all. [pause]

He uses His power for our good, so why fret or fear?

God's power is available and used for the good of His people, us, the church. [pauseeee]

This is why Paul wants us to really and truly *know* the surpassing greatness of God's power on our behalf. [pauseeeee]

We are all looking for power to do things. [pause]

We look for the power to change ourselves, or for the power to change others. [pause]

We look for the power to get through another day, or to get through a major trial of our life.  
[pause]

We look for power to be successful, or conquer something in life.

But way too often we are looking in all the wrong places, when there is immeasurable power already available for us in the Lord. [pause]

Remember and know deeply the surpassing greatness of God's power toward us who believe!  
[pauseeeee]

You have access to the power of God, but you may wonder, "Well, what would that look like today?" [pause]

Let me give you just a few examples...

His power keeps us, preserves our eternal life, and will someday give us resurrected bodies.  
[pause]

His power gives us the power to say "No," to temptation and also to endure suffering righteously.  
[pause]

His power gives us boldness and the words to say when we witness for Him.

And His power changes and transforms us so that we grow to be more like Christ and produce the fruit of the Spirit. *[pause]*

Essentially, His power gives us everything that we need to live for Him in this fallen world, and His power will bring us Home someday to be with Him in Heaven. *[pauseeee]*

We don't have to live defeated lives, for we have all that we need, as we trust in Him. *[pause]*

Now this doesn't mean that we won't feel weak, for Paul did, but even in our weakness, His power will be even more evident in and through us.<sup>5</sup> *[pauseeee]*

Are you trying to resist temptation? God has the power to help you! *[pause]*

Are you feeling like you want to give up? God has the power to help you persevere! *[pause]*

Are you stuck in an enslaving addiction? God has the power to break it—there's nothing that God cannot do! *[pauseeee]*

Are you worried about Satan and his demonic hordes?

They are under Christ's feet, so that every time a sinner is saved and a Christian resists their temptations, Christ says, "Satan, you can't stop me!" *[pauseeee]*

God's power is sufficient...

Don't look inward, don't look to the world's methods—look to God, whose surpassing power is available *to you*. *[pauseeee]*

My hope and prayer (like Paul's) is that you, me, and all of us together would know the surpassing greatness of His power. *[pause]*

Know it—truly, deeply, gratefully know it, and be astonished by it, and may God work in our hearts towards that end.

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<sup>5</sup> A reference to 2 Corinthians 12:9–10.