

Power belongs to God

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[0 : 00] Psalm of David, Psalm number 62. The words there in verse 11. God has spoken once and twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God.

Power belongs to God. God is strong or God is powerful. So, by most people today in the society in which we live, God is regarded as being someone who is the very opposite of powerful. He is weak to most people. He is helpless and he is unimportant. For the vast majority of people, God is a nobody. At most, he is the private little idol of people who come to God's house. He has no national and no international significance or importance and he is cast aside by most. He is a convenience, a nice idea, a warm feeling.

Whatever condescending things people will say, they'll say it of God and they'll apply it to him. But he's never described as being powerful.

[1 : 21] It's never said of God by most people that he's a powerful God. But the God that we believe in in the Bible, a God that the Bible tells us about, and the God of truth is a powerful God.

And this psalm explains this, brings it to bear, it opens up this truth about God, that God is powerful. That God alone is powerful.

Five times in the original language of this psalm, the word alone or only is used. And it's said that God alone, David says God alone has this power.

Nobody else has the power. He alone, he stands on his own. He stands, as it were, on a pinnacle, all on his own, for having this power.

He, David says here, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is the only true foundation to life. He is the solid rock. He uses illustrations to describe God's power.

[2 : 25] He is unmovable. He is the perfect support. He's the one that can't fail, or crumble, or give up. David pleads with, maybe even himself and with others, that his salvation must be in God alone.

In verse 1, that he rests in God, that his salvation is in God. And as we go through the psalm, he talks about his protection, being from God. That his hope is in God.

That if he has any honour, it lies from belonging to God. That his fortress is God. The foundation of everything he has and is, is God himself.

It's like the good foundation on a house. A strong rock, a strong foundation on a house. Doesn't just affect the walls and the roof, the basic structure of the house, but it affects everything.

Everything in that house is dependent upon the foundation. Dependent upon the strength of the foundation. Every corner, every nook and cranny, every part of the house, depends upon the strong foundation.

[3 : 34] And so it is with the Christian, with the person who believes in Christ, that the foundation that he offers, is one that affects every part of their lives.

It's not just the big, momentous, important things, but it's the small, tiny, insignificant things. His foundation is a foundation for all, because he is the power, he is the strength, he is the dynamism, behind the Christian life.

And so David here speaks, or the Holy Spirit speaks to David, speaks through David to all of us. Different people, different circumstances, different beliefs. And he speaks surely to individual Christians, in the first place, about God alone, being the power, in the life of the Christian.

And he says there in verse 8, to everyone, trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart before him. Because he is the foundation, because of this truth, David says we need to trust in him, and pour out our hearts to him.

That is his encouragement. And it is him alone. As you sit here this morning as Christians, your hope must be in him alone. He stands as your saviour alone.

[4 : 49] He can't be shared. He's not on a podium with somebody else. He stands alone, unsurpassed, unequalled. He's the sole trustee of your life, and of your soul.

And Jesus Christ is the rock alone. The power is in him alone. It comes from him alone. And in our lives, and in our daily walk, and in our problems, and in our hassles, the strength that we will gain, the strength that we need, comes from him alone.

We'll not find, as Christians, the strength we need in all life's difficulties at home. We'll not find it in our family. We'll not find it on TV.

We'll not find it at work. You see, if we avoid Christ as Christians, if he's not alone, the rock, the foundation of our lives, then we are not being strong.

We're not living as strong Christians and strong people, but we're becoming weaker and weaker. The more we depend on ourselves, the weaker we become. So avoidance from God's house, staying away from God's house and God's people, and away from God's word and prayer, leads to weakness, not strength.

[6 : 07] Our strength as Christians is in Jesus Christ. Do you feel this morning as a Christian like giving up? It's too hard. Then your strength alone for carrying on will come from Christ.

Do I dread getting up in the morning to get ready with a sermon to preach in the pulpit? The only way I'll carry on is by asking God for the strength to get into the pulpit and preach.

You're fed up with the routine of going to God's house every week and the routine of church. Then the only way you'll find the strength to carry on is in Christ.

It's not in anyone else or in anything else. Are you too tired to come out, to come to God's house, to come to prayer meetings or whatever it might be? God alone, on his own, can provide and will provide the strength.

Are you afraid of sharing with others the truth of Christ? Does it make your mouth dry and the roof, the lips, the tongue of your mouth cling to the roof of your mouth, the very thought of speaking about Christ?

[7 : 13] Do you manage to find anything else to speak of except Jesus Christ? The strength for doing it will come from Christ alone. He alone can provide it, looking to Him.

He's the rock, He's the foundation. Are you afraid of commitment to this congregation? Afraid of giving of yourself? Afraid of time? Are you afraid that you can't persevere?

You see old Christians, you think, how on earth have they carried on all their lives? And then you remember that it's only in Christ day by day, with Him as the foundation that you carry on.

Are you afraid in illness? Are you depressed because of your sinfulness and your lack of holiness and the mistakes you make and the errors and the failures? Then the strength to overcome and the strength to cope only comes from Christ.

It's only this Word comes out again and again. It'll not come from me, from anyone else here, from any other area except Jesus Christ and His Word.

[8 : 17] He alone is the power and the motivation and the strength that keeps us going. Single, on His own. We point to Jesus Christ.

He is the only one. David says, trust, trust in Him. Trust in Him at all times. And he says, going on, pour out your hearts to Him.

As Christians, your trust is in Him alone. And he says, it's not good enough just to trust, but to pour out your hearts to Him. It's not just, David explains with his words so beautifully, it's not just a measured little drop, medicine, which we pour out once in a while when it suits us.

It's not just a bit here and there, a little polite, measured amount that we hand over to the Lord. But he says, pour out your hearts completely.

Give Him everything in your prayers and in your life. It's not even a lot of yourself, but pour out everything from your heart to Him. It's an image of overflowing, an image of gushing out, extravagant, pleading to God for help and for strength.

[9 : 30] The rim of your heart is overflowing with requests, pouring out from every area, from wee, little, insignificant things to big, major, important things.

Pouring out over the rim of your heart in prayer to God because He wants to know. He wants to hear you pouring out your heart to Him, everything. Christ is central.

He wants your heart. He wants everything in your heart, all the weakness that you feel. He wants that exploded from your heart so that He can fill you with His strength because in our heart and in our soul and in our minds there's nothing but weakness and there's nothing but mistakes, but God

takes that and we pour it out to Him and we find that our weakness is replaced by His strength and we pour out our hearts in prayer.

That is where we find the strength. That is where we find the power and what importance the Bible and what importance God and what importance David places on prayer, your own prayer, the vitality of your own prayer every day.

Each day your heart's going to be full and God says each day pour out your heart, pour out your heart to me, make your requests known, little trifling and significant things, bring them to me.

[10:47] I need to hear and you need my strength and we are to pray at all times to the Lord for His strength, for His power because He alone can provide it.

He doesn't say pray to anything else but to me because I alone can provide a full heart, a heart full of strength. And it seems sad that in many cases today Christians when they're in times of trouble, when they're in times of problem and difficulty, they decide that they stop coming to God's house, they'll stop coming to prayer meetings, they'll stop reading their Bibles until they sort themselves out and then they'll come back.

But God says no, it's in times of trouble, you need to come. The people here, in a sense it'd be great to see all the hassled and troubled people in the whole area filling this church because it's in God's house and it's in praying and it's in pleading to Him that we'll get strength to help in time of trouble.

It's easy to come when it's all good and it's easy going but God promises help when we're in trouble. David, through the Holy Spirit speaks then to individuals here but surely he also speaks to us as a congregation because in a sense as a congregation we're just one big individual also because we're a body, we're a body of Christ here in Roskeen and the message is to us as a church as well to a congregation that our trust in verse 8 again must be in Him at all times in this church in this body of Christ.

It's in Christ alone that our trust must be and that our strength must be here in Roskeen in this congregation compared with Jesus Christ compared with the Savior compared with the strength that is available to us the power that made the universe the power that guides providence and that knows the end from the beginning the strength that gave you a new heart as a Christian and has implanted eternal life within you compared with that strength we as a congregation are very weak and we're very poor and there's little evidence there's no much evidence of this great strength that Christ has and that Christ offers in comparison with Christ and in comparison with the numbers that are outside there are very few conversions to Jesus Christ in this congregation there are few that are being saved there aren't many there is a massive population outside untouched by the gospel disinterested in Christ unconcerned about their souls there are a whole generation of young people paganized so that they don't know anything about Jesus Christ except that he's a good swear word they don't know and they're not concerned and no one reaches them and meets them at the point of their need we're a congregation as every other congregation is who have struggling Christians who have prayer meetings that are unattended who have ministers that are preaching sermons that are lacking in power and lacking in strength there is no real strength in us unless it's in him alone it's in Christ alone that if we can imagine a corporate heartbeat all of us beating as once then we pour out as a congregation in our heart because we have one heart unified as the body of Christ there's no strength this morning in Roskeen in the congregation just on its own our strength doesn't lie in the beautiful building our strength doesn't lie in the traditions it doesn't lie in the ministry or the eldership or the number of members or the number of people who came forward to the table it doesn't lie in the number that come to God's house every week that's not where our strength and that's not where our security lies and if it does then we're soon going to be chopped down and we're going to be humbled but surely our strength lies and must lie as a congregation of Christ's people in him alone in his foundation in trusting in Jesus Christ never be proud of the numbers because compared with those who are outside there's far too many empty seats as a congregation our trust must be in him and also as a congregation not only as individuals but as a congregation we must pour out our hearts to Jesus Christ our very survival our protection our growth our development our contentment our peace our unity depends upon pouring out our heart to God that is the central message of Christ's kingdom that everything that we are and that we seek to be and that we want to become as a people as a congregation depends on us pouring out our heart our joint completed heart to God we pray to him as a body and we must pour out our heart emotional heart-rending exhausting emptying of ourselves in prayer as a people to God for the progress of this congregation

the prayer meetings must be the engine room

[16:22] the heartbeat of this congregation they must be where the work is done and I'd rather that we attended a prayer meeting a week than our 25 other services because the prayer meeting is the heartbeat of the congregation where we make our requests for the congregation known to God it's where we make our concern for the congregation known where our love for the congregation is seen because we're in prayer together pleading for God to bless this congregation prayer can't be overstressed it can't be said that there's too much it can't be said that we're making too much effort in prayer because there is where we find that our trust grows and our strength grows and our unity and everything else that we ought to be as a body of Christ finds its fulfillment pouring out our hearts to God emptying ourselves and being filled with his strength he speaks to individual

Christians here and also to us as a congregation the Holy Spirit speaks in this psalm about God's power but surely he also speaks to those here this morning who are uncommitted who are unconverted who aren't Christians to unbelievers and the Holy Spirit in this psalm pleads that you'll put your trust in him pleads that you will pour out your heart to him and that you will make your commitment to Jesus Christ and David in this psalm warns the unbeliever against putting your trust in two major things he talks in verses 9 and 10 about the danger of men of low degree are a vanity men of high degree are a lie laid in the balance they are altogether lighter than vanity then he goes on in verse 10 to say if riches increase set not your heart upon them David warns through the power of the Holy Spirit that we don't set our trust and our hope and pouring out our heart and making our foundation on either our fellow men or on riches and there's a danger that we trust and put our commitment and our faith and our fellow men whether they be low born applies to most of us here whether you be high born in the aristocracy whether you're a labourer or a laird whether you're professional or whether you're working with your hands whatever is your career and profession whatever is your group whoever is the people that you're around whoever are those whom you're with at home or at work whatever it is

David through the Holy Spirit Christ says don't put your trust and your hope in them you see you feel relaxed with your group the people that you know and the people that you work with you feel secure with those that you're round about you feel quite happy they've got the same attitudes as you they've got the same likes and dislikes you're relaxed in their company when you're with them you feel secure and you feel strong and you feel just like one of the boys or one of the girls you're just there and you don't have anything to fear that's why pubs are so popular places because people go in and they're immediately in with the crowd they're in with people they know they can talk to people they feel secure they feel happy they don't feel threatened because they're in with their mates and they're in a situation where they are content and secure and they feel like they don't need anything else but God says in that circumstance in that condition with these people don't put your trust in them don't make them your foundation in life because they can't offer you peace they can't offer you the things you need because they're just like you they're the same as you and if you don't have them then they can't offer you the things you look for they can't offer peace of soul they can't offer meaning of life they can't offer eternal security they can't offer a change for your character the forgiveness of your sins they can't offer you control over providence and God alone giving you that gift of new life these people can't offer you your peers the people around you don't trust in them because God says when it comes to making them a foundation for yourselves when it comes to trusting them they're like a breath they're like a vapour they go away and they can't provide you with the strength you need

God alone again we come to this word alone God alone has the power to give you these things and to give you this trust and the support and the foundation and the rock that you need and I speak to the young people to those of you that are at school the same is true for you that you have a secure group which you're with at school your pals your friends and you're happy with them you're contented with them you know what they're going to talk about they talk about boys and about girls and about sport and about music and you're secure with them you're happy in their company and you're content there and you don't need anything else and you don't need God and when you come to church you find you're surrounded by older people and you're surrounded by strange language and strange concepts and the minister rabbiting on about things you don't seem to understand and the minute he starts talking about souls and about heaven and hell and about being secure in life and about sins and you stop listening because you think it's only people that are over 45 that have souls and that when you get older you think about these things but it doesn't apply to me and unless

you particularly speak to my need and speak about things that I can relate to and mention pop groups and mention soap operas on the television then I'm not going to listen because it's irrelevant but surely young people you've got it the wrong way round that you shouldn't be secure in a sense in school but you should feel secure in God's house you've got things the wrong way round because God alone can give you the power and the foundation in which to live you're young and you need a foundation for the future and only God can give it

David wrote this psalm as an older man but he trusted in God he trusted in his Lord as a teenager as a young man as a boy he trusted in God what makes him any different from you he had a soul so of you he needed guidance in life so do you he had sins that needed forgiven so do you even as a youngster you have these things you need your friends in one time or another are going to leave they're going to go on to college go on to get jobs you'll break up you'll not feel secure again because God alone can give you the foundation you need in life you have a soul and you're in dangerous ground if you're not Christ even as a youngster even as a boy and as a girl he can give you newness of life change your character peace forgiveness security even eternal security as a youngster he can give you these things you're not guaranteed long life you haven't a monopoly on old age and becoming old even some of you this week last week have lost friends lost a friend a youngster what guarantee do you have of living on and on and then when you're 45 and you get a soul then you'll think about these things

[24 : 29] Christ David testimony of scripture testimony of your parents and of friends tell you come to Christ when you're young make him the foundation of your life because you can take him with you everywhere you go trust not in men and your fellow men and your fellow children and then finally he says also don't trust in riches don't trust in money and in becoming rich as a foundation for life as a guarantee of strength don't look upon money as the way out the way for giving you strength and security in life the bible reminds us and we know it all what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and lose his soul they can't be compared money doesn't have the answers to the needs of your soul and the needs of mine we only need to think maybe it's wrong but we're reminded of Robert Maxwell the man with everything that money could buy and yet he like the poorest insignificant unemployed person is under the power of death and is taken beyond his control sterling the pound is strong one day it's weak the next overtime is wiped out jobs come to an end the bank collapses the strength of money and power that we gain is wiped out in an instant by circumstances beyond our control at best a lot of money in a big account will only make you powerful in your own eyes or possibly in the eyes of those who have sold their souls to money but money can't give you security and can't give you peace in life the rich people stand alone with their souls they stand alone with the uncertain future they stand alone in illness and with fears and with unforgiven sin and without a foundation in their lives that will take them into eternity money can't buy a new heart money can't forgive your sin or give you eternal life

God can't be silenced by the checkbook we ought to know that we ought to have that lesson in our hearts look at the pharaohs they took everything with them in these beautiful big pyramids because they thought money would be going but their money is still there and it's still been found God says in Christ to us all pour out your heart to me pour out your troubles pour out your weaknesses your fears your unbelief your lack of faith your atheism pour it all out to me and I will fill your life and your heart and your soul with strength you will get eternal life you will get forgiveness of sin you will be well founded God alone is the foundation he alone is the rock he alone can give what you need in your life new heart and new hope eternal life because

I alone have the power and God willing next week hopefully we'll look at the second part of this which is that to God belongeth mercy Amen let us pray Gracious God we ask that you would take your word and that it would not be a word that is with clever or diverse arguments but is in the power and in the strength of the Holy Spirit and we pray that more and more as we preach and as we live and as we develop and as we grow as Christians that our strength and that our power would not be in ourselves and not in techniques and not in attractive presentations of things primarily but in the gospel power of Jesus Christ and in his ability to open hearts that we can't get near Gracious God we pray for the blinded eyes to be seeing today for the deaf ears to be hearing and for Christians to be upheld and uplifted and strengthened be with us throughout this day may we consider good things and consider the Lord's day and honour him in it and to do with it what we ought to in the name of Jesus Christ we pray
Amen Amen