

**Sermon or Lesson: Ephesians 1:18-20** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: God Is Not Done Using His Resurrection Power

INTRO: As we think about the resurrection on Easter morning some 2,000 years ago, it is interesting to study this event from the perspective of God's use of His power.

[Lesson Question: What are the circumstances leading up to the situation in which Jesus' body is in the tomb just prior to dawn on Sunday morning?]

SECTION POINT: When Jesus' body lay in the tomb up until the dawn on Sunday morning, the situation was a total defeat for His followers and a terminal end to their religious movement.

The situation leading up to Jesus' body being in the tomb:

- - Jesus was brutally tortured and excruciatingly crucified on a cross. (Matthew 27:26-31)
- - He was confirmed quite dead by a spear thrust up into His side. (John 19:33-35)
- - His body was wrapped in clean linen cloth. (Matthew 27:59)
- - He died on Friday afternoon at about 3 p.m. (1500 hours), lay dead through all day Saturday until dawn Sunday morning. (Matthew 27:46-50; 28:1)
- - His body was sealed in a small chamber tomb that had been carved out of solid rock. (Matthew 27:60, 66)
- - A heavy stone sat in front of the opening. (Matthew 27:60)
- - Armed soldiers were guarding the tomb. (Matthew 27:66)
  
- - To His bewildered and stunned disciples, at that point it was a devastating fatal disaster and major catastrophe.
- - Furthermore, it was an abrupt terminal end to their religious movement.
- - Overall, it was an impossible situation, total defeat.

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[Lesson Question: In what manner did God do His mighty work, using His power to raise Jesus?]

SECTION POINT: But then God used His mighty power to raise Jesus from the dead, and thereby also raising their religious movement to new life.

- - Quietly behind-the-scene, God did His mighty work, using His power to raise Jesus.
  - - God did this out of sight - there was no audience.
  - - It was a quiet working of His power, with no fanfare.
  - - This working of His power was implemented at a time of God's choosing.
  - - This working of His power was not openly displayed, but there is distinct subsequent evidence of His power.
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TRANSITION: In His own way, in His own time, God brought new life out of a hopeless disastrous defeat. But, God is not done using His resurrection power. He makes it available for us even today.

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READ: Ephesians 1:18-20

[Lesson Question: What does it mean "that you may know" God's power? (v.18)]

SECTION POINT: God's power is available "that you may know" it. (v.18)

- - "To know" means to "see" it for yourself, to "know" or experience it first-hand, personally. (from Strong's #1492)
  - - The context indicates that God makes available this experiential "knowing" - it is accessible. (see vv.17-19)
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[Lesson Question: What do the words "incomparably great" indicate or imply about God's power? (v.19)]

SECTION POINT: God's power that is available is "incomparably great". (v.19)

"incomparably" = Strong's #5235 "surpassing; to throw beyond the usual mark, i.e. (figuratively) to surpass"; "incomparably" - (AHD) "Being such that comparison is impossible; incommensurable; So outstanding as to be beyond comparison; unsurpassed."

- - As indicated in this passage, "His incomparably great power" is one of the things that we can experientially "know".
  - - His "great" power that we can know goes beyond normal, i.e. it is supernatural - in its greatness, in its nature, in its "magnitude". (Strong's #3174)
  - - By implication from the passage context, God uses His supernatural "incomparably great power" for the good and benefit of those He uses it on or in.
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[Lesson Question: What does the phrase "for us who believe" (v.19) indicate about conditions God has for accessing His power?]

SECTION POINT: God's power is specifically "for us who believe". (v.19)

- - God's power is available to the average believer. (vv.19,15)
  - - This implies God specifically and individually designs and customizes His power for us personally.
  - - This implies God carefully and masterfully applies His power in us.
  - - But by extension, God's power is not available to those who do not believe - those who have not placed their faith in Jesus to apply His sacrificial death on the cross to pay the penalty for their personal sins.
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[Lesson Question: What is the nature and the dynamic of the use of the power being referred to in verses 19-20, where it states God's power is "like the working of his mighty strength" (v.19), "which he exerted when he raised [Jesus] from the dead" (v.20)?]

SECTION POINT: God's power being described here is of the nature that it raises or resurrects us to be victorious over being a slave to sin - being alive to righteous living rather than being dead to enslaving sinful living.

- - The word "like" (v.19) in the Greek has the meaning that this power comes down in relation to or according to that with which it is being applied to. (from Strong's #2596)
- - The "like" kind of power being described in this passage that God makes available to us living believers is not the exact kind that resurrects a dead body back to life.
- - Instead, this power is the kind that raises us believers while we are living to "walk in newness of life". (Romans 6:4 KJV, Strong's #4043, #2538)
- - We are allowed access to His power that will enable us to no longer live being dead in our sins, a slave to "gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature". (from Ephesians 2:1,3,5)
- - But instead we are being made into a new creation, in a sense being resurrected "to be like God in true righteousness and holiness". (v.4:24)
- - God makes His resurrection-like power available to us believers, to assist us in gaining victory over and defeat of our "sinful" "cravings", "desires", and "thoughts". (v.2:3)

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BIG IDEA: In His own way, in His own time, God is wanting to bring new life out of your hopeless situation, the disastrous moral defeats that your sinful nature is producing in your life. God is not done using His resurrection-like power. He makes it available for you who are a believer even today.

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#### IMPLICATIONS:

Obviously, God has conditions for using His resurrection-like power, because "the eyes of your heart " need to be "enlightened in order that you may know" (v.18) "His incomparably great power" (v.19).

[Lesson Question: Why do you suppose most believers are not accessing God's power to produce the righteous life God desires? (v.4:24)]

Logically, most believers do not access God's power because:

- - They do not know how to correctly access His power.
- - Or they do not want to access His power.
- - Or they are waiting for it to happen on its own, like a random lightening bolt from heaven.

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#### APPLICATIONS:

- - Where are you at in terms of successfully accessing God's resurrection-like power that He is making available to you as a believer in Jesus?

- - You don't know how?

- - You don't want to?

- - You are waiting for spiritual lightening to strike?

- - What are you, who are a believer in Jesus, going to do about this shortcoming, not effectively drawing on God's power for righteous and holy living?

- - Do nothing?

- - Try to fake it?

- - Try to access it improperly?

- - Give up trying?

- - Or instead, research it and pursue it?

[CLUE: The biblical answer to how to successfully access God's resurrection-like power for new righteous living can be accomplished by doing properly what is prescribed in these following key verses: 1 John 1:9 and Romans 6:11-13, which is repenting, confessing sins and yielding control of your life to God in prayer daily, refraining from engaging in sinfulness, and pursuing engaging in righteousness.]

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