**The “*Power”* Points is a teaching summary**

**from the classes of Grace Bible Church of PA**

**Taught by Pastor/Teacher Ed Rish**

**From Sunday, December 11, 2011**

**Doctrine in the Soul of One Believer Provides Refreshment for Others**

As always we thank our GOD and FATHER for the privilege to gather together with members of the royal family to receive the Word of GOD. It’s His grace that sustains and strengthens believers to rise above the challenges this world presents. Therefore Isaiah writes in **Isa. 26:4 Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord, we have an everlasting Rock.**

The Lord was the rock that followed the Jews every day in the wilderness. The Lord is our strength today as well. Having this assurance eliminates fear. The LORD GOD said through the prophet Isaiah in ***Isa. 41:10 Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.*** The hand that upheld Israel in the Old Testament is the same hand that upholds believers today. In the world there is tribulation. Inside these bodies there is the flesh that constantly wars against the spirit. At times it seems like life is a constant struggle. And there are the forces of darkness whose objective is to rob believers of that peace GOD calls every believer to.

On the other hand there is the righteous right hand of GOD. There is power in the hand of GOD which no power in the universe can stand against. This power is an everlasting foundation. In the Old Testament, the walls of a city provided the saints with a foundation of safety and security. Today believers have that foundation of safety and security inside the plan of GOD. The plan of GOD for church age believers is a type of dwelling place that separates believers from the world and from satan. It’s a place where the power of GOD acts as a shield and a sword. In the Old Testament the war was visible, the enemy was visible, and the weapons were visible. Today the war, the enemy, and the weapons are invisible. Paul wrote in ***2 Cor. 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.***

However the power that delivers believers is still the same omnipotent power of GOD. The weapon today is the Word of GOD in the souls of believers. The fortress is the soul that becomes a fortress built on divine power. GOD is the One and only GOD. He is the same GOD who brought about the victory in the Old Testament. He brings about the victory today as well. The victory is not a visible victory because it takes place in the soul. And blessed are the believers who rely on GOD for their strength.

We’ve been noting the attack of Gnosticism and legalism against believers in the Lycus Valley. As a result Epaphras, the pastor/teacher to the church at Colossae travelled to Rome to consult with Paul on the matter. This is what prompted Paul’s letter to the Colossians. The doctrine contained in the letter is designed to take believers from reversionism back on the road to maturity. Spiritual growth through Bible doctrine resident in the soul inside the plan of GOD provides the ingredients for victory. It’s a victory not by means of strength of might, but by means of strength of thought. The right arm of The LORD is the doctrine in the soul. A soul filled with doctrine is the believer’s promised land. It’s the doctrine and the power of GOD The HOLY SPIRIT that drives out the inhabitants of evil thinking, fear, and deception. It’s the doctrine that changes lives.

Paul’s letter to the Colossians led us to a study on a man by the name of Onesimus, a man whose life was drastically changed by the power of the Word of GOD. Paul describes Onesimus as a beloved and faithful brother. Onesimus ministered to Paul during Paul’s 1st imprisonment in Rome. But before Onesimus came to Rome, he served as a slave under Philemon. Philemon was a mature believer who lived at Colossae. Onesimus stole from Philemon and ran away. He ended up in Rome. This is where he became saved through the apostle Paul and grew up spiritually. There are times when certain events occur in a person’s life that causes him to see his need for GOD. Often times these events are painful.

Paul’s letter to Philemon was written on behalf of Onesimus. In Paul’s letter to the Colossians we saw that Paul was sending Onesimus back to Philemon. Onesimus would be delivering Paul’s letter. How Philemon deals with the situation has the potential for impact in their geographical area. Under Roman law Philemon has the right to severely punish Onesimus. But as a believer in The LORD JESUS CHRIST he is subject to a much higher law, the law of grace. (***Phil. 10-16)***.

Last time we noted that the grace and love of GOD has the power to change people. Bible doctrine resident in the soul of one man became a blessing to Paul in Paul’s time of need. The name Onesimus means useful or profitable. It was doctrine in the soul of Onesimus that profited both him and Paul. Paul wrote in ***1 Tim. 4:8 Godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.*** Godliness is living the spiritual life. Its residence, function, and momentum inside the pre-designed plan of GOD. Here we see that Godliness makes men profitable. As a result, Philemon will profit as well. Although Paul has the authority to keep Onesimus in Rome, the higher authority is the law of grace.

Operating in grace is always the right way. Recall Paul’s words in ***Rom. 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*** It’s GOD who causes all things to work together for good, but not to every believer. GOD causes all things to work together for good to those believers who love GOD. Believers who personally love GOD are those who come to know Him through the Word of GOD and keep His commands. The LORD JESUS CHRIST said in ***John 14:15 If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*** As a mature, believer, Philemon has love for GOD. Love for GOD motivates love for others. Based on this we can assume that Philemon will deal with Onesimus in grace. Philemon will be getting back not just a slave, but a beloved brother (a man who shares the same system of thinking). Onesimus gets his freedom and goes on to serve GOD. Paul’s soul is refreshed by the grace act of someone close to him.