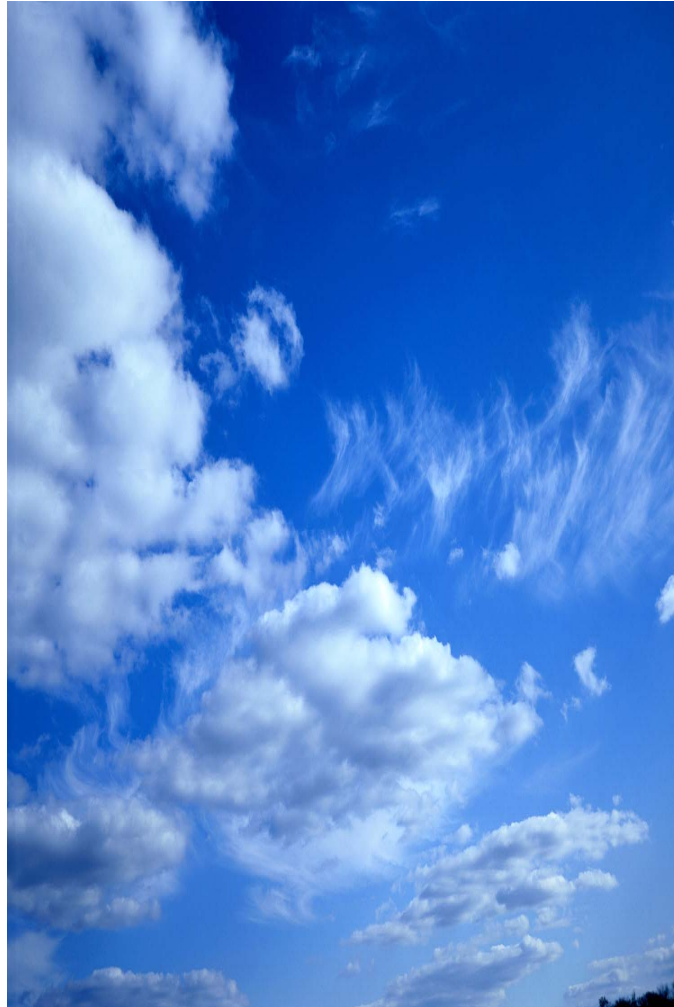


# ***THE POWER OF PURITY***



By  
Evangelist Norman R. Stevens

## THE POWER OF PURITY

Please open your Bibles to Philippians chapter four and verse thirteen. I would like to preach a message entitled "The Power of Purity."

Do you lack power with God today? You pray and nothing seems to happen. You witness and nothing seems to happen. You battle with the world, the flesh, and the devil, and you lose more than you win. You don't have to live that way because it is never God's will that God's people be without His power.

If you have ever known what it is to have God's power on your life and then known what it is not to have God's power, you know the misery of powerless living.

Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." In Acts 1:8, the Bible says, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..." That's power!

As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you ought to have power with God in your prayer life and in your service for the Lord. And that power, that power with God, is going to be found in your personal purity before God.

We are going to notice several things: Number one, power with God; number two, power of purity; number three, power in prayer; and number four, power in service.

Please notice number one: power with God. What do I mean by power? It is the ability you have to do something for God. It is the ability you have to accomplish something for the Lord. It is the ability you have to influence God. It is the ability you have to move the heart of God to action.

You say, Preacher! Is that Biblical? Can I influence God? Can I move the heart of God to action? Yes! You can influence God. You can move the heart of God to action.

Do you remember the story in Genesis chapter thirty-two in which Jacob wrestled with an Angel? The Angel said, "Let me go for the day breaketh." Jacob said, "I will not let you go, except you bless me." In Hosea chapter twelve and verse four, the Bible says that Jacob wept, that Jacob wept sore, that Jacob made supplication unto the Lord.

The Angel said unto him, "What is thy name?" And he said, "Jacob." The Angel said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel. Thou hast power with God. Thou hast power with men. Thou hast prevailed." What was the Angel saying? The Angel was saying this! Jacob, you have power with Me. You have influence with Me. You have prevailed.

Moses had power with God. On a number of occasions God was going to destroy Israel, but Moses prayed and prevailed with God in prayer.

Abraham had power with God. In Genesis chapter eighteen, God told Abraham that He was going to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. In verse twenty-seven, Abraham began to pray; and by the time he finished praying, God agreed with Abraham that, if He could find as few as ten righteous people in those vast wicked cities, He would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.

Hezekiah had power with God. It was the prophet Isaiah who told Hezekiah to set his house in order because he was about to die. In Isaiah 38:2, the Bible says, "Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD." Listen! Before Isaiah could leave the middle court, the Lord told Isaiah to go back and tell Hezekiah, "I have heard thy prayer. I have seen thy tears. I will heal thee. I will add fifteen years unto thy days and I will deliver thee out of the hand of the king of Assyria." Hezekiah had power with God. Hezekiah had power to move the heart of God to action.

Elijah had power with God. In James 5:17-18, the Bible says, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

By means of prayer, you too can have power with God. You too can influence God. You too can move the heart of God to action. And the Bible makes that very clear to us. Do you remember James 4:2? It says, "...ye have not, because ye ask not."

Listen! There are things that God wants to do for you today. He wills to do it. He wants to do it. He would do it, but He won't do it because you do not pray.

What a shame that is. It is your prayers that move the heart of God to action. Listen to the Bible! Matthew 7:7-8 says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." In John 15:7, the Bible says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." In John 16:24, the Bible says, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Why then don't you pray? It is your prayers that move the heart of God to action.

We have noticed number one: power with God; but notice number two: power of purity.

What do I mean by purity? Purity simply means doing what is right. Acts 24:16 says, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." That's being pure! In I John 3:21, the Bible says, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." That's being pure! In Deuteronomy 6:18, the Bible says, "And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD..." That's being pure!

If you want to do something for God, if you want to accomplish something for the Lord, if you want to influence God, if you want to move the heart of God to action, you need to have power with God. And that power, that power with God, is going to be found in your personal purity before God.

Personal purity before God is the thing that gives the child of God power with God. You can have power with God through personal purity.

When a man is pure, when a man is clean, when a man is right with God, when a man is in fellowship with the Lord, he is doing the right thing and he keeps on doing what is right. He is living by biblical principles. He is living by biblical convictions.

If you are going to have the power to do the will of God, if you are going to have the power to influence God, if you are going to have the power to move the heart of God to action, that power is going to come through personal purity before God.

The child of God can experience his greatest power to do the will of God when he is pure. The child of God can experience his greatest power to accomplish the will of God when he is clean. The child of God can experience his greatest power to influence God and move the heart of God to action when he is right with God, when he is in fellowship with the Lord.

A Christian who is pure, who is clean, who is right with God, who is in fellowship with the Lord, can influence the heart of God. He can move the heart of God to action. He can gain from the Lord what he needs. He can be used mightily of God. He can magnify God with his life.

Don't you see! It is your prayers that move the heart of God to action, and you need to be right with God. You need to be in fellowship with the Lord.

In James 5:16, the Bible says, "...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." You could say it this way. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much.

Did you notice that it is not the fervency that gets the answer? The answer comes from a righteous man. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, accomplishes much. The effectual fervent prayer of a man who is right with God availeth much, accomplishes much. A man who is pure, a man who is clean, a man who is right with God, a man who is in fellowship with the Lord, who is doing the right thing and keeps on doing what is right, that man has power with God in prayer. He has the ability to influence God. He has the ability to move the heart of God to action.

We have noticed number one: power with God; and number two: power of purity; but notice number three: power in prayer.

What keeps God from answering your prayers then? You pray and nothing seems to happen. You pray and you don't get any answers from God. I am going to tell you what it is. It is the impurity in your heart. In Psalm 66:18, the Bible says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: If there is a sin in your life and you know it (and that is the key—you know it, but you are not willing to confess and forsake that known sin in your life), you can pray until you are blue in the face and God is not obligated to hear your prayer. He is not obligated to answer your prayers.

What is it that taps the power of God in prayer? It is your personal purity before God. I am not talking about positional purity. We are all pure in the eyes of God when we are saved, when we are born again. I am talking about practical purity before God. In I John 3:22, the Bible says, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

God knows every thing about you. God never comes to learn anything. He is everywhere present in all places at all times. You are not going to hide anything from God. You are not going to do in private what you think will not be seen in the public eye and it not rob you of God's power in prayer.

Listen to the Bible! In Hebrews 4:13, it says, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of [God]...." In Proverbs 15:3, the Bible says, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place beholding the evil and the good." In Ezekiel 18:30, the Bible says, "Therefore I will judge you every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin."

Brethren! There are folks in this room today who have genuine needs, needs that God wants to meet; but you don't have what you need because you have no power with God in prayer. You can't influence God. You can't move the heart of God to action. You can't get anything from God because of the presence of sin in your life that you know about.

If you choose to ignore personal purity before God, you will have no power with God in prayer. You will have no power to influence God. You will have no power to move the heart of God to action.

So go ahead and embrace that sin in your life that you know about. Go ahead and cherish that sin in your life that you know about. Keep that sinful act. Keep that sinful attitude. Keep that sinful behavior. Keep those besetting sins in your life that you know about. Keep those sins that God has dealt with you about over and over again. Keep those sins you just can't seem to get the victory over, that you don't want to give up, that you won't give up. You will have no power with God in prayer.

You will pray for loved ones to be saved; but God will not hear, God will not answer. You will pray for the power of God on your life; and God will not hear, God

will not answer. You will pray for the power of God on your pastor and on your pastor's wife; but God will not hear, God will not answer. You will pray for God to give your missionaries souls; God will not hear, God will not answer. You will pray for God to give your church souls; God will not hear, God will not answer. You will pray for God to bless the Sunday school teachers; God will not hear, God will not answer. You will pray for God to meet your financial needs; and God will not hear, God will not answer. Why? Because of the presence of sin in your life that you know about. Because of the presence of impurity in your heart that you know about. So go ahead and embrace that sin in your life that you know about. Keep that sinful act, that sinful attitude, that sinful behavior. You will have no power with God in prayer.

We have noticed number one, power with God, number two, power of purity; number three, power in prayer, but notice number four: power in service.

Purity is the thing that gives the child of God power in service. It is God's desire that you serve Him. You have not been saved just to get out of hell. You have not been saved just to go to heaven. You have been saved so that you could in turn serve God and glorify Him thereby.

The purpose of God's working in mankind is not simply to save man from his suffering. The purpose of God's working in mankind is to make it possible for man to glorify and magnify God.

I submit to you that, if you are not actively seeking to glorify Jesus Christ, you have missed the reason for the salvation that you enjoy in Christ today.

You ought to be serving God. In Ephesians 6:7, the Apostle Paul said, "With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men."

The reason you were saved, the reason you were born again, is that you might be fixed up in such a way that you could render a service unto God that would glorify Jesus Christ.

Let me ask you something! Do you have power with God in service? There are Sunday school teachers who have taught in the power of the flesh. There are Christians who have sung in the power of the flesh. There are preachers who have preached in the power of the flesh. It is possible to go through the motions of service in the power of the flesh. There are husbands who are seeking to be husbands in the home in the power of the flesh. There are wives who are seeking to be wives in the home in the power of the flesh. There are children who are seeking to be children in the home in the power of the flesh. Anyone can do that. My question is this! How can you serve God with God's power? How can you serve God with God's energy? How can you render to God the service that really counts? How can you be the husband you ought to be in the home with God's power? How can you be the wife you ought to be in the home with God's power? How can you be the child you ought to be in the home with God's power? How can you be the Christian you ought to be with God's power? The answer is, by means of personal purity. In

II Timothy 2:21, the Bible says, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use and prepared unto every good work." What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this! If you want to be honored of God, if you want God to set you aside from the crowd unto His service, if you want God to make you ready and usable for all sorts of good works and prepared for the master's use, the secret is going to be in your purging yourself. You need to purify yourself of sin.

If you want God to use you today in His service, you must be purged. You must be pure. You must be clean. You must be right with God. You must be in fellowship with the Lord. And as you are purged, as you are right with God and you do the right thing and you keep on doing what is right, you will be the kind of person God is going to bless in His service. You will be the kind of person God is going to use in His service.

If you are not pure, if you are not clean, if you are not right with God, if you are not in fellowship with the Lord, God is not going to bless you in His service. He is not going to use you in His service.

Now, you can do a lot in the flesh. You can preach in the flesh. You can teach a Sunday school class in the flesh. You can run your house in the flesh. You can run your business in the flesh. You can run your life in the flesh. But I promise you, carnal methods or carnal means never accomplish spiritual work.

If you want to do the spiritual work, the spiritual work of God with spiritual power, with spiritual energy, you need to purge yourself. That is, you need to purify yourself of sin.

In Psalm 24:3-5, the Bible says, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." The Psalmist is not talking about my positional purity. He is talking about my practical relationship with God in my life.

Who has the blessing of the Lord? The Psalmist said, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD."

Are you convinced that your power with God in prayer and in your service for the Lord comes from personal purity? I hope that you are! How then does personal purity come? Through confession! In I John 1:9, the Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

How then does personal purity come? Through consecration! In Psalm 119:9, the Bible says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." In Psalm 119:11, it says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Brethren! You get your sins forgiven instantly as you confess them to God; and, as you day by day seek to live under the authority of the Word of God and rule of the Word of God, you maintain cleansing. You will maintain personal purity before God, and thereby you will have power with God in your prayer life and in your service for the Lord.

Your church will only have power with God in relationship to purity. You yourself will only have power with God in your prayer life and in your service for the Lord in relationship to your personal purity before God.

Are you pure? Are you clean? Are you right with God? Are you in fellowship with the Lord? Are there sins in your life that you need to deal with today? Are there sins in your life that you need to confess and forsake? Are there sins in your life that you need to face up to? If the spirit of God is speaking to you saying that these things keep you from being pure, these things keep you from being clean, these things keep you from being right with God, these things keep you from being in fellowship with the Lord, then you need to deal with them.

It may be you are consenting to lust in your life. It may be that God is leading you in a certain direction and you are refusing to follow Him.

Are you aware of some impurity in your life today, some moral impurity, some financial impurity? It could be any number of things.

Anything between you and God is impurity. It will rob you of God's power in your prayer life and in your service for the Lord; and you don't have to live that way. It is never God's will that God's people be without His power. If you have ever known what it is to have God's power and then known what it is not to have God's power, then you know the misery of powerless living.

As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you ought to have power with God in your prayer life and in your service for the Lord. And that power, that power with God, is going to be found in your personal purity before God.



## How is a Person Saved?

Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the Devil – Romans 3:24; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:18; Romans 5:8.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead – John 1:12, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13.

Simply admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith – Romans 3:10, 23; I Corinthians 15:3-4.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for you some 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him more than to save you today.

Won't you go to Him right now in prayer and tell Him in your own words that you will trust Him as your Saviour? Or pray this simple prayer: Dear Lord, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me and that He arose from the grave. Here and now I ask You to forgive me of my sin and save me. In Jesus's name. Amen.

If you prayed that simple prayer, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by e-mail or phone (813) 760-4028.

Evangelist Norman R. Stevens  
Emmanuel Baptist Church  
602 Canterbury Road  
Kings Mountain, NC 28086  
Phone: (813) 760-4028

E-mail: [nrsevangelist@earthlink.net](mailto:nrsevangelist@earthlink.net)  
<http://www.evangelistnormanstevens.com>