

How to be powerful in spirit

Introduction

Paganism is full of methods to become powerful or of examples of people that gained power in some manner. These normally follow a pattern whereby a person sets out on a mission of discovery, or trials, that result in a mystical experience of some kind (such as meeting a god, having a vision, hearing a prophecy etc.) and a certain power is granted to the individual who then has success over some adversary.

Greek mythology is full of this and it makes great escapist reading; but this trope is universal in paganism.

It is also evident within occultism and its various branches. A novice has to undergo certain probations, usually under the tutelage of an adept, until he gains the power he is seeking, such as clairvoyance. In Gnosticism the goal is a higher knowledge (gnosis). Traditional mysticism also follows this pattern so that after a mystic inner struggle (e.g. a 'dark night of the soul' or ascending a ladder of self-denial and growing awareness of God) there is a release of power giving knowledge and an experience of the 'God' within.

Some historic churches engaged in similar activity, especially those influenced by mysticism. Wesleyanism featured this inner struggle or probation until one experienced a baptism in the Spirit, or a baptism of perfect love, which gave sinless perfection or entire sanctification. Other perfectionist groups had similar patterns and these led to Pentecostalism via the Holiness Movement.

Modern apostate Christianity has copied this methodology to various ends. Most commonly the Pentecostal/Charismatic version (there are many other versions) of the power contained in their baptism in the Holy Spirit doctrine. This teaches a probation trial¹ seeking this second blessing mystical experience which results in tongues and power to witness. There is very little difference between the Charismatic experience and those in paganism and occultism; they have the same pattern to a similar end.

All of this is based upon supposed changes to the human experience given by external forces (a god, a vision from a god, illumination from a god, laying on of hands etc.). The individual initiates this experience by certain disciplines (asceticism, passivity, self-denial, seeking an adept etc.). In other words, it is all about the person and their choices and actions. It is about man. They choose to seek this experience. They undergo disciplines or techniques or a human intervention, perhaps travelling long distances to do so. They undergo a mystical experience. They then believe that a powerful change has occurred to them.

None of this is Biblical!

What is the Biblical method of knowing God's power in your life?

¹ This probation varies in different groups. The original Pentecostal trial was a tarrying meeting.

Salvation

The short answer is salvation. The salvation of God provides everything that a believer ever needs; God's salvation is full and complete.

'Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; "For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation". Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.' Isa 12:2-3

Surely in the LORD I have righteousness and strength. Isa 45:24

So great a salvation. Heb 2:3

He is also able to save to the uttermost. Heb 7:25

Why is this so? Because the believer, through conversion, is placed into Christ; he becomes part of the body of Christ.

Now Christ is everything. He is God's only begotten son, the Second Person of the Trinity, the Master of the universe, the King of Kings, the fountain of life, the fulness of God. Everything that a believer will ever need is found in Christ, and the believer is in Christ.

Of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. Jn 1:16

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ. Eph 1:3

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us. Eph 3:20

For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. Col 2:9-10

For example the key benefits of salvation are righteousness (justification), sanctification and redemption. The believer has these in Christ.

Of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God -- and righteousness and sanctification and redemption -- that, as it is written, 'He who glories, let him glory in the LORD'. 1 Cor 1:30-31

No one ever needs to seek out some power or blessing anywhere; he needs to grow in understanding of God and Christ and of the salvation God has provided.

Thus none of the current practices to become more gifted, blessed and powerful are correct; they are sin:

- Going to a certain supposedly powerful place to receive God's power (e.g. Toronto during the Toronto Blessing).
- Going to see / hear a certain church leader or preacher in order to understand about power.
- Going to have a certain leader lay hands on you in order to receive power.
- Paying money into a certain ministry in order to gain power or healing.

Why are these sinful? Because they blaspheme Christ. They take away from the blessing that is already ours in Christ and seek this from some mortal person. In fact, these methods are completely pagan in origin. These things are what pagans do.

An example: Hannah

And Hannah prayed and said: 'My heart rejoices in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD. I smile at my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation. No one is holy like the LORD, for *there is* none besides you, nor *is there* any rock like our God. Talk no more so very proudly; let no arrogance come from your mouth, for the LORD *is* the God of knowledge; and by Him actions are weighed.' 1 Sam 2:1-3

Hannah is a superlative example of a person who needed miraculous power to change something in her life; she was barren, a curse in her times. She needed a miracle to be able to bear a son. The fact that her prayer was answered proves that she knew the Lord and walked with him. Not only did she bear a son whom she gave to the Lord, but this son was Samuel, one of the greatest of all the prophets.

What method did she use?

She rejoiced in salvation. This led to her heart rejoicing in the Lord. Which led to her power (horn) being lifted up. Plus having victory over her enemies.

She focused only upon God and did not look to any man or any experience. Look at her words: 'No one is holy like the LORD, for there is none besides you, nor is there any rock like our God. Talk no more so very proudly; let no arrogance come from your mouth, for the LORD is the God of knowledge; and by Him actions are weighed.' She is entirely consecrated to God and looks only to him for grace to help in time of need (Heb 4:16).

The example of godly Hannah directs us to this method of seeking power:

- We must rejoice in our salvation. Study it; understand it. Rely upon its fulness and power.
- We must rejoice in God. Worship God at all times; celebrate the glory of the Lord.
- Believe that God will give you the power to cater for any need (not desire) in your life.
- Believe that God has given you victory over your enemies in Christ. Smile at them and be not afraid.

The key to a powerful life full of grace is to focus upon God and the gifts that he has already given us in Christ.

He is before all things. Col 1:17

That in all things He may have the pre-eminence. Col 1:18

Conclusion

I cannot stop emphasising that the believer must concentrate on Christ; must focus upon Christ; must celebrate Christ; must look to Christ at all times.

The thrust of the age, which comes through the apostate church, is to take attention away from Christ. Often this is by some seemingly righteous misdirection, such as focusing upon Israel, or focusing upon power to witness, or power to be holy, or some church agenda, or some human ministry. No; this is deception. Nothing must take the place of Christ; He is everything.

There is a reason why the Biblical church always has a leadership of a team of equal elders. This is because there must never be a single leader having power and focus in the church; this is a worldly and pagan temptation which always leads to evil. The focus upon loyalty to a single church leader is anathema and evil. The fact that 99.9% of churches have this system means nothing at all; they are all wrong. The Biblical local church has a plurality and parity of elders and nothing else.

Why is this important? Because it places the focus upon Christ in the local church and not on some gifted man. The equal leaders direct the attention of the church to Christ and celebrate the Supper every Sunday to cement this focus upon Christ. Anything that leads away from centring on Christ is deception and cursed.

He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Col 1:17-20

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