



Living Hope Bible Church

Where hope comes to life, and the Son always shines.

February 20, 2021

Dear Living Hope Family and Friends:

The strange and bizarre events of 2020 continue to be seen in the new year of 2021. A highly unusual arctic blast in Texas has caused power outages and continued shortages of food and water. This highly unusual storm even prevented alternate forms of energy from wind turbines to function. Sadly, for these individuals there was no energy resources available to them. For any of us who have ever lost power, we know it can be a frightening experience. Those things we normally take for granted can quickly vanish. In fact, many will prepare for such a possibility by purchasing a backup generator. Although expensive, such a purchase can give a peace of mind and assurance during times of uncertainty and danger. Not having access to a power source in any storm, is both unwise and unsafe. And yet ironically this is an even more vital truth in the spiritual realm of our lives.

Thankfully, God tells us that when we receive Jesus' forgiveness of our sin, we receive a new power source that is unlike any other. Just prior to Jesus' crucifixion, while in the upper room with His disciples, Jesus reminded them that He would not leave them "as orphans", but would give them "another Helper" that would remain with them "forever"(Jn. 14:16-18). This was the same Spirit of God that Jesus told them would give them "power" and assist them to be His "witnesses" (Acts 1:8). Unlike the limited power sources of today, God has provided us with a supernatural power source that will sustain us in the severest storms of life. This Spirit, as Paul affirmed is a Spirit of "power and love and discipline", that will dispel any sense of fear or uncertainty (II Tim. 1:7).

God's Holy Spirit is perhaps the single greatest resource God has given us in this life. The word used to describe His nature and ministry is the Greek word, 'paraklete'. This compound Greek word includes the words "alongside" and "called". Together they express the wonderful concept of someone who has been called alongside to help us. In other words, God's Holy Spirit is our constant companion and helper. He functions as our bodyguard, teacher, comforter, and friend. What an amazing gift God has given us! And yet sadly, we often choose to live our lives independent and unaware of His presence. In fact, we are warned in Scripture not to "quench the Spirit" or extinguish His promptings, leading, and empowerment for our lives (I Thess. 5:19). Instead we are commanded to "be filled", or controlled by Him (Eph. 5:18), and to "walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16). These key exhortations describe our need to yield our wills to His, and to keep in harmony with His leading.

Sadly, I believe the neglect of this amazing gift of God's Holy Spirit is the single greatest reason most Christians struggle to find comfort, strength, and consistency in their spiritual lives. This is because they unplug their greatest power source to their lives. We must never forget that the life God calls us to live is a supernatural life and it requires His supernatural power through His Holy Spirit.

In closing, I would caution each of you to never get caught in a storm without an adequate power source. But in an even more serious manner, I would caution each of you to avoid neglecting your greatest spiritual power source granted through God's Holy Spirit. Life this side of glory is difficult and hard enough, but it can be much worse and more difficult if we fail to draw upon God's power and peace provided for us through His Spirit. I would encourage each of you start each day by seeking God's Spirit, and His control over your life and daily activities. Let's commit to let God live through us and display His power and love through the in-working of His Spirit!

I love each of you and can't wait to share a very special announcement with each of you this Sunday morning.

May the Lord sustain you and use you for His glory, as you learn to yield to, and become empowered by, His Holy Spirit. God bless!

Your Servant In Christ,
Pastor Mark

Living Hope Bible Church

35 South Main Street

Plains, PA 18705

O: 570.406-4295

plainslhbc@gmail.com | www.lhbcpa.org

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