

Unleashing the Power of the Spirit in Your Life

1. Warm up: Scientists say we humans have a secret power most of us have never heard of. It's called "'hysterical power.'" When facing an extremely urgent situation, massive doses of adrenalin flood our bodies giving us extraordinary strength – an example being Angela Cavallo when she lifted a 3,780 vehicle off her son. What's the heaviest thing you've ever lifted?
2. On Sunday Jeff focused our attention on another largely unknown, unused power that lies deep within every believer. It's called "Spirit Power," *i.e.*, the power of the Holy Spirit I us which can do amazing things. Jeff shared two well-documented, true-life stories as examples: in one instance the prayers of a pastor and mother revived an infant girl who seemed to have been dead for three hours; in the other instance a cracked C-4 vertebra in a teenage boy's neck suddenly popped back together.
 - a. What do you make of those two stories, one testified to by renowned New Testament scholar Craig Keener (dead girl rising) and the other by Pastor James Christensen of Necedah, Wisconsin (teenage boy who's neck spontaneously healed). Both outcomes were prompted by fervent prayers from Spirit-filled people. Do you believe that things like that happen? Why or why not?
 - b. What's the most extraordinary experience of Spirit Power ever witnessed by you or by someone you know?
3. As we try to better understand this phenomenon of Spirit Power, let's read Acts 8:4-24, as printed on p. 3.
 - a. Our scripture passage tells us that the new believers in the city of Samaria had not yet heard about the concept of the Holy Spirit. They had no idea that the same kind of power they saw in Philip, Peter, and John was also now latent within them, waiting to be activated. Most of us have heard about the Holy Spirit, but different churches take different approaches. Some churches present the Holy Spirit as a source of guidance in our life and stop there. Other churches emphasize that the Holy Spirit is also a source of amazing power within us. What did the churches of your past teach? When, if ever, did you learn to see the Holy Spirit as a source of great power?
 - b. Jeff pointed out that before the new believers in Samaria could access the power of the Spirit within them, they first had to become aware that it even existed and was a possibility for them. Jeff said, "The first step to actualizing Spirit Power within us is awareness. Just realizing – and daring to believe – that it's there." Do you dare to believe it? Do you dare to believe that the very power of God's Spirit now dwells inside you, waiting to be tapped into? Would you say that you have "received" the Holy Spirit? If so, how would you explain to somebody else what it means to "receive" the Holy Spirit?

- c. We often feel underpowered in life. What's an area of your life right now where you feel you could really use some extra power?
 - d. Jeff said, "I'm here to tell you today that there is a power source in you – often untapped – that's greater than you could ever imagine." What excites you about this concept of Spirit Power? What causes you to be leery of it?
4. When we hear about – or witness – Spirit Power, we find ourselves thinking, "How can I get me some of that power?" – because there are so many things that we want, which takes us back to our passage. When Simon the Magician saw Spirit Power in action, he realized its potential to further his prosperous career as a wonderworker and wanted to acquire it to use for his own narrow personal purposes, *i.e.*, his career path. Peter rebuked him, saying, "You have no share in this, for your heart is not right before God."
- a. We all face Simon's temptation – the temptation to want to use spiritual power to get more of the things we want. If the Holy Spirit said, "I'll grant you one wish – anything you want," what would be at the top of your list? Be honest. ☺
 - b. From the example of Simon the Magician, we drew a second key lesson about Spirit Power. Spirit power cannot be exploited for narrow personal purposes. It's only available to be utilized for the greater good in a manner consistent with the will of God. It's not there so I can implement my agenda. It's there to be used in furtherance of God's agenda. It's there for everyone who wants to be on God's team, not for those who want to be their own team. So a precondition for being able to access God's power – Spirit Power – is surrender. In this context, what does it mean to "surrender"? How would you explain it?
 - c. Given the foregoing, Jesus models for us what it looks like to pray in a way that's consistent with all we've talked about so far. In the Garden of Gethsemane, he prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup [of suffering] pass from me; yet not what I want, but what you want." Matthew 26:31. Think about something you really want God to do. Verbalize what that prayer request is for the whole group to hear, then add the words, "Yet not what I want, but what you want." How does it make you feel to say those words? Are you able to say it and really mean it?
 - d. Spirit Power is not just available for big flashy miracles, but also for the supernatural power we need for everyday living. Jeff gave an example of self-control. What's an area in your everyday life where you need supernatural help to live more fully into the ideals Jesus taught? Are you consciously asking the Holy Spirit to empower you in that area?
 - e. Jeff summed up Sunday's scripture lesson with an equation for activating Spiritual Power. Look at the equation on p. 3. Which aspect of this equation is hardest for you and needs more focus from you?

Acts 8:4-24, selected verses

Now those who were scattered went from place to place, proclaiming the word. Philip went down to the city of Samaria. The crowds with one accord listened eagerly to what was said by Philip, hearing and seeing the signs that he did, for unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed; and many others who were paralyzed or lame were cured.

Now a certain man named Simon had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people. All of them listened to him eagerly, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." He had amazed them with his magic. But when they believed Philip, they were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon himself believed. After being baptized, he stayed constantly with Philip and was amazed when he saw the signs and great miracles that took place.

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me also this power so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." But Peter said to him, "You have no part or share in this, for your heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you." Simon said, "Pray for me to the Lord."

Equation for Actualizing Spirit Power

Sermon Handout, June 7, 2026

B/F + BPA + AwGW = SPIRIT POWER

Believe (faith) + Bold Prayer & Action + Alignment with God's Will = SPIRIT POWER

Step 1 – Believe that there is Spirit Power inside you.

Step 2 – Boldly pray and act like you have access to that Power.

Step 3 – If what you're praying and doing is **Aligned with God's Will**, get ready!

Cause something amazing is going to happen! Nothing's impossible. Nothing's ruled out.

Step 4 – Remember, God's will may be to deliver you **THROUGH** a great challenge, rather than **OUT** of it. Trust and surrender.

Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."