Essential: God's Power

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application Lynn Haven UMC – June 28, 2020 – Pastor Craig Carter

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As our regathering and rebuilding process as a church continues over the summer, we are discussing what is **essential** to our existence as a congregation. In the last two weeks we have explored the need for God's Perspective, God's Presence, and this week we consider how God's Power is truly necessary.

Jesus ended His earthly ministry by speaking these words to His disciples: "*And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven." (Luke 24:49 NLT)*

Jesus' final words focused on power. Since the disciples were to continue Jesus' ministry after His return to heaven, power was to be the dominant feature of their lives, just as it had been for Him (see Luke 4:14).

Jesus told His followers to wait for God's power to fall upon them. "*But when the Holy Spirit comes to you, you will receive power. You will be my witnesses…" (Acts 1:8 NCV)* On the day of Pentecost Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak different languages by the power the Holy Spirit was giving them. (Acts 2:4 NCV)

Discussion Starters:

⇒ If outside observers were asked to describe those of us who call ourselves Christians, what words would they use? Would they use the word *powerful*?

⇒ Do you feel as though many Christians (including perhaps yourself) are operating without the power of God in their lives? If so, why is that the case?

1) God's power is essential to travel anywhere but downhill.

There are times in our lives when we seem to be able to get along just fine by ourselves, we are coasting along through an easy season of life. However, when we hit a challenging spot or approach a "hill" where it may become obvious that we are lacking in power. We need God's power to succeed in life. Here are some areas in which we need God's power.

a) Power for holiness (Leviticus19:2; Romans 8:2)

b) Power for healing (James 5:16)

c) Power for hope (Romans 15:13)

⇒ Are you in need of power for holiness, healing, or hope today? Are you tired of struggling in your own strength to overcome sin? Are you exhausted by brokenness? Will you surrender yourself to God, ask for the power of the Holy Spirit, and trust that God will intervene and give you His power? What would that look like?

2) God's power is essential to be of use to other people.

As Christians, we have been created for a purpose – to honor God and carry out His divine work in this world. For that to happen, we must be energized with power from on high. Specifically, we need...

a) Power to witness for Jesus (Acts 1:8; 4:33)

b) Power to minister in Jesus' name (Acts 4:7-12)

⇒ *"The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils." (Matthew 10:7b-8a KJV)* What would it take for our ministry as a church to look like this? How might we pray for the power of God? With God's power, what kind of difference could we make in our community and world?