

# Power Through God's Spirit

by C.I. Scofield

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of relying on the power of the Holy Spirit for Christian work and victories, rather than human sources of power such as organization, intellectual training, and money.*

**Scripture:** Zechariah 4:6, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 2:4, Ephesians 3:16, 2 Timothy 1:7

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Christian Victory"

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## Description

C.I. Scofield preaches on the vision of Zechariah, emphasizing the importance of understanding that true power and victory come not from human might, power, or resources, but solely through the Spirit of God. The lesson highlights the significance of exalting Christ through the power of the Spirit, amidst the distractions of relying on organization, intellectual training, and money in Christian work. It warns against the danger of neglecting the foundational truth that Christian victories are achieved only through God's Spirit, not through human efforts or resources.

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## Transcript

(Zech. iv:1-10.)

I. The Analysis.

1. The prophet's vision (verses 1-3). 2. The angelic explanation (verses 4-6). 4. The exaltation of the headstone (verse 7). 5. The comforting promise (verses 8-10).

II. The Heart of the Lesson.

The lesson is full of precious things of God and of Christ, but scholar and teacher must choose between teaching the lesson of the candlestick, the olive trees and the headstone, and teaching the truth embodied in the lesson title, "Power through God's Spirit," which is also the truth of the golden text: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

It is not meant that the two parts of the lesson are in conflict--far be the thought--but only that in the candlestick and the headstone we have two precious types of Christ, while the latter part of the lesson the thought is more upon the Spirit.

But this very difficulty suggests that underlying truth which is the heart of the lesson--the truth, namely, that Christ, the Candlestick and the Head Stone is to be brought forth and exalted only through the power

of the Spirit.

So much, in our day, is said and printed concerning the Holy Spirit that the mighty word by Zechariah, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord," is in danger of becoming a mere cant phrase--a mere platitude of modern religious life. We answer, "Of course--who does not know that?" but we go on, nevertheless, in methods which assume that Christian victories are to be won by might and power and by God's Spirit. We forget the "not by," and the "but by."

It is no uncharity to say that in Christian work we all depend to-day chiefly upon three sources of power other than the Spirit of God.

The first of these is organization. To the simple apostolic and inspired organization, the local church, we have added an infinitude of purely human devices. We have gathered numbers of churches, sometimes many thousands of them, into a something which we call a church. Still building, we have equipped our "church" with from three to eleven boards or societies, and with a multitude of smaller groupings of churches according to local contiguity or convenience, and each of these groupings has from two to eight officers.

Invading, then, the local churches themselves, we have organized a bewildering system of societies, committees, treasurers, chairmen, etc., etc. We have thus sophisticated the divine order and model because we believe in all good faith that power and efficiency will be thus increased.

The second source of power other than the Spirit of God upon which we chiefly depend is, intellectual training. We have said, with the pagan, "Knowledge is power." We have said, and, through our religious journals are constantly saying that what we need for greater efficiency is a more highly trained ministry; and, by that phrase we mean a ministry with a better equipment of learning. We verily believe our ministers will have more Christian efficiency--more power for God--if we teach them more things drawn, not at all from Scripture, nor from centuries of Christian experience, but from the latest hypotheses of men of science, the latest guesses of psychology, as to what the inner phenomena of life are, the latest proposals for the amelioration of the hard conditions of the present social order.

And the third source of power to which we seek with far more of faith and persistency than to the Spirit of God, is money. We verily do believe that if we had money enough we could convert the world. It has been recently gravely stated, and in an influential quarter, that we may not in the future hope to secure for the foreign field the "best equipped men and women" unless we "bravely face the fact" that they must be offered as much more money than they can earn at home as the perils of climate, discomforts and deprivations of intellectual and social opportunities weigh against the choice of the foreign field.

No sane person undervalues training, but many sane persons overvalue it as a source of power. Money is, indeed, in some sort, absolutely essential to the prosecution of extended Christian enterprises--but it is never a source of power. Organization is necessary--as witness the organization of the primitive Christian life into assemblies--but organization is never power. When these, in utter subordination and abnegation, are put into the hands of the Spirit He may and will use them for the manifestation of His power.

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