Some time ago, I had to fly from Los Angeles to New York for a mere three-hour stop, then fly to Portland, Oregon, to speak to several hundred pastors at a conference. When I reached Portland, I was bone tired. Every fiber of my being ached with fatigue. As I stood in the terminal, I felt impressed to pray, “Lord, do You have something that You would like to share with me?”

Immediately, I felt another impression to turn to the 40th chapter of Isaiah. I began to read a familiar passage, which took on new meaning for me. “Don’t you know by now that the everlasting God, the Creator of the farthest parts of the earth, never grows faint or weary?…He gives power to the tired and worn out, and strength to the weak.”¹ I could identify with the writer, for I was absolutely worn out.

I continued to read: “Even the youths shall be exhausted, and the young men will all give up. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”² At that moment, it was as though a great infusion of power
flooded my very being. I was so excited as I thought about who God is and what He had said to me. I felt I could have thrown my luggage over the airport terminal and run to the meeting some miles away. Suddenly, I could hardly wait to stand before those pastors and proclaim to them the glory and power of our great and faithful God and Savior. Within thirty minutes or so, I did have that privilege, and God empowered and anointed me for the occasion in a marvelous way.

In all my years as a believer, I have found God faithful to use His power in the behalf of those who seek Him. A right understanding of who God is will revolutionize the life of every believer. It will launch him or her into the exciting adventure of supernatural living in the power of this mighty God.

But perhaps you have asked yourself: How much can I expect God to do through me? How involved is He in what I see going on around me? What is He willing to accomplish in my life?

**GOD USES HIS POWER PURPOSEFULLY**

When we look at the cosmic universe, we see order and design. Everything is in its place; everything has its purpose. If creation has so much purpose and design, then human history must also have purpose and design.

Many people are skeptical about God’s willingness to get intimately involved in their affairs. They may agree that God has a general purpose for everything, but they wonder: *Do we live by luck or the breaks produced by our own hard work and cleverness?* They question if God even knows or cares about the details in their lives.

In His Word, however, God shows that He has a plan for this world and every person in it: “I have a plan for the whole earth, for My mighty power reaches throughout the world.”

No matter what happens anywhere in the world at any moment, God is always in control. This is a comforting truth. How would you like to live in a world where everyone could do whatever he wanted? Can you imagine the chaos? For example, I have visited countries that seem to have no traffic laws. Taxi drivers go
at breakneck speed, in and out of lanes, often colliding with each other. Fortunately, I have not been in a collision although I have ridden in thousands of taxis. I certainly would not want to drive to work each day in heavy traffic where drivers do not follow traffic laws.

Sometimes this world seems just as chaotic and out-of-control, yet God knows what is in the future. He is not the author of evil and suffering, nor is He responsible for the consequences of mankind's sins. He does place authorities in their positions to help bring order to our world. The apostle Paul tells us, "Obey the government, for God is the one who put it there. All governments have been placed in power by God. So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God."4

God has unlimited power within Himself and does what He wants with it. This would be terrifying if God were a tyrant who meted out His power indiscriminately. Fortunately, the Bible says God acts out of love and righteousness (attributes that we will examine later). Some of us may question why God does not answer our prayers when and how we ask. But God is not a "genie" or Santa Claus who gives us everything we ask for just the way we want it. He uses His power to fulfill His purposes, plans, and will for us and everyone involved in our situations. He knows what we need far better than we do. Can you think of at least one prayer request for which you are now thankful God did not answer the way you wanted? Often we pray selfishly or from our fleshly natures. But as we align our ways and desires with His perfect will, and pray in faith, we will see His power demonstrated more frequently in answered prayer.

When we study God's Word from Genesis to Revelation, we get a glimpse into how He directs history and nations. The psalmist writes: "Come and see what our God has done, what awesome
miracles He does for His people!...By His great power He rules forever. He watches every movement of the nations.”5 Although events at times make no sense to us, God knows the end from the beginning, and has us in the palm of His hand.

Man is at best a microbe on the “grain of sand” we call earth, yet God created us for a purpose. We feel most fulfilled when we respond to that purpose.

**GOD’S POWER IS SHOWN THROUGH HIS SON**
First Corinthians 1:24 tells us that God demonstrates His power through His Son. We can see evidence of this in His virgin birth. God planned before the foundation of the world to send His Son to die for us.

God’s ultimate display of power was raising Jesus Christ from the dead. After Jesus’ death by crucifixion, His enemies put a Roman seal on the tomb and set guards to make sure no one disturbed His body. Yet their efforts meant nothing to God. When He was ready to display His power, He simply rolled the stone away from the tomb and Jesus walked out alive and well.

Paul writes that the power available to us as believers is “the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms.”6 Does that not thrill you? The amount of power available to us through God’s Spirit is equal to the power God used to raise Christ from the dead! Like Paul, we can honestly say, “I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.”7

**REFLECTING GOD’S POWER**
In the midst of the barren desert between Los Angeles and Las Vegas stands a 300-foot tower. On top of this tower rests a black receiver that is 45 feet high and 23 feet wide, surrounded by 70 heat-conducting tubes. Tens of thousands of people who drive across the desert during the daylight hours see what looks like a brilliant ball of fire glowing from the top of the tower. This is the world’s largest solar-powered electricity-generating station: Solar One.

How can a receiver turn into a glowing ball with a tempera-
ture exceeding 1,175° F? The secret is on the ground. On the desert floor surrounding the tower are 1,818 computer-controlled frames, each holding 12 giant mirrors that track the sun daily from the time it rises until it sets.

When sunlight strikes these mirrors, it is reflected onto the receiver at the top of the tower. The heat generated at the receiver is then transformed into electrical energy through a system of thermal storage and a turbine generator. When the network of mirrors is working in harmony, tremendous power is generated from the sun.

Note that the tower itself does not have the ability to generate power. This process is possible only because light from the sun—the real source of the power—is reflected onto a helpless receiver.

Have you considered that God wants us to reflect His power on earth? As we begin to understand our God's vast and magnificent power, our lives cannot help but be transformed. Everything about us will change—our attitudes, actions, motives, desires, our lifestyle, and even our view of God. As we are transformed, we light up the world around us. Our society which was once darkened by fear, ignorance, and hopelessness will become lightened with our witness of God's power, care, and intervention in our lives.

**God Wants Us to Be Vessels for His Power**

Just because God has the power to do anything should not cause us to assume that we can use that power for selfish purposes. His power is dedicated to the accomplishment of His purposes, not ours. He will bring about the future that He desires. As our all-powerful God and loving Father, His ways are infinitely better than ours.

God is seeking faithful servants to be channels of His incredible power. Paul was one of countless servants of Christ who was available for God’s mighty power. Acts 19:11 records that “God did extraordinary miracles through Paul” (NIV). Through Paul’s prayers, other Christians also understood what it means to be “strengthened with all power according to His glorious might.” The ways God desires to use us are beyond counting, but let me mention five that will help us reflect God's glory.
God gives us power to conquer evil forces.

We have already seen that God’s power is infinitely greater than the forces of evil. We can apply that truth to our own battle with Satan and his helpers—no matter what they throw at us.

When God instructed Moses to lead the Israelite people out of Egypt, conflict developed between God’s servants (Moses and his brother, Aaron) and Pharaoh’s magicians. These accomplished sorcerers could have intimidated Moses and Aaron. Their demonic power was clearly evident when they threw their rods to the floor and the rods became serpents. But God demonstrated His superior power when Aaron’s rod devoured the other serpents. This was a graphic illustration of how much greater God’s power is than any other.

Satan’s power is most clearly demonstrated through false religious systems. Millions have followed him to disastrous endings. From the 900 followers of Jim Jones who tragically died in Jonestown, Guyana, to Heaven’s Gate cult members who committed suicide in recent years at the command of their leader, many have been deluded by Satan’s wiles. But when we walk with God, we need not be afraid. The devil and his forces are no match for God. God’s Word promises that we can have victory in our spiritual battles. James 4:7,8 says: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you.”

Although we are weak at times, we can stand firm and say “no”; we can quit any habit or addiction; and we can speak up to tell the truth at any time. How do we do these difficult feats? In the power of the name of Jesus Christ and faith in our almighty and powerful God.

God gives us power to live a holy life.

I like to compare the Christian battle against sin to an individual
swimming upstream against a surging current. His progress is slow and tortuous; he is constantly swept backward by powerful undercurrents. Hovering near the swimmer is a speedboat with a powerful motor. He can continue to try to swim upstream or he can choose to climb aboard the speedboat, which can easily whisk him up the river. Staying in the water means he must trust in his own efforts. Accepting a ride in the speedboat allows him to take advantage of a power far greater than his own.

We have a similar choice. When battling evil spiritual forces, worldly influences, and our own fleshly temptations, we can either fail miserably by fighting temptation in our own efforts or defeat that sin-current that drags us down by living in the unlimited power of the Holy Spirit.

Peter explains, “As we know Jesus better, His divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life. He has called us to receive His own glory and goodness!” We do not have to make our own lives holy or clean up our messy lives before we invite God in; we can appropriate God’s holiness through His Holy Spirit living His life within us.

The Scriptures assure us “that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of Him.” We can become holy vessels of the all-powerful God by committing to live holy lives and being filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

God gives us power in our weakness.

Since nothing is too hard for God, we do not have a need too great for Him to meet nor a problem too complicated for Him to solve. We can never face a foe too strong for Him to conquer. We can never pray a prayer too difficult for Him to answer.

His ways are always above our ways, and when we submit to His will, we experience peace and He builds patience into our lives. Our frailties in His hands become strengths. When Paul repeatedly asked God to remove a physical ailment that was tormenting him, God responded, “My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.” God uses our weakness
to highlight His magnificent power. Just as He helped me speak to those hundreds of pastors in Portland, He will enable you to do more than you could ever imagine.

**God gives us power to proclaim the gospel.**

One important aspect of living a holy life is spreading the good news of God’s love and forgiveness to everyone we meet. Paul writes, “ Everywhere we go, we tell everyone about Christ...I work very hard at this, as I depend on Christ’s mighty power that works within me.”

Each time I am with someone for five minutes or more, I consider it a God-given opportunity to testify of God’s mercy and grace in my life. Whether in an airport, a taxi, or a restaurant, I am prepared to share with others my excitement about my Lord and my love for Him. How can I do this? Because God through His Holy Spirit gives me the power to represent Him.

You may be thinking: Bill Bright is the president of a worldwide organization dedicated to introducing people to Christ. Surely, proclaiming the gospel is easier for him than for me. I could never witness like that.

I am naturally a shy and reserved person, so sharing my faith is sometimes difficult for me. I must continually rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to be a fruitful witness. When I obey God’s command to tell others of Jesus, God makes the experience joyful and meaningful. He reminds me that I am not responsible for convicting the sinner or drawing others to Him. He is. I am just to follow His command in love, concern, and the power of His Holy Spirit.

At Campus Crusade for Christ we have trained millions of believers around the world to share their faith in Christ. We have learned that successful witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ with everyone who will listen, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and leaving the results to God.

**God gives us power to fulfill His plan for our lives.**

God wants to strengthen us so we can serve Him in the fulfillment
of His purposes. That plan includes allowing us the privilege of making an eternal difference in the lives of others. But that is possible only as we come to know God as He really is. He is our God who can do anything through us that He chooses to do: “By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope.”16

If we really believe that God is all-powerful, we will no longer walk in fear and unbelief. We will place our faith in God—not necessarily great faith in God, but rather faith in a great God who is omnipotent. In turn, He will lead us into a life full of adventure and purpose. I have found no better way to live!

Pastor David Jeremiah explains that the unlimited power that raised Jesus Christ from the grave is available to us today:

Most believers give lip service to God but live their lives in their own strength. They operate in their own energy about 80% of the time. Then they have a power outage. You know what a power outage is? It’s going to the doctor and finding out there is something wrong with you that they can’t fix. And realizing that you don’t have control. It’s going into an office where you have been going for 25 years where you feel secure, and getting a pink slip saying that you have been laid off from your job. Now you don’t know what to do. Most of us as believers don’t really touch the power of God until we have our own power outage. Then we discover that when we are weak, God is strong. I tell you that the power of God that was in Jesus Christ is the power that is available to you today. So we, too, can say with the Apostle Paul, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).17

God’s power is something we can trust. Yet God’s character involves much more than power. His strength is used in conjunction with His many other qualities. One of these is the unlimited nature of His knowledge. In the next two chapters, we will learn more about God’s incredible knowledge—and how it affects our lives.
**Life Application**

**Write It On Your Heart**—Commit the following statement and verses to memory. Then as you encounter situations during this week where you are in need of strength, claim these promises by faith.

- Because God is all-powerful, He can help me with anything.
- Philippians 4:13—“I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need.”
- Isaiah 40:29—“[God] gives power to those who are tired and worn out; He offers strength to the weak.”
- 2 Chronicles 16:9—“The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.”

**Count On God**—What difference can God’s power make in a situation you currently face that is beyond your control? Commit your circumstances to Him in prayer and by faith depend on Him to give you strength and to work changes through His mighty power.

**Obey God**—Do you feel incapable of doing something that God wants you to do? Rather than concentrating on your inadequacies, focus on God who “by His mighty power at work within us…is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope” (Ephesians 3:20). By faith, take the steps necessary to do what God is asking of you.