

Good News

WordBytes



A new evangelization for a new millennium

Living in the Fullness of God's Power

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Good News Ministries

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Overcoming the Power of the Occult
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Every gift or power that comes from the occult is actually a counterfeit of God's greater gifts and powers.

Occult gifts come from spiritual forces that want to occult the Light of Christ. They are designed to lead us into the world of darkness. God's gifts, on the other hand, come from the Light of Christ and lead us into the Light of Truth. And what the Light reveals is love: divine love, supernatural love, unconditional love, true love, always love. The spiritual forces of the occult cannot even come close to imitating this gift from God. They offer what feels like love, but it's only lust, or empty promises, or a briefly lasting hope for satisfaction.

God is bigger, mightier, and much more loving than any power or spirit in the occult. He is also bigger and mightier than any problem, any need, any hurt or impossible situation we face.

There is no greater supernatural gift than to know the love of the Creator of the Universe. To those who make this the focus of their lives, He gives joy that lingers even in the midst of frustrations. He gives peace that lasts even through turmoil. In human experience, this is difficult to understand and impossible to achieve, but through the supernatural power of God, it is ours.

Experiencing God's love is achieved by growing in the holiness that you, as a baptized Christian, already have. "All are called to become a glorious church, holy and without blemish," said Pope John Paul II on February 2, 1994, in his Letter to Families for the International Year of the Family. "'Be holy,' says the Lord, 'for I am holy' (Leviticus 11:44). This is the deepest significance of the great mystery" of God's love, "a love which continually expands and lavishes on people an ever greater sharing in the supernatural life."

Jesus' life is a perfect example of the kind of supernatural powers available to us. Keep in mind that the motive behind His use of each supernatural gift was love—always love.

Jesus could read people's minds, that is, He had the gift of the word of knowledge (John 4:17, 18; Luke 5:22; Matt. 9:4). Since God knows the thoughts of all people, He can tell us, too, what someone is thinking. He empowers us with this knowledge to help us minister to others, understand their needs, or become united with them through love.

Jesus foretold the future (John 1:47, 48; Luke 19:28-34; Matt. 16:21). God's gift of prophecy is always accurate, unlike fortune telling. By giving us glimpses of the future (my family calls them "future-flashes") God encourages us, offers us hope, and gives us guidance. He does not use this gift to frighten us; therefore we can be sure that predictions are not from Him if they cause Christians to fear or hold us back from loving others.

Jesus healed supernaturally, but not the way psychic healers do. He did not use auras or pyramids or crystals. He did not prescribe remedies dictated by a spirit's voice as Edgar Cayce did. Nor did He pull out strands of foul-smelling flesh or materialize diseased organs through the skin as many occult healers do. Jesus simply healed by word and touch. We, too, can lay hands on people and allow the healing power of God to make a difference in their lives. Not everyone has a ministry of healing—because it's too easy to put the focus on ourselves and get caught up in the glamour and fame it brings—but every Christian does have the gift of healing. We use it whenever we distribute God's love through prayers for healing, through showing that we care, and by listening to and addressing the hurts of other people.

Jesus heard disembodied voices, but it was always the Father or angels to whom He listened (John 12:28-30). He knew the difference between theirs and Satan's voices. It's essential that we learn this, too. Although God does speak audibly sometimes, we need to train our hearts to recognize what He is telling us, for He speaks to us all the time, guiding us, reassuring us, and helping us through all situations.

Jesus talked to "ghosts" during the Transfiguration on the mountain (Luke 9:28-36), but this was no séance.

And Jesus never told His disciples to repeat this kind of event. It was a singularly unique encounter. Moses and Elijah cannot even really be called ghosts. They appeared to Jesus in glorified bodies, that is, physical bodies like those every believer will receive because of the second coming of Christ. Moses and Elijah met with Jesus as the highest representatives of the law and the prophets, the two main ways God revealed Himself before Jesus was born. Moses and Elijah were passing on their ministries to Jesus so He could bring them to the ultimate fulfillment.

Jesus gained knowledge supernaturally (John 7:15, 16; Luke 2:46, 47). He learned from the Holy Spirit, not through divination or channeling. Likewise, if we need to know, for example, that a friend is in trouble and needs our help, or that the job we're thinking of taking isn't right, the Holy Spirit does tell us.

Jesus levitated. How else could He have walked on water (John 6:19)? He traveled supernaturally (John 6:22-25). He disappeared when people tried to kill Him (John 8:59; 10:39). In everyday life, we have no need for these types of events to happen, but if we follow Jesus into a very challenging ministry, it can happen to us, too, if it glorifies God and accomplishes the good He's called us to do.

Jesus had power over animals (Luke 5:4-7; Matt. 21:18, 19). If the need exists and we've matured spiritually enough to use this gift only for advancing God's kingdom, anything is possible through Him.

Jesus transformed a little into a lot (Luke 9:14-17) and water into wine (John 2:7-10). He even miraculously produced money when He needed it! (See Matt. 17:27.) The multiplication of something out of next-to-nothing happens today much more frequently than we realize, usually when Christian organizations take care of other people's needs.

Jesus brought the dead back to life (Luke 7:14, 15; 8:50; John 11:43, 44). He controlled clouds and wind and rain (Luke 8:24).

Whatever God the Father could do—and He had done countless amazing miracles throughout the Old Testament—Jesus could do. Likewise, when we are filled with God's Spirit, we can do it, too. Jesus promised in John 14:12 (NJB):

In all truth I tell you, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, and will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father.

What were the "same works" Jesus did? What are the "even greater works?" Putting this verse into

context and reading all of chapter fourteen, we can understand what Jesus meant. The "same works" were those He did as a man—a human like you and me. They were works of love, like you and I can (and do) accomplish in our normal, every day lives. The "greater works" are the supernatural ones, because the Father makes them happen through us when He calls us to special ministries.

God has provided ample evidence that His supernatural powers and gifts truly are available to us. The book of Acts tells story after story of Christians performing supernatural wonders in the name of Jesus. The lives of Saints also show that anything's possible:

- The face of St. Sebastian, a young Roman officer, glowed supernaturally when he told people about the Lord.
- St. Lucy, around A.D. 304, refused to budge from her beliefs—literally! Soldiers, pagan magicians, and even a team of oxen could not move her from the spot where she prayed. When they tried to burn her, the flames were held back by unseen forces.
- St. Patrick knew when a distant ship would be available to help him escape slavery—an angel told him in a dream.
- St. Brigid's butter and milk multiplied as she gave it away to the poor. God also gave her milk from depleted cows and fruit from trees that had been picked clean.
- St. Columban freed Christian prisoners by having their iron chains shatter from a touch. When these prisoners sought refuge in a church, Columban commanded the locked doors to open, then slam shut to keep out those who had chased them. Not even the sexton's keys could reopen them.
- Wild animals obeyed St. Francis of Assisi, including a wolf that had been killing people and cattle.
- St. Clare of Assisi, when her convent was being invaded by a horde of Mohammedans, showed them the consecrated Host in its monstrance. The enemy fled. When she was too ill to attend Christmas Eve Mass, she saw and heard the full service in a vision.
- St. Catherine of Sienna, at the age of seven, wandered too far from home. An invisible force levitated her and sped her back. As an

adult, she kneaded spoiled dough and watched it miraculously freshen. And when interrogated by bishops who challenged her intelligence, she came up with all the right answers despite a lack of education.

- St. Bernardine of Sienna restored to life a young man who had been killed by a bull.
- St. Frances of Rome, needing grain for the poor, prayed before an empty bin. It filled in seconds! When the enemy captured her little son, none of the horses they put him on would budge until he was returned to his mother.
- St. Philip Neri foresaw that the ship a friend was going to travel on would be ambushed by Turks. When it happened, the friend started to drown and called out, "Father, save me!" Philip appeared and carried him across the water to safety. Philip often levitated when he celebrated Mass.
- St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, the first U.S. citizen to be canonized a Saint, needed to dig a well for a new orphanage and novitiate house. Rather than using the occult method of dowsing, she asked God to show her where to dig. They found water on the first try.
- In modern times, Padre Pio, not yet canonized a Saint, appeared to people who needed help, although his body was still back home. However, unlike the occult counterfeit of astral projection, he was seen in a touchable body, sometimes in several places at once around the world.

There is much, much more of the supernatural in the lives of Saints, but they did not consider such power surprising. Their source, after all, was God. They took seriously Philippians 4:13 (NJB):

There is nothing I cannot do in the One who strengthens me.

This is the way Christ intended all of us to live. After His resurrection, just before He ascended into heaven, He said (Acts 1:8 NJB):

You will receive the power of the Holy Spirit.

When we are filled with the Spirit of God, supernatural powers become natural. So why don't we see more use of these powers today? It's not because people don't believe in miracles. Forty-seven percent of Americans completely agree with this statement:

"Even today, miracles are performed by the power of God." Thirty-five percent mostly agree. Only four percent completely disagree.¹

The reasons we don't see more miracles today are these: (1) we don't want to spend the time and effort to grow spiritually; (2) we excuse our lack of supernatural powers by assuming it's not meant for us and it's not available now; (3) we don't trust God's ways of solving problems, and (4) we don't trust God's timing.

Miracles don't happen without God, and yet He's not the center of our lives. We do an awful lot every day without Him. We let too much distract us from putting Him first.

A large part of the problem is the times we live in. We're used to getting everything fast and easy. Microwave ovens, jet airplanes, push-button telephones, computers, fax machines, and medicines that speed healings: these time-saving inventions are a blessing to our physical lives, but a curse to our spiritual lives. They've created a generation of "give-it-to-me-now" spoiled brats. We've lost the patience to wait for God's perfect timing. (Our idea of perfect timing is not God's!)

It takes years to develop blind trust in God, years to grow in the unconditional love for others through which God channels His power. We mature in holiness only gradually.

Even though we can experience a taste of God's power right now, just the way we are, we want more fast. We're not used to waiting, so we turn away from God and resort to shortcuts. That's a big reason the occult is so popular.

Another curse is the comfort all our modern conveniences provide. Daily life is filled with pleasures, even when we're miserable. The furnaces and thermostats, plumbing and water heaters, telephones and ambulances we take for granted have become our false gods. We rely on them first, then maybe turn to God if all else fails.

When our car breaks down in the middle of nowhere, don't we hike to a phone to call a tow truck before we think of praying? When the flu strikes our family, don't we run to the doctor or the medicine cabinet faster than we run to God? We should first ask God for help, then use the towing service or doctor He guides us to—but don't be surprised if the miraculous happens.

When our daughter, Tammy, was six months old, her stomach didn't develop properly. She could not keep her food down. Repeated trips to the pediatrician accomplished nothing but increased worry. We'd for-

gotten to turn to God. When the doctor said we'd have to put her into a children's hospital, Ralph and I finally decided to call the prayer chain at church. That night was the last time Tammy threw up.

With all the speed and comfort our society provides, we forget to seek the Giver of Miracles. St. Leo the Great saw this danger from the fifth century: "Even the things that are necessary for human existence can be a snare to us, absorbing our energy and spiritual vigor to the neglect of the things of God."²

Put God First

Step one toward holy supernatural power is training ourselves to think of God first—in all things—and then trust Him for perfect timing. Remember, God knows more about what's best for us than we do. And He wants what's best for us more than we do. Jesus told us we should never worry because our heavenly Father understands what we need. But for His help to reach us we must follow the advice He gives in Matthew 6:33 (NJB):

Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well.

First Corinthians 4:20 tells us that the Kingdom of God is power. Jesus' central message was "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." He was inviting us to receive power that could only come through a change from worldly ways to God's ways, from self-centeredness to unconditional love. The more we turn away from the "gifts" and "gods" of the world to fix our minds on God's Kingdom, the more His greater supernatural power and love can work in us.

God should be more important to us than our problems. Jesus did not say, "Call on me only when you can't solve the problem yourself." He told us to always put God first, to turn to Him in all things. Then we can trust Him to guide our efforts to work out the problem. And we can trust that when our efforts alone aren't enough, God will do the rest.

When we don't seek God's help, we tend to give ourselves credit for the work that's accomplished. But we cannot grow strong in faith if we glorify ourselves for what we do. We need to see God's power at work. That's why Jesus said in John 5:44 (NJB):

How can you believe, since you look to each other for glory and are not concerned with the glory that comes from the one God?

Failing to put God first in our lives is the sin of pride—the same sin that felled Satan. When we need to rely on God, but choose instead to rely solely on our-

selves or someone or something else, we are saying that God is less loving and less powerful than the person or thing we are turning to. We all do it, but how wrong we are!

The Power of the Holy Spirit

There is nothing more loving and more powerful than God. It was Jesus who said in Acts 1:8 (RSV):

You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

We have all had those times when we respond to problems with a nauseating wave of fear instead of trusting God. But St. Paul told us in 2 Timothy 1:7 (NJB):

God did not give you a Spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power.

The more we are filled with His Spirit, the more we experience His power. But the more we are absorbed in ourselves and the lies of Satan, the more we let fear clog up that power.

I can see this in my own life. One day, I visited a friend after a shopping trip. I hadn't thought much about the Lord that morning, so I felt very much affected by the atmosphere in the stores. Comparing prices, looking for bargains, failing to find the right pajamas for my son, and coping with unfriendly customers left me tense and self-absorbed. I didn't even want to listen to the Christian music tape I usually played in the car.

When I arrived at my friend's house, I found her son home from school with the flu. Should I pray for him, I wondered? What if my prayers didn't work? Then I'd look like a fool. Can I risk failing? My thoughts focused on me instead of God. I couldn't even bring myself to ask my friend if she'd like me to pray. Afterward, I kept berating myself for failing to give God this moment to use me to show His love.

By contrast, the next morning I started the day out right. I asked God to forgive me for being too filled with myself before. I thanked Him for the new day and asked Him to take charge of it. I read my Bible. And when I left home to attend a luncheon, I kept Him in my thoughts.

The woman I sat next to (a coincidence? I think not!)—unknown to me—had been wondering if God still performs miracles of healing. After the program, we began to chat. I sensed God telling me to ask her if one of her legs was shorter than the other.

If this had happened the day before, I would have thought, "No way! I'll sound ridiculous!" But today I could obey. Sure enough, one leg was shorter.

"Do you want to see a miracle?" I asked, filled with excitement. She sat down; I held her feet and began to command the short leg to grow out in the name of Jesus. About a minute later, the legs were even.

God's power flows through us when we stay near to Him, through daily prayer time, reading the Bible, listening to Christian music, attending Christ-centered seminars and prayer meetings and retreats, frequent use of the Sacraments, sharing our faith with friends who also know Christ, reading books about God and Saints, worshipping Him with community, etc. The more time we spend with Him, the more we experience His supernatural power and love.

The Power of Renewal

We were all made in the image of God, but that image needs continual rebirth. As St. Leo said:

We were meant to be like a mirror reflecting his likeness in all its beauty and goodness. We know only too well, however, that this reflection is obscured and tarnished by all kinds of obstacles within ourselves. The nature we inherited from Adam is a wounded and fallen one, and unless it is healed and raised up again by Christ, the second Adam, there is nothing we can do of ourselves to become what we are meant to be.³

It is the Holy Spirit who transforms us into a reflection of God's power, but only if we are willing. He removes our wrong aims and unloving attitudes so we can be more wholly focused on Christ's Kingdom. He removes all the obstacles within us that impede His power. He teaches us everything we need to know about who God really is, how powerful He is, and what He has promised us.

He does not do this alone. We have to commit ourselves to this transformation. It takes time and effort to get to the place where St. Paul can say of us (2 Cor. 12:12 NJB):

All the marks characteristic of a true apostle have been at work among you: complete perseverance, signs, marvels, demonstrations of power.

The Power of Prayer

Prayer brings us into the holy presence of God. It's impossible to experience God's power without it. St.

Paul learned this from experience. He advised in Ephesians 6:18 (NJB):

In all your prayer and entreaty keep praying in the Spirit on every possible occasion.

Pray in the Spirit, that is, in unity with the will of God. Pray on every possible occasion. To pray constantly is to keep God in our minds on some level, all through the day, every day. It's letting Him interpret the events of our day, staying tuned in to His guidance, doing our work in a way that will please Him, and running all our decisions by Him first, from the least to the largest.

Prayer should become a habit. He is the most important thing in the universe; without Him, nothing would exist. Yet how often we ignore Him!

There's a story about four men, all but one living in troubled marriages. Each was asked how much time he spent talking to his wife. One said, "Twice a year, on Easter and Christmas." Another said, "About once a month, whenever I've got nothing better to do." A third said, "Once a week, on Sundays." But the fourth said, "Every day. I make time to talk to her in the morning before I get out of bed, and she's the last person I talk to at night. And any other chance I get, I give her a call."

How often do you talk to your heavenly Spouse? The more time you spend communicating with God, the more you will see His power in your life.

The Power of Faith

Faith, we are told by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, can "give us confidence, by assuring us that the power of Satan cannot go beyond the limits set by God. . . . Above all, faith opens the heart to prayer, in which it finds its victory and its crown. It thus enables us to triumph over evil through the power of God."

Jesus told us that if we have faith and no doubts, we can move mountains (Mark 11:22-24). Have you moved any mountains lately? A mountain could be a severe illness, the loss of a job, or any major problem.

How difficult it is to have no doubts! And yet, faith is not something we can conjure up by our own power. Faith is a gift from the Holy Spirit (see 1 Cor. 12:9). When we are united with Him, we have within us all the faith that He has! The key to overcoming our doubts is trusting God. When I pray, "Jesus, you be my trust, help my unbelief," I see better results than when I rely solely on my own efforts.

God can perform miracles without us. He can answer our prayers before we even turn to Him. But most of the time He prefers to work through us. That allows our free will to play a part. We can choose to rely on Him or we can choose to ignore Him.

When we ask for a miracle, or when we lift up our prayers to God, we need to open ourselves to receive His help. Receiving His help takes trust. Trust builds through experience, which takes time. The more we let God work, the quicker our trust grows. We're told in Hebrews 12:2 (NJB):

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection.

It becomes easier to trust God when we understand what God's will is concerning our problem. We learn His will through prayer, through the Bible, through others who are close to God, and by looking for evidence of His activity. For example, if you're confused about what kind of job you should pursue, pray about it, find scriptures that deal with it, talk to other Christians who know where your talents lay, and look for "doors" (job opportunities) that God may be opening or closing.

When we pray according to God's will, the gift of faith He's given us becomes active. But when we reject Him, such as by insisting we get things exactly the way we want them when we want them, we frustrate ourselves and our patience. God wants only what's best for us. If we find no peace in following God's will, it's because we don't completely trust Him.

Trust is a muscle. It has to be exercised to grow strong. Trust is hope turned into action. It becomes a powerful force when we make sure our request is within God's will and then act on our prayers as if they're already answered, because that shows our complete trust in God.

For example, I mentioned in an earlier chapter that my husband and I wanted to go to a Christian conference but couldn't find someone to watch our young kids. Believing that the Lord wanted us to go, I started making plans. I knew that God often waits for the last minute to answer prayers to test our trust and patience, so I refused to worry as the conference weekend approached. Sure enough, Thursday night a friend offered to take the kids.

Jesus had promised He would help me—and all of us—in Mark 11:24 (NJB):

I tell you, therefore, everything you ask and pray for, believe that you have it already, and it will be yours.

The Power of Words

Our spoken words have far more power than we imagine. They spread like ripples, effecting changes we cannot perceive. We hurt others with careless words. We blaspheme God and our own spirits with curses. We bring sickness on ourselves through self-fulfilling prophecies such as: "I always get the flu in January."

Words have more power to make ripples than do our thoughts. The Bible doesn't tell us to wish for the power of the Holy Spirit; it tells us to ask for it (Matt. 7:7 NJB):

Ask, and it will be given to you.

When we ask for a miracle—for example, a better job—we should request it out loud in the name (i.e., the will) of Jesus. I asked God, one day, why I sometimes doubted He would answer my prayers. I had usually prayed silently. Suddenly it occurred to me that when I prayed silently, God seemed to me to be no bigger than my own mind. When I prayed out loud, I realized I was praying to a God who is bigger than the universe. That increased my ability to trust Him.

Praying out loud also sets the spirit world in action. Demons cannot read our minds if Christ dwells within us. Therefore, they have to hear us speak the power of God. For example, they have to hear that our job search is off limits to their interference.

Speaking our prayers also activates our faith. Even secular books on how to be successful tell us to speak our desires. Psychologists say that if we want to change a habit or reach a goal, announcing that we're accomplishing it actually helps us to achieve it. It empowers us to believe in the goal and in our ability to effect the change.

Another way to speak our prayers is to pray the Word of God. Find scripture verses that relate to your situation and read them aloud. For example, when I have a speaking engagement, I might pray John 10:2-3, beforehand: "Dear Lord, you be the Shepherd of the flock that is here today. Help me be the gatekeeper that lets you in. Let these sheep hear your voice."

We can also quote Scriptures the way Jesus did when Satan tempted Him in the desert. You could say, "It is written that Jesus gave Himself for my sins to rescue me from this present evil (Gal. 1:4), so the demons at work against me now must stop!"

Our words can destroy, thus giving Satan opportunities to work, or they can unite us with God, empowering us to see miracles.

The Power of Praise

Some of the most powerful words are those that praise and glorify God. God commands us to praise Him in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NJB):

Always be joyful; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks; this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

God does not insist on this because it strokes His ego, but because praise increases our trust. Every day, we have reasons to praise God. When He answers prayer, we should praise Him. Better yet, when we ask for His help, we should show our trust by thanking Him before His answer comes. But most important, in the midst of problems we should praise God despite our feelings, because then we're placing our trust in God's love above the evidence of trouble.

This sacrifice of praise is powerful, as shown in Psalm 8:1, 2 (NJB):

Yahweh our Lord, how majestic is your name throughout the world! Whoever keeps singing of your majesty higher than the heavens . . . you make him a fortress, firm against your foes, to subdue the enemy and the rebel.

The teenage son of a friend of mine was hit by a truck. As his mother cradled his broken skull in her hands, covering his exposed brains, she praised God through her tears. She said, "Thank you Jesus for helping my son. Thank you Jesus, thank you Jesus."

Then, a soothing voice seemed to say, "This is not unto death. This is for My glory." It filled her with peace and reassurance. Her praises increased.

At the hospital, miracle followed miracle. His smashed cheek bones knit together in one day! The boy recovered with only a few scars and a metal plate in his head as proof the accident had really happened.

God cares for us more than we can hope for. When we focus on this, rather than on how bad the problem looks, praise becomes easy. Praising God means we know the meaning of 2 Corinthians 4:7 (NJB):

The immensity of the power is God's and not our own.

The Power of Fellowship

Christian fellowship is essential. There is power in numbers. Ever notice it's easier for people to get miraculous healings in a large healing service than in their own, private prayer time?

Christian community provides growth, encouragement, support, instruction, and greater exposure to God's spiritual gifts. When we're weak and discouraged, we can turn to the joy and confidence of those who are walking in God's power. The more we're surrounded by people who are strong in the Lord, the more we become aware of the Lord's presence. Jesus promised in Matthew 18:19, 20 (NJB):

In truth I tell you once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them.

"God is working in a special and unique way in and through the Christian community," Dr. John Newport has said concerning the way God's power breaks into our world. "The church's mission is to witness to the Kingdom in the world and to be the instrument of the Kingdom."⁴

The Holy Spirit empowers community members to build each other up in trust and love. Pope John Paul II made mention of this in a homily on October 30, 1987:

[Individuals] can never remain in isolation from the community, but must live in a continual interaction with others, with a lively sense of fellowship, rejoicing in an equal dignity and common commitment to bring to fruition the immense treasure that each has inherited. . . . Thus the charisms, the ministries, the different forms of service exercised by the lay faithful exist in communion and on behalf of communion. They are treasures that complement one another for the good of all and are under the wise guidance of their Pastors.

Most of the gifts of the Spirit are meant for community use. When we use them this way, God's supernatural power becomes very natural!

In Conclusion

Much of our powerlessness comes from trying to do God's part, i.e., trying to handle problems without seeking God. And it comes from expecting God to do it without us. We cannot sit back and wait for every-

thing to fall into our laps. God and you make a team. If you work together, you always win.

God wants us to use His power. He gave it to us at the cost of His Son's life. Jesus suffered the most brutal death in order to release the fullness of God's power in our lives. Our lives. Are we going to deny that? Reject it? Ignore it? Or act upon it?

God has a divine response to the New Age movement: bigger and better supernatural power, combined with ultimate truth and pure love. As people search for supernatural power, if we say "yes" to God's invitation to be His witnesses, He will work through us to show them where they can find the greatest and the best.

Are you willing to become a channel of His love? Let us join together in praying Ephesians 3:20:

Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine!

1. According to the Princeton Religion Research Center, 1989.

2. Anne Field, *The Binding of the Strong Man*, Ann Arbor, MI: Word of Life, 1976, pp. 58, 59.

3. Ibid., p. 23.

4. Dr. John Newport, *The Biblical and Occult Worlds—A 20th Century Confrontation* tape series, Fort Worth, TX: Latimer House Publishing Co., 1973, "The Christian Alternative to Magic: The Kingdom of God."

SUGGESTED PRAYERS

Prayer for the Presence of Christ

Lord Jesus, I know I have sinned against You. Forgive me. I want the love that You offer. I want to become the kind of person God the Father created me to be. I want You to be my Friend, my Guide, my Savior. I want You to be in charge of my life and empower me with Your Holy Spirit. Fill me with Your presence, Your love, Your peace. I thank You for dying on the cross for me. Thank You for loving me even though I haven't loved You as I should. Lord, I believe in You; help my unbelief.

Prayer for the Power of the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, and renew me. Recreate me so that I can reach my fullest potential. Fill me to overflowing with Your gifts, Your power, Your love. I open myself to receive all that the Father has for me. He is the Creator of everything and, through Christ, He has made me His adopted child. Therefore far more is available to me than I ever imagined. Help me to receive it all. Teach me how to use Your gifts. Instruct me in all truth. Fill my mind with Your thoughts and help me to recognize Your voice. Make me an instrument of the Father's will.

Prayer to Conquer Evil

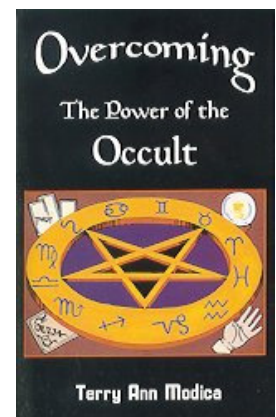
Satan, in the name of Jesus Christ, I bind you from interfering in this [what] situation in any way. You have no right to interfere with [what] because I [or the person you're praying for] am a child of God Almighty! So, in the name of Jesus Christ, I cast you out of this situation now and command you not to return. Go now to the foot of the cross!

Then pray:

You spirit of [name the problem], in the name of Jesus Christ, I bind you and I cast you away from this situation, now, and I command you never to return! And don't send any other evil spirits back to me, and do not retaliate in any way.

After doing this for every spirit that the Holy Spirit brings to your mind, pray:

Father, in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, resolve this situation according to Your will and Your love. I leave it in Your hands and refuse to worry about it any more. Jesus, fill me [or the person you're praying for] with Your presence, Your love, Your peace, Your joy, and [the opposite of everything that was cast away]. Holy Spirit, fill me [or that person] with Your power and Your gifts. Father, surround [who] with holy angels to protect me/them and fight off the attacks of demons. Bless [the person or situation] and replace all the evil with Your holiness. Jesus, pour Your precious blood over [who] and my/their home, friendships, workplace, activities, etc. Thank You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit! I praise You and worship You for what You are doing, how You are doing it, and when You've chosen as the best time for finishing it. Amen!



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