

# Power in Perilous Times

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This booklet was created from a message preached by Pastor Stevens.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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## INTRODUCTION

Pressure is predestined by God to reveal our character. Things were planned billions of years ago to show how you would react in relationship to what you have been taught.

We are taught the Word of God. It is imparted to us, and then come the tests. These are the Last Days. America is in a state of backsliding. The fiery pulpits that made her great have been neutralized by complacency and familiarity with God and His Word.

During these times, God is developing a remnant among His people. This remnant consists of absolutely mature believers. Christians such as these possess great mental attitudes and waste no words. This group of believers, by their prayers and their testimonies, will hold back judgment upon nations.

God desires to raise up more people committed to His Word and His work. He wants believers who will not surrender to carnality and

lazy spiritual practices when temptations and pressures come.

This booklet is written to reveal the power available to Christians who live Christ-centered lives. Perilous times have come, and the Lord needs men and women who are expert in warfare and totally available to Christ.

## Chapter One

# THE PRICE OF POWER

“O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

“A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

“For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matthew 12:34-37).

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way” (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

What do you believe about victory?

What do you really believe about obedience?

What does it mean in Matthew 12 where

Jesus Christ tells us that we will have to give an account for every idle word that we speak?

Many things are being recorded in eternity. Our words are among them. In eternity, there will be a time when books will be opened. The pages turned will contain details of conversations and behavior. Precise, accurate accounts shall be read.

Iniquity is at work. It affects people, causing them to lose control of their evaluations, their ideas, and their reactions. Victory and power are directly related to our obedience to the Word of God.

We see a decided tilt happening. A yielding to what the world wants is infiltrating churches. Conservative and fundamental thinking is labeled as backward and out of touch.

My Bible says this:

“For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

“But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (1 Peter 1:24-25).

The Word of the Lord is what shall stand. It shall never return void.

There really is no excuse for living in contin-

ual carnality. Secret sins and heinous hypocrisy go on, and the power of God wanes in people's lives. Partial obedience brings nothing to pass. It just hinders the work of the Lord. Entanglements and dishonesty have corrupted businesses, families, and, ultimately, congregations.

Temporal value systems cannot produce eternal results.

### Actions That Bring Victory

More than ever, I sense a need to enter into real obedience. Some things, Jesus told us, will not go but by prayer and fasting. For weeks at a time, my wife and I commit ourselves to times of intense prayer and fasting.

Why?

We desire power from God. Something serious is happening in our churches. Demonic attacks progress, and spiritual advancement is thwarted. Strongholds are thrown up by the enemy of our faith. Intensified, atmospheric interference is upon us. Perilous times, powerful assaults, tremendous oppressions: They are a part of our life now. People and personalities and workers and leaders are being affected. But no one wants to point to the real problem. It is demonic, and we have to take up the spiritual



weapons God has given us. Carnal responses will not work.

We need victory, we need discernment, and we need to recognize the authority God has given by grace through our faith.

Prayer and fasting: These things make a difference. We have seen it.

## Chapter Two

# POWER THROUGH DISCERNMENT

“My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

“Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment.

“How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet?

“For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge” (Jeremiah 4:19-22).

Please don't take this wrong. I am just trying to offer you a little help in walking with God. I have a bit of experience, and perhaps my expe-

rience—more than four decades worth—can be of some benefit to you.

We need discernment. This is a great ability that the Spirit gives to people who commit themselves to receiving the truth, line upon line and precept upon precept. For example, Christians should have discernment about the tone that presents itself during a specific church service. On communion nights, I am very quiet and reverent. Someone may sing as we are passing out the elements for this celebration, but I don't clap at the end of those songs. My mind goes to imagining what it was like at the Cross. I picture the nail scars and the crown of thorns. I want God to help me visualize the angry mob and the Roman soldiers, with all of their authoritative stances. So I am very solemn in these moments.

That is discernment. There is a sacred tone that surrounds communion time when it is celebrated in the right way.

In these perilous times, we want to have the faith that heaven has for us. The kingdoms of this world are going to go because the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ will be established.

God promotes those who are able to discern the hour. Pressure will come. The angelic conflict will rage on. As this happens, humble believers

learn discernment. They learn how to make right choices. They implement the truth that they have been taught.

### Good Choices, Good Emotions

“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

“For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

“I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jeremiah 17:7-10).

“Reins” refers to the kidneys. Here, the word speaks of how human emotions respond in certain ways. The kidneys in our physical bodies do the important function of separating water and waste products from the blood stream. If there is a problem with our kidneys, then our blood supply becomes toxic.

The kidneys in our bodies discern the good

and the bad. They keep what's vital and beneficial for us and then purge out what is unnecessary and harmful.

In our emotional structure, wrong attitudes can back up and create troubles that linger so much longer than they should. What is the problem? There is a lack of discernment. Discernment only comes from learning the Word of God and living in the filling of the Spirit.

Terrible emotions are simply emotions that are out of control. Like bad kidneys, bad emotions cannot regulate what is being received. They are not separating out the good initiations from the bad initiations. Reactions are a choice. I can choose what God declares about me and my circumstance, or I can choose negative thought patterns and negative attitudes.

The tests God allows into my life reveal the extent of my discernment. Do I have a proper emotional function? That will be found out.

David had such confidence from his walk with God that he challenged the Lord. I think God loves that, but be careful! I believe that God will take us up on any such offer. Be sure you are ready if you pray a prayer such as the one found in Psalm 26:

“Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in

mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD;  
therefore I shall not slide.

“Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try  
my reins and my heart.

“For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes:  
and I have walked in thy truth” (Psalm 26:1-3).

## Chapter Three

# POWER TO STAND FIRM

“I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

“I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

“Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Psalm 16:7-11).

It is important for me to implement what I hear from God, whether it is from the pulpit or from the Word or from a good spiritual book. The counsels of God can dwell richly in me. I should make a nice home in my heart for truth.

Truth should live the good life inside my heart. There should be no skeletons in my closets. That will be the case when I stay confessed up to date, I recognize my weaknesses, and I am quick to respond to the truth as I hear it.

In the home I am making for truth in my heart, there should be melodies—specific and well-written hymns and psalms and spiritual songs. A choir—“God’s Grace Choir”—should live in me. The voices in that choir are love, mercy, peace, kindness, gentleness, meekness, and joy.

When the love of God dwells richly in me, I am not moved by the perilous things going on around me. In fact, out of me flows compassion—a compassion that makes a difference (Jude 22). 1 John 3:17 tells us that there are some who shut up their bowels of compassion. Love does not dwell richly in their hearts.

God gives us great provisions for what we encounter. Hear the messages God is giving to you in church. Read your Bible carefully and consistently. Ask the Holy Spirit to open up its mysteries to you and watch what happens. God always honors that prayer when it is a prayer from a humble heart.

Believe what God says. Especially believe



what He says about you. It is all true—every word of it. Get it. Keep it. Live by it. Stand upon it.

### Set Your Mind on Truth

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:2).

We are going to enter into some unbelievable days in the next few years. Things will happen that we will never be able to understand. Really, we have seen nothing yet. No one gets out of this world alive, unless the Rapture takes us.

Any intelligent, objective believer needs revival every day. Know God, love God, and be intimate with God. Let the Book be your foundation.

We preachers are most accountable during this era. We have to preach it just as it is. We cannot sugarcoat the reality of what’s happening in our culture. TV, movies, sports, and music: Every segment of society is becoming more and more seductive. The air is charged with demonic energy.

Our churches need to know how it is. Hard things need to be said. Congregations have to be taught and made ready for the angelic conflict.

Job was in the middle of an angelic conflict,

and he endured some very perilous personal times. He stood upon the truth of Job 19:25-26: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

In his heart and mind, Job knew his Redeemer was alive and that the Redeemer would reign upon this earth. His difficulties were hard on him. He complained, he questioned, he staggered. Still, Job never forgot the truth about his Redeemer. He clung to the reality that he would see God.

Job retained his integrity. He stood on truth and ultimately let truth set him free. And then came blessing upon blessing for him.

## CONCLUSION

Perilous times are here. The Church needs power, but some of her parts are trying to get it in all the wrong ways. Spiritual power cannot be contrived. Hypocrisy is always revealed in the light.

We need to pray. We need to fast. We need to study to be quiet. Objectivity must rule in our frame of reference. Let's be careful with our words. Our expressions can really influence people in certain ways. We need to be in the right places at the right times. By that, I mean that God's people should be in God's house whenever possible. God has a lot to say to us. Let's do things God's way and grow, grow, grow. Watch how the process goes: faith, honor, obedience, objectivity, conviction. Oh, how the world needs to see these characteristics in mature believers.

It is our call to be so prepared for the host of demons that will come at us. We need to resist them and then they will flee.

As a ministry, it is time for us to say some things:

Lord, we're going to be right.

We are going to think right.

We're going to respond properly.

We're going to be positive toward the Word.

We are going forward without secret sins, without hidden motives, without looking back. Surely, we all have flaws and hidden motives. But may we discern the hour. As we reverence the presence of the Lord, may You revive us in Your compassion, according to Your mercy.

Send down Your power, oh, Lord. We so need it in this perilous hour. In Jesus' name, Amen.