

God is All-Powerful

“Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.” (Jer. 32:17)

Good morning! Today, we’re continuing our series on “God is”. We’re on the fourth part of our series and this message today is the first in the 3 omni attributes of God. First, omnipotent, then omniscient, then omnipresent. In simpler terms, that’s all-powerful, all-knowing and all-present. Sounds like our wives, right?

You know, after 18 years of marriage, I now realize that my wife is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-present. I mean, she tells me to bring out the trash, and I can’t say “No”. That’s power. One time before the pandemic I came home late from work and immediately she said, “I know where you’ve been. You went to Best Buy, didn’t you?” She was right. How do they know these things? And many times, she would go to work then be able to attend Ally’s orientation in school and then go to Eza’s school activity and buy groceries and a dozen more and I just wonder how she could do all these things all at the same time it seems. I’m just amazed at the many things she can accomplish in a day.

Anyway, going back to our topic, these 3 omnis are what we call the incommunicable attributes of God because only God possesses these attributes. God did not make man to have these attributes as well just like the first three we already talked about like his Self-Existence, his Unchanging nature, and his Sovereignty. Speaking of sovereignty, the attribute I’m going to speak about today is closely related to sovereignty. You cannot discuss one without the other. They are both woven together so that you cannot think of God’s sovereignty without thinking of this other attribute.

So, this attribute or character trait of God I’m talking about is his all-powerful nature. So, this message is entitled “God is All-Powerful”.

Jeremiah 32:17 says, *“Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.”* See this verse? Jeremiah calls God “sovereign” and he says, “Nothing is too hard for you” meaning God is All-Powerful. He said those two concepts in the same breath because they are quite synonymous although there may be subtle differences.

Now, since they are synonymous, one flows from the other but in our human experience that’s not quite true. For example, Kings may declare themselves sovereign over their subjects, but do they really possess exclusive power to exercise their control over all their subjects? We know earthly kingdoms do not last, right? Just like the Kingdom of Great Britain when for almost 200 years, it ruled the British colonies in North America but ceased to rule and eventually recognized the United States of America in 1783.

So, being sovereign does not mean being all-powerful and all-powerful doesn’t mean being sovereign. A nation or a person can be sovereign but not powerful at the same time. And a nation or person can be powerful but not sovereign at the same time.

Both attributes, however, are present in God. God is both sovereign and all-powerful at the same time. Thus, in God, the distinction between sovereign and all-powerful are blurred. And in God, sovereignty and being all-powerful have characteristics that are different from that of man’s. God’s sovereignty and being all-powerful are based on his other attributes of love, goodness, and wisdom. Meaning, he doesn’t rule and exercise his power like a whimsical king or a capricious dictator.

Now, some of you may ask, “Rolly, I thought sovereignty and all-powerful are incommunicable attributes of God? Why are you talking about a King being sovereign or powerful like they are attributes shared by God with mankind? Aren’t you contradicting yourself?”

Well, no, because God did not share these with men. Men just assumed these attributes in themselves. They say, “I’m sovereign and powerful, I’m in control”, when they are not really. In short, these are not inherent attributes of any person. We just claim them, we just think we possess them. Sometimes, we possess them forcefully. And it’s a tragedy when we think we possess something we don’t have a right to. That’s why we have a saying, “Power corrupts but absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

And since the beginning of time, man has been usurping God power and control which has caused a lot of problems throughout history.

Let me now talk about what it means that God is all-powerful.

1. What does it mean that God is All-Powerful?

In the Bible, Jesus, being God, is described as “The Alpha and the Omega”.

Do you know that Alpha and Omega are two letters that denote power and strength? Alpha is derived from the Semitic Aleph and aleph means “Ox”. And as we know, the ox is a beast of burden. It is a very strong animal. Oxen are used for plowing, for transport like pulling carts, hauling wagons, for powering machines that grind grain or supply irrigation and so many other labor-intensive tasks.

Meanwhile, Omega means “great O”. It is the capital letter O. There is a small “O” letter in Greek which is omicron. So, we use mega for things or objects that are great or huge or connote power like megamall, megachurch, megaphone, megabyte. If you’re popular like Sharon, you’re a megastar. If you’re obsessed with power like fill in the blank, you’re a megalomaniac.

So, you combine those two, Alpha and Omega, that’s superpower. That’s Jesus. He holds all power in the universe. He is the creator after all.

In Revelation 1:8, Jesus introduces himself to John, “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, ‘who is, and who was, and who is to come, the

Almighty.” See that, Alpha and Omega, the Almighty – all-powerful. Well, Alpha and Omega can have different meanings, but I think I’ve tackled them in the past.

So, as God incarnate, Jesus Christ is all-powerful. His power is seen in the miracles He performed—His numerous healings, the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6:30-44), calming the storm (Mark 4:37-41), and the ultimate display of power, raising Lazarus and Jairus’s daughter from the dead (John 11:38-44; Mark 5:35-43), an example of His control over life and death.

Now, I want us to take a few moments to go through Psalm 29 to help you understand what I’m talking about here. We’re not going to read it but open your Bibles to that passage. Let me set the scene for you. David is describing a thunderstorm brewing over the Mediterranean Sea. It’s a powerful storm beginning to develop. This storm is then going to move on shore and it’s going to rumble through the desert. It is an awesome breathtaking experience to be in the midst of a desert storm. David’s using a word picture to liken God's power to a desert storm.

“The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.” – Psalm 29:4-5

Have you seen a cedar tree? It’s huge. Thick. How big are the cedars of Lebanon? They are so big they can be thirty feet wide and twelve stories tall. What David is saying is that a mere whisper from the lips of God is powerful enough to turn that huge tree into toothpick.

“He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.” – Psalm 29:6

Mount Sirion is a 9000-foot mountain. It is also known as Mount Hermon. It is located in the boundary of Syria and Lebanon. In other words, David is saying God's voice is so powerful that it can make the land and it can make the mountains quiver and swell and dance.

“The voice of the LORD strikes with flashes of lightning.” – Psalm 29:7

Think how powerful lightning is – within a fraction of a second a bolt of lightning releases one hundred million volts of electricity, 13,000 million horsepower, at a temperature five times hotter than the surface of the sun.

And David is saying that one word from the lips of God is far more powerful than all the lightning in the 1800 thunderstorms that are taking place at this very moment around the planet.

“The voice of the LORD shakes the desert; the LORD shakes the desert of Kadesh.” – Psalm 29:8

Kadesh is in the South, while Sirion is in the North. He is saying God's power flows across the entire land. There is nowhere we can go to get away from or escape the power of God. He is talking about twisting the oaks and stripping the bark off of trees. He is saying that just one utterance from God would be enough to flatten 815 million acres of the Amazon rain forest. That is how powerful God is.

What we see here is that God doesn't even have to lift a finger to do a powerful thing. He just says it and it happens. When he created the universe, what did he do? He just spoke it. “Let there be light” and there was light. “Let there be sun, moon, planets, vegetation, animals, and so on and so forth”. Our God is a powerful God!

What is our response to that? What is the natural response a human being would have in the face of this breathtakingly awesome power of God?

“...and in his temple all cry, ‘Glory!’” – Psalm 29:9

In other words, we cannot help, in the face of this, but to worship God for being a powerful and a strong and a breathtaking deity. But then something amazing happens in this poem that David is writing.

He has been talking about the power of God, and then we get a surprise ending as he takes a completely different turn.

“The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as King forever. The LORD give strength to his people! The LORD bless his people with peace!” – Psalm 29:10-11

Not only is God powerful, but God doesn't hoard His power. He is a power sharing God, and He wants to equip and empower you today.

“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” – 2 Timothy 1:7

We all need God's strength, God's power in one way or the other. He is saying, “I'm a God that's not only all powerful, but I'm a God who wants to give My power to you.” Where do you need that power the most? What part of your life, your faith, your family, needs the strength of God today? Whatever area that is, I want you to keep it in mind as I give you four steps to receive God's strength:

2. WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO RECEIVE GOD'S STRENGTH

Step 1: Affirm God's power and His presence

So often when we are feeling weak it is because we have forgotten that we serve an omnipotent God. He has this amazing track record for coming through for those who are His children.

“Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually! Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles and the judgments he uttered.” – 1 Chronicles 16:11-12

In other words, go back and remember this panoramic unfolding of history that we see in the Bible and remember how God empowered Moses and He strengthened David and how He undergirded Daniel and how He emboldened Peter. Remember God's track record with His people. The Lord told Joshua in Joshua 1:9:

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” – Joshua 1:9

God can be as present and as real in your life as He was in Joshua’s life, and as He was in David’s life. He can embolden and strengthen you just as He did Gideon, just as He did Peter and Paul. Affirm God’s power and presence in your life. Accept Him as an ever-present reality.

Step 2: Align yourself with God's will

God's power is not like some electrical outlet that we plug in and receive power for any purpose that we want. You can run any appliance that you want through electricity but God's power does not work that way. It depends on what it is that you want to be empowered.

Jesus says, *“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” – John 15:5*

In other words, we need to be as intimately connected with God and His purposes as a vine is to its branches. This means that when we are working in concert with God to accomplish His goals, His purposes for our life He will give us the power to accomplish great things. When we are independently pursuing our own agenda, we shouldn’t expect that God is going to necessarily empower us.

We need to make sure that we’re walking down the road that He wants us to walk. If we are walking down that road then God will give us the power to keep putting one foot ahead of the other. He will give us the strength to endure.

This starts the moment we realize that apart from God there is no hope for us. Our wrongdoing, our sin, has separated us from God. And unless something is done about that we are going to be separated from God in eternity forever. And none of us want that.

So, we align ourselves with God's will when we first open our hearts to Jesus Christ and we say, "I am a sinner in need of grace and forgiveness." And we receive His free gift of forgiveness and eternal life that Jesus Christ offers, and we say to Him, "I want You to lead my life. Take me in the direction that You want to take me."

Then once we've done that, as we continue to grow and mature in our faith, we become more adept, more skilled in discerning God's will for our lives. We become more adept at using the Bible to test things and to make sure they are consistent with the teachings of God. You receive guidance from the Holy Spirit and receive wise counsel from other Christians.

And over time we develop a confidence that we are going the right way, and that we are aligned in the direction that God has for us to go. God will empower and strengthen us as we continue our journey with Him.

Step 3: Ask God for the power that you need

When we need the gift of strength, why is it that the last thing we do is ask God for it?

"You do not have, because you do not ask." – **James 4:2b**

God has this power waiting for you but if you don't ask you are not going to get it. So having affirmed God's power and presence in your life, having admitted your inability to handle the matter yourself, having aligned yourself with God purposes for your life, just come right out and ask Him to supernaturally give you the strength that you need.

There were times when I asked God for his strength, and I physically felt the power of God infused into my life. Maybe you've done that too. Sometimes it's not physical power you need but mental power too.

Like perhaps there was a time when somebody has asked you a really difficult question about Christianity and you just kind of mentally say, “God help!” and you give an answer and later you look back and say, “Where did that come from? How did I get that answer? It was brilliant. It’s not me. Where did that come from?” It’s God answering that panicky prayer and saying “I will give you the power to answer that question”.

I remember the time I was speaking to a couple who are members of the Iglesia ni Cristo in Jersey City. Iglesia ni Cristo is Church of Christ in English. Their headquarters is in the Philippines. They claim to be Christians, but they teach doctrines that you don’t find in the Bible.

So, this couple, like other Iglesia members do not believe that Jesus was sinless when he was on earth. They believe that Jesus is merely a man and is still a man in nature when he ascended to heaven. They thought I believed the same way and so, the wife asked me, “If Jesus were only man and he sinned, how can he save us?” Of course, I corrected her and said that Jesus did not sin and then I realized that there’s a verse in the book of Hebrews about that. But I didn’t know exactly where. I prayed in silence nervously. “Lord, please don’t let me look like a fool here.” Then, I opened my Bible, it opened exactly to that verse I needed, **Heb. 4:15, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.”** Then, I wasn’t prepared also for the next question. It was her husband this time. He asked, “If Jesus died a long time ago, what about us now? Can he also save us?”

Again, I thought of a verse in Hebrews about that, prayed again, and when I opened my Bible it opened exactly to the verse I needed, Heb. 7:27, **“Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for**

all when he offered himself.”

One correct verse you may say, “Oh, that’s coincidence.” But two correct verses consecutively? You can say, “That’s God’s incidence.” I don’t know how God did it, but he surely was there when I needed him.

Yet, there are times – you know it and I know it – when we ask God out of desperation “God, give me the strength! Give me the power!” and we don’t feel anything. Nothing! You just do not feel a thing. So, what do you do then?

Step 4: Act right now out of obedience to God

You see, there is a pattern in scripture. It begins in the Old Testament and continues into the New Testament and even into our time. Even when we don’t feel empowered by God, when we take action by obediently proceeding down the road that God wants us to walk, He will give us strength as strength is needed.

In the beginning of the New Testament, we see a man who desperately needed strength. He was facing a crossroad in his life. I’m talking about Joseph. We know his story. But at the time when it was happening to him, he thought that Mary, the girl he loved the most and who he was engaged to, was unfaithful. Mary just broke the news to him that she was pregnant. That’s bad enough but I can deal with that, he must have thought. Then, she said that she was carrying the son of God. Now, that’s a different matter. What happened to the girl I thought I knew? He must have wondered. Does she expect me to believe that? That was too much for any man to handle. What would Joseph do? I’m sure he struggled emotionally and mentally with this situation. But he was a good man and as the Bible says because he *“...did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly”* (Matthew 1:19b). Some of you may be thinking, I thought they were just engaged? Why divorce? Well, in Jewish culture, being engaged is a commitment to marriage. It’s like being married already. The only way to break it is by divorce.

Anyway, going back to Joseph, even in a very trying situation he found strength in God and God granted him the strength and wisdom to do the right thing. A lesser man would be vindictive. In fact, a woman in this situation could be stoned to death if it was broadcast. Joseph did not want that to happen and so he was planning to divorce her quietly.

But, as we know, the story did not end there. The Bible says, *“After he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”* (Matthew 1:20-21)

How did he respond? Verse 24 says, *“When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.”* And the rest is history. That’s the reason why we celebrate Christmas which is coming up soon.

So, Joseph acted out of obedience to God. He did not dilly-dally, he did not argue with God, he did not ask questions, but right after waking up, he did what the Lord wanted him to do.

When we demonstrate faith by taking specific steps of obedience even when we don’t feel empowered by God, He is willing to supernaturally empower us.

Those are the five steps to take. Keep them in mind as I’m sure you’ll need them in the future. Even at present, some of you need to take these steps to receive strength from God.

God knows where you need His strength. God knows where you’re at. The amazing thing about God is He looks at this room at this very instant. He doesn’t see a crowd of people. He sees individual faces, individual lives.

Do you need God’s strength to go through a difficult circumstance in your life?

Do you need God's power just to go through day by day? Psalm 37:5 says

"Commit everything you do to the Lord, trust Him to help you do it and He will."

Let us pray.