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

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

**Taught by Pastor/Teacher Ed Rish**

**From Sunday, May 13, 2012**

**God’s Power can deliver Believers through Difficult Times – 2**

As always we give thanks to our GOD and Father for the privilege to come together as a royal family to receive the Word. We are thankful for the privilege to live in this great nation. Anyone living in the United States is blessed. This country is a far cry from what it once was, but people living here still have far more prosperity than most people anywhere else in the world. That is something to be thankful for, but there is a problem. The problem is most of us are failing the prosperity test. Most of us, at least to a certain extent, have become focused more on the blessings than on the source of blessings. At one point in this country there were people who had to struggle just to stay alive. Under those conditions believers are focused on GOD and at such times the reality that GOD holds their lives in the balance is ever present. As conditions improve that reality doesn’t change, but in time people lose sight of it. Many people in this country lost sight of the reality, and as generation after generation passes, people lose sight of GOD altogether.

Eventually people reach a point in time that Paul refers to as the last days. As Paul stated, in the last days difficult times will come. But even in difficult times believers who desire to live Godly lives can do so. In our series in Paul’s 2nd letter to Timothy Paul touched on 19 characteristics of people in the last days. As we stated the phrase *last days*, refers to the last days of a dispensation or the last days of a nation. The point here is the last days will be characterized by evil. Ironically, much of the evil will come from believers. These are individuals who at one time accepted The LORD JESUS CHRIST as their savior but they turned their backs on Him in order to live for self. Paul describes these individuals as *lovers of self*.

In this series we noted how loving self can result in degeneration. The 19 characteristics Paul mentioned in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 brought this out. We also touched on four types of individuals that fall under the category *lovers of self*. These individuals become lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of GOD. They function according to a form of godliness but reject the Word of GOD and the power of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. Paul warned Timothy, as well as all church age believers, to avoid such men. The reason is because out of this group originates false teachers. It’s these false teachers that gain influence over another category Paul referred to as *weak women*. Weak women are reversionistic believers and can be male or female. They’re weak because they rejected the power sources, (Bible doctrine and the filling of the HOLY SPIRIT). As a result they are controlled by their emotions. The Corinthian church fell under this category because of negative volition toward doctrine. The result was reversionism and apostasy. Under these conditions they were antagonistic toward Paul who gave them the gospel and taught them sound doctrine. At the same time they migrated toward individuals who taught them false doctrine. ***2 Cor. 11:3 But I am afraid, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.*** They were deceived because their emotions were blocking out the truth and emotions are not designed to control the soul. Emotions cannot think or make sound decisions; they are nothing more than a puppet ruler when they control the soul. That is because the old sin nature will assume control over the emotions because the old sin nature appeals to man’s emotions. When a person is controlled by his emotions he will respond to the desire of the old sin nature. In the garden satan appealed to the woman’s emotions and got her to look at the fruit which was appealing to the eyes. The fruit in the garden is analogous to the lust of the eyes. She looked at the fruit and that caused her to act on emotion. When the soul is not controlled by sound thinking, emotions will eventually come under control of the old sin nature.

It works the same with mental attitude sins. The old sin nature sends out mental attitude sins and when sound thinking is not in control of the soul, emotions react to mental attitude sins. Now you have a person who is responding to a situation based on anger, bitterness, jealousy, hypersensitivity, or implacability. Why were the Corinthians antagonistic to Paul? It had to do with something in their mental attitude. Why does an arrogant person reject correction? It has to do with something in his mental attitude and since he lacks humility, he rejects authority. Correction comes from authority and when the arrogant person is under the control of his old sin nature, when corrected, the old sin nature sends out a mental attitude sin. The arrogant person responds to those sins by way of emotions. It’s the same with fear. Fear is an emotion and when sound thinking doesn’t control the soul, the old sin nature sends out fear, and if left unchecked, fear will dominate the thinking process. Loving self dominates the thinking process and results in many of the other characteristics we discussed.

Bible doctrine in the soul is a wall of fire around the believer and is designed to dominate the soul and protect believers from being dominated by the old sin nature and being controlled by emotions. However, believers have to choose to be filled with the HOLY SPIRIT and use the doctrine. We can know a lot of doctrine and even know how to apply it but the decision to do so is up to each individual believer. If the believer fails to make the right choice the potential to be controlled by the old sin nature, and ultimately satan, exists.

The point is that everyone is deceived to a certain extent at least in one area, and in some cases more. Believers have to know their weak areas, and they have to rely on GOD to strengthen them in those areas. One thing GOD can’t do is make our decisions for us. Believers who fail to choose to humble themselves, recall and apply the doctrine they know, and rise above self and their old sin natures are going to become a hindrance to themselves and others.

Believers who use GOD’s solutions don’t have to fear difficult times because they have the means to spiritual growth and divine protection.