6. Walk in the Presence and Power of Jesus Every Day

Have you ever noticed how young kids will watch commercials with enthusiasm and maximum believe-ability. One of my kids loved those infomercials when he was little and begged us to buy a Roomba robot for cleaning our floors.
He was captivated by those commercials. (*They do own one today!)*

Have you ever come away from watching some commercials with a low level of depression? The happy-go-lucky, beautiful people that were using the product they were selling can make you feel less than, incomplete, not as cool as you used to be. Like you got the short end of the stick in life.

Modern marketing methods condition us to think we have areas lacking in our lives. Almost every advertisement we see or hear is intended to sell us something by inferring we lack what their product or service can deliver.

And sometimes we build up a resistance and a skepticism to these kinds of marketing messages. We do it for self-preservation. Who wants to feel like a doofus after watching these commercials?

But sometimes when we do that, we can unintentionally hold other messages of optimism with guarded skepticism. When we hear truths from God intended to inspire us to new heights and to new levels of joy and impact we can turn the volume down or change the channel in our hearts to avoid feeling like we won't ever measure up. That's just not us.

This morning, I want to encourage you to not change the channel and don't turn the volume down because…

Truly, one of the Lord's greatest desires for us is that we
Walk In The Presence And Power Of Jesus <u>Every Day!</u>

We started this series dropped into the River of Sanctification in our 'Kayak of Life.' Thus begins the adventure of a life with Jesus living in you. This River is mysterious and continually changes, where God is committed to shaping and molding us to become more like Jesus. We talked about what God has done for us, what God allows, and what he is doing, and then what we are doing, --our part in this great transformation.
In the midst of all these tributaries and changing waters we have the freedom to choose how we respond, and what we will do for our own growth, renewal, and impact. We have the choice to turn around and see Jesus paddling with us.
He will never leave us.

We talked about getting ready to Walk in the Presence and Power of Jesus.
Walking in the Light with the Indwelling Christ, Walking in the Spirit, Keeping in step with the Spirit, Being Filled with the Spirit, and Abiding in Christ, --staying close to Jesus and bearing much fruit.

But how can we do this Every Day? Is it even realistic? Is it even possible?
<u>I believe it is possible</u>, but before we dig again, Let's Pray.

Today, as we reach the finale of this series, our focus is on Walking and the Presence and Power of Jesus <u>Every Day.</u>

First, we can do this…
#1. By Clothing Ourselves with Christ (Rom 13:11-14; Col.3:12-14)
(Living like who you really are!)

Sometimes when we get up in the morning after a wild and crazy dream, we shake our heads and wonder where am I? Or sometimes when we're on vacation and sleeping somewhere other than our own bed, we wake up and ask the same thing, wait a minute, where am I? But then, when we get our bearings, and slip out of bed, the first thing we need to do is put on our Jesus Clothes. To Remind Us Of Who We Are!

Listen to what Paul writes to the Romans about this very idea in ch.13…

11 And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to ***wake up from your slumber****, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.
So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and ***put on*** ***the armor of light.***

13 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.

14 Rather, ***clothe yourselves*** ***with the Lord Jesus Christ****,*
and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh. (Rom. 13:14)

Put on your Jesus clothes! Jesus hoodie, Jesus Jacket…?

We all have a story, with a past, a present, and a future.

Paul is challenging us to Live our story in the Present, "*understanding the present time."*

Wake up from your slumber: **this is a dream like state, outside of the True Present, a place where we often live in our past. A past living in the flesh, in our own strength, without Jesus.**

Sometimes we drift there when we feel overwhelmed in the present.
When the present doesn't appear to be our friend.
We can drift into an almost 'Denial-Like' state, reverting to past thoughts and behaviors.

This is like the 'mental equivalent' of 'Comfort Food.'

But Paul says to us to Wake Up! Wake Up from this slumber.
You don't need Emotional Comfort Food!

because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

Jesus is coming again and we are closer today than when we first believed in Jesus.
This is Thrilling News, --Not Chilling News!

He says
12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.
(the day is the second coming!)
So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and ***put on*** ***the armor of light.***

He says Put on the Armor of Light Today! This Armor is different that Eph 6, the full armor of God. This is Clothing yourselves with who you really are, Today in the Present! Not the past you.
Look at v.14
*14 Rather, **clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ**,*
and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh. (Rom. 13:14)

Uniform… put on the uniform of Who You are Today. Clothing ourselves with the Lord Jesus, to do the work of Jesus.
Consciously putting on our Team Jesus Jersey! Consciously living the Jesus Way.

Putting on the Jesus Jacket!
Everyday wearing the Team Jesus Jersey.

What does it look like to put on the Lord Jesus? To wear the jersey?
Notice what Paul writes to the Colossians in chapter 3.

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved,
***clothe yourselves** with: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

This is who you are now! Live like this, put these accessories on! Clothe yourself with them.
These sound a lot like the Fruit of the Spirit.

We display the Fruit of the Spirit when we Walk in the Spirit, holding onto the Spirit's hand, being Led by the Spirit, Keeping in Step with the Spirit.

Look at v.13…
13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

I believe we look a lot like Jesus when we forgive others who have wronged us.

Who does unforgiveness hurt the most? –Those who don't forgive!
When we withhold forgiveness, it's like corrosion in our soul. But when we forgive, as the Lord forgives us, the internal corrosion is washed away.

Notice the final accessory that we are to put on…
14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

This sounds a lot like the New Commandment to Love One Another.

We can Walk in the Presence and Power of Jesus Every Day…
#1. By Clothing Ourselves with Christ

We can also do this Every Day…
#2. By Praying without Ceasing
16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
(I Thess. 5:16-18).

To Walk in the Presence and Power of Jesus Every Day requires us to:

Pray Without Ceasing. Pray Continually, Never stop praying,

Gr. Adioleiptos (incessantly,without intermission, Keep the conversation going.

Brother Lawrence has said:
"To think that we must abandon conversation with Him in order to deal with our day-to-day tasks is erroneous."

This seems like an almost Herculean task, next to impossible…
Our common prayer patterns: praying in the morning for a devotional time with the Lord. Praying before meals. Sometimes praying at bedtime.

But what about all the in-between time? Is it even rational or practical to think we can pray without ceasing?

Brother Lawrence said:

- Whether working in the kitchen or the shoe repair shop, he rejoiced in even the smallest tasks because he was conscious of the presence of God. Talking with Him throughout the day.

- He said, In the beginning, he declared that a little extra effort was needed to form the habit of continuously conversing with God, telling him everything that was happening.

- However, after a little careful practice, God's love refreshed him, and it all became quite easy.

I would love to say this is now "Easy For Me."
It's not easy, *BUT* it's getting better.

Have you ever been on a conference call? In the days before Zoom, when I served on the board of trustees for Western Seminary, we would often have meetings on a conference call. Most of us were located around the country and we would punch in a code and get on the same call with one another. Sometimes there would be 10 of us on a call. Those were always a challenge to listen closely, to variety of voices.

Today because of Zoom, we rarely do conference calls. But on our Elder Board, we sometimes have one of us out of town and so they would call into my cell phone and I would put my phone in the middle of the table on speakerphone, where we all could hear them and they could hear us.

It wasn't perfect, but it seemed to work OK. My big problem was they were often very quiet and I would sometimes forget they were even on the call. The rest of us were in the room, actively engaging with one another. Every once in a while, they would pipe up and say something. Or someone on the team would ask them a question and I would think "oh ya, I forgot about them!"

To pray without ceasing is almost like having the Lord on your cell speakerphone all the time.
So no matter what you're doing or where you are, you can talk to him and you know he's listening.
Wouldn't that be great if every time we looked at our cell phone we thought about talking with the Lord on speakerphone, praying without ceasing? Leaving the call on speakerphone… all day!

In Philippians 4, Paul gives us similar council…
*[6] Do not be anxious about anything, **but in every situation**,*
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

He's telling us to pray <u>in all things</u>, <u>in everything</u>, <u>in every situation</u>, with thanksgiving, to present our requests to the Lord.

Look at the results when we do that, when we pray without ceasing, when we pray in every situation…

7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6-7)

<u>This is peace that goes beyond rational understanding.</u>
It is a deep heart-saturating peace that permeates our souls.

When you: Know Prayer, You Know Peace
When there is: No Prayer, There is No Peace

We Walk in the Presence and Power of Jesus Every Day
#2. By Praying Without Ceasing, in every situation.

We Walk in the Presence and Power of Jesus Every Day.
#3. By Fully Relying on *His* Divine Power (2 Peter 1:3, Acts 1:8, Eph. 6:10)

--His Supernatural Strength, His Energy, His Might.

When I was in junior high, every year in PE we had to do the presidents physical fitness test. One of the last things on that test was running a mile.
I had never run a mile before. No one ever made me and I was not internally motivated to go out and run a mile on my own.

But I can still remember running that mile, it was four laps around the track, and that fourth lap was really, really hard. I wasn't sure I was going to make it that final stretch. Then off to my side I noticed another student who already finished, running up to me and began running alongside me. I didn't really know him well, but he began to say "You can do this." "Just keep running like you're going to fall forward, but don't fall." So I started doing that and before I knew it, I crossed the finish line!

It was quite an accomplishment for me, a kid who grew up on the chubby side, and somewhat out of shape. But you know, it took human effort to run that mile, I wasn't a believer. I didn't ask God to give me divine strength. I ran as I best knew how with my own effort.

For us today, in living out the life of faith, a life following Jesus, being faithful to living Jesus's way, --God never intended for us to gut it out like I did in running that junior high mile.

He's called us to follow Jesus, but do it with His strength,
with His Divine Power flowing through us.

Listen to what Peter writes to the church in 2 Peter 1…

His divine power has given us <u>everything we need for a godly life</u> through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.
(2 Peter 1:3 NIV)

You and I have every resource we need to live out our faith, with unlimited power flowing from God to us and through us.
I don't know about you, but I forget that and fall into Junior High Miler-Mode far too often.
I'm stressing out, I'm gutting it out, I'm the one over caffeinating and getting it done in my own strength.

I forget that…

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life

Do you know that? Do you believe that?

In Acts 1, before Jesus ascended back into heaven, he gave a promise to all the disciples gathered there with him. He said:

*But **you will** receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;*
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Well it's 2000 years later, did this actually come true? Did they receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them? Of course they did! 2.4 billion people are followers of Jesus today. 31% of the world's population.

There's no way that could've happened unless this verse was true.
Unless they really did receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them.

As this verse was true for them, it is true for us today, we receive power when we become followers of Jesus and the Holy Spirit comes upon us.

We are baptized in the Holy Spirit when we put our faith in Jesus and have his power available to flow through us.

We can be His witnesses in Our Jerusalem, Our Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the Earth because of his power that flows into us
and through us is unlimited!

Towards the end of his letter, Paul encourages the Ephesians when he says:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. (Eph. 6:10)

Don't live out your faith under your own strength, under your own energy,

We are to be: *Strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.*

We are to Desperately Rely upon His Strength flowing through us.
His power coming upon us and working through us.

But How do we do this?

#1. We Clothe Ourselves with Jesus, putting on the Jesus Team Jersey.

#2. We Pray Without Ceasing, we leave Him on speakerphone throughout the whole day.

#3. And we Pray and Ask For His power to flow through us.
To use us as a vessel for His work, with His Divine Strength.
We Depend on Divine Power as though our lives depend on it!

Just imagine for a minute, what it would be like if there was a physical change that took place among humans on planet Earth?

What if, instead of just being able to take a breath on our own we had to stop and ask God for the power to breathe? Unless we did that, we would suffocate.

If that were truly the case, there is no question, we would all begin to pray without ceasing!

As we wrap up this series I can say with complete confidence that God desires each one of us to Walk in the Presence and Power of Jesus Every Day.
It is The New Normal!

Swimming on my Dad's shoulders…
When I was a little kid growing up we never had a house with a swimming pool. I never had a close friend that had a swimming pool. And we never belonged to a club or gym that had a swimming pool. But I loved to swim. Whenever we would go on vacation and stay in motels the first thing I couldn't wait to do was jump in the pool with my dad.

If we had time to share, I think we all would have different stories on our own experience with swimming and with water. For some it's been very traumatic and you or a loved one may have had a very difficult experience with water. One of my brothers was pushed in the pool when he was about third grade and he couldn't swim well at all. He was pulled out right away, but for the rest of his life, he never went in the water over his head. My son-in-law is 32 years old and he has never learned how to swim. He will never go in water over his head. But many of you are like fish and love the water.
Pool, Lake, or Ocean, You've had wonderful experiences and enjoy splashing and swimming in the water.

When I was a little kid in those motel pools, I wasn't comfortable swimming in the deep end yet. I would hold onto the edge and pretty much stay in the shallow end where I could feel the bottom.

But when my dad would jump in, I would get on his shoulders, and he would swim around into the deep end, and I loved it. I can still remember his scratchy face as he tightly held onto my legs. He never let go of me in the deep end, so I was never afraid. But when I got old enough to swim on my own, he did begin letting go.

When it comes to Walking in the Presence and Power of Jesus Every Day, it is a lot like swimming on our Heavenly Father's shoulders. He is always there, holding onto us tight, swimming and paddling us around through life with His strength and not our own.

Let's Pray…