

Appropriating Spiritual Power

Discipleship is a Relationship

1. With God
2. With Family
3. With the Church
4. With the Lost

Suggested Memory Verse
Ephesians 3:16

Purpose: To learn what God says about how to obtain spiritual power

1. The apostle Paul had an ongoing struggle with the flesh all his life. Read Romans 7:14-23 and describe the nature of his struggle with his flesh.
2. Do you notice in your own life similarities with the struggle Paul experienced? If so, give two examples where you identify with Paul's struggle.
3. Do you think you will ever grow so mature in Christ that you will no longer be susceptible to the temptations of your flesh? Why or why not?
4. Have you noticed that Paul frequently speaks to Christians about the need to gain in spiritual power in order to control and overcome the draw of the flesh? (Galatians 5:17)
5. List each word and verse in Ephesians that mentions or is synonymous with "power," "strength," and "might." (1:17-20; 3:14-21; 6:10)
6. According to the prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21 above and the following verses, how does one obtain the power necessary to control and overcome the draw of this flesh: Romans 8:13; Galatians 5:16-24; 6:8?

(Appropriating Spiritual Power Continued)

7. Based on the six questions above, what is the main need of the Christian in order to live successfully for Christ and what is the main work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian?

A key insight in learning to grow spiritually is understanding the relationship between spiritual power and one's ability to live victoriously for Christ. Each believer has certain tasks or works to live out for the Lord. Each believer also has a certain level of spiritual power from which to draw as he attempts to carry out his tasks.

1. What happens to us when the power level is insufficient for the tasks before us?

2. How do we build up spiritual power in our lives so we always have enough?

Definitions:

Task: Good works for the Lord, e.g., witnessing, serving, teaching tithing, reaching out to the needy, caring for the family, helping one's neighbor

Power: The level of spiritual energy from which one draws in order to perform his good works and responsibilities.

Margin: The difference between the amount of Task and the amount of Power in an individual. When one has more Power in his life and Task, the margin is positive. When the Task is greater than the Power to perform, the margin is negative. Zero margin occurs when Task and Power are equal.

Explanation:

1. You need to analyze whether your Power is sufficient for Task(s) you have to perform in your life at this time.
 - a. The amount of Power directly determines the amount of Task you can successfully handle over the long term.
 - b. Because Power and Task tend to equalize over the long term, one way to determine the level of your Power is to analyze carefully how much Task you are successfully able to carry out consistently and continually.
2. When Task is greater than the Power to carry it, you will drop some of your load. You will reduce the quantity and quality of your work to the level you can handle. If you continue in overload (continually trying to carry more than you have Power to carry), you will do a poor job and will have to deal with ongoing guilt. Guilt destroys power even further, reinforcing a downward cycle.
3. When your Power is greater than your Task load, you have a surplus of power in your life. That power will not remain stored in some spiritual battery. Rather, it will overflow out of your spiritual reservoir. You cannot hold it back even if you try (Jeremiah 20:9). The result is that you automatically (naturally) assume more Task into which to channel your Power.