Higher Power

Transforming Potential Into Progress

November 8, 2026

Today we're learning to turn our *untapped* power into *real-life* progress! Cuz *every* one of us lives with a gap between who we *could be* and who we *actually are*. We've got *talents* we never *use*, *ideas* we never *start*, and good *intentions* that never make it off the *couch*. We *know* we're capable of *more* – and yet *knowing* we *could* doesn't mean we *do*. And that difference between our *capacity* and our *reality* is infinitely *irritating* – cuz it's the one place we can't blame anyone *else*. So, if we want *actual* success instead of *possible* profit, we gotta face the question *behind* every report card, performance review, and New Year's resolution: **Are you living up to your potential?**



Ugh! I *hated* that question cuz I *hated* being judged on what I *could* do – instead of what I could *convince* people I *did* do! I liked the idea of living up to my *publicity* – not my *potential,* cuz *talking* a big game is much easier than *playing in* the big game. And to *understand* our *emotional relationship* with our *potential* we gotta start with *physics* and *philosophy*.

You ever play with your kids on the floor when one goes all "pro-wrestler" and climbs to the top of the couch and yells, ***"Geronimo!"****?* Well, it's physics that just made every parent *flinch* – cuz that kid is loaded with **potential energy – *stored* power that comes from their position;** and the *higher* they get, the *more* potential energy they've *got;* and potential pain *you've* got! *But* the second their feet leave that couch, all that *stored* energy turns into **kinetic energy – which is power in *motion*** – and that's when energy has an effect; usually on your soft, unsuspecting *stomach*. Got it? **Potential is power you *possess;* kinetic is power you *express*.**

And *those* ideas go back to the *beginnings* of Western *philosophy* when Aristotle was trying to wrap his head around the *universe* and split *reality* itself into *two* categories: **dynamis: what something *could* do;** and **energeia: what it's *actually* doing.** *Potentiality* and *actuality*. And *that* was a huge *help* to understanding the *universe* cuz it shifted our focus from *what* things *are* to *how* they *work*. *But* – before *Aristotle* used the *words* to explain *life*, *God* planted the *ideas* when He *created* life. So Paul packs *both* words – and the path to our potential – into three verses:

> [Paul calls it] … this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is the one we proclaim …so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy [energeia] Christ so powerfully [dynamis] works in me. – Colossians 1:27-29 NIV

In other words, **"I *strive* to turn my *potential* power in Christ into *actual* progress in life."** The *power* is *Christ's* – but it's *possessed* in Paul and *expressed* in his *action*. Which provides a critical principle for everyone who wants to fulfill their potential: **we don't *generate* power; we *harness* it.**

And last week, Bruce showed us *how*: by training, not *trying*. Cuz **self-sufficient *trying* runs us down** – but **obedient *training* runs on *God!*** So, no wonder Paul's word for "strenuously contend" is *agonizomai* – it's the *same* word for the strict *training* of athletes we saw last week!



So, Paul's reminding us that *every* path to potential takes *training* cuz **training transforms what we *could* do into what we *actually* do.** It's the *action* that *releases* the *potential* of our *position* – and look at Paul's path: "Christ in you" is our *position*, "strenuously contend" is our *action*, and "fully mature" is our *potential*. So *today*, we're gonna focus on those *three* principles of *Paul's path* to keep *our training* on *target!*

And we're gonna start with *position*, cuz ***position* determines potential.** That kid on the couch didn't get *stronger* – he climbed *higher*! Cuz ***potential* energy has nothing to do with *effort*** – it's all about *elevation*. Just *look* at one of the world's biggest batteries – it's a *lake* on a *hill*! In Bath County, Virginia, they built two reservoirs 1,260 feet apart – and when the power grid has *extra* electricity, it pumps water *uphill*. But, when everyone cranks the AC, they release *that* water and it falls *back* through *turbines*. But the water at the top isn't *special* water; it's *regular* water with a *high* position that gives it high potential for power!

> [Well,] God raised *us* up with Christ and seated *us* [past tense] with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. – Ephesians 2:6 NIV

Forget elevation, *our* lofty position as residents of heaven puts this whole world under our power! **"Sure Noah, but I don't *feel* seated in the heavenly realms – I *feel* seated in a drafty *church!*"** *Exactly!* Potential doesn't *feel* like anything. That's what makes it *potential*! Remember Juneteenth? The folks in Galveston were *free* for two and a half years before they ever *felt* free – cuz their *position* changed long before their *lives* did. And Paul says *we* have the *highest* potential *possible* cuz *our* position changed the day the Creator of the universe *adopted* us:

> You are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are His *child*, God has made you also an heir. [*That's specifically* referencing the *potential* of the *position!*] – Galatians 4:7 NIV



Remember when we compared *our* identity crisis to Buzz discovering *who he* was by checking his *boot* and understanding *whose he was?* Well, Paul's reminding us that accepting *our identity* as God's kid *is* the key to our fulfilling future – but like an *heir*, all our inheritance is stored up as *potential* we grow into as we "mature in Christ." Cuz it's *100% true* that **our potential is set by our *position*, not our *performance*** – but **we can't *wield power* we don't *know* we *possess*.** So, we train with Christ to *flesh out* the *identity* we *believe*, to *understand* the *inheritance* we *receive*. Cuz God's *omni-potent,* literally *all*-potential; so *heirs* got a lot to handle!

Which means **we don't have a potential problem; we have a growing-up problem!**

And ***heirs* grow up by *acting* like heirs** – which takes us to the principle two: ***action* releases potential.** Cuz potential that *doesn't* transform into action *doesn't* have any *impact*. Raise your hand if you own something you *paid* for but have never *used*. Yeah, me too… unless one of these days, I actually break out that ab-flex I got in 1998! Well, we're not alone, according to unclaimed property officials, 1 in 7 people have *money* just sitting with the government – *billions* of dollars that are legally *theirs* – just never *claimed*! *Possessed* – but never *expressed*. And that's where *faith* steps in. Cuz **faith doesn't just *acknowledge* potential – it *acts* on it.** And I'm not the *only* Noah who says so:



By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen [*that's* potential!], in holy fear built an ark to save his family. – Hebrews 11:7 NIV

Noah didn't just *believe* it was gonna rain – he grabbed a *hammer*! Cuz **faith isn't just *believing;* it's *building*.** And faith *itself* needs building, too:

[Cuz Peter says] [God's] divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life … For *this* very reason, make every effort [action] to *add* to your faith *goodness* … For if you *possess* these qualities in *increasing* measure, [AKA *mature*] they will keep you from being *ineffective* and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. – 2 Peter 1:3, 5, 8 NIV

That word for "ineffective" literally means "*no-work*" or "*no-energy*." God's not worried you'll *run out* of power – He's worried you'll *sit* on it! Cuz **We gotta *make* faithful *moves* to *realize* the power of our position!** Otherwise, we'll accept the *limits* of earthly potential and go with the **"*Fake* it 'til you *make* it"** approach. Problem is, *your* potential *isn't fake* – it's just *unrealized*! It's stored power just *waiting* to be tapped by faith – the way *Jesus* did! So, don't *fake* it – *follow* Christ; ***imitate* to *activate*!**

Cuz faith isn't *pretending* something's true and *hoping* it'll *help you* – **faith is *knowing* something's true and *trusting* it to *grow* you.** So take the *jump!* Just like the *couch kid* – it wasn't *his strength* that knocked the wind out of dad – it was just *understanding* how *jumping* could *harness* the *higher power* of his higher *position* to increase his *impact!* Likewise, *you* don't need more *power* this week – you need one faithful *jump*. So **pick one thing God's put *you* in *position* to do and *do it!***

That's the whole message! ***Who* you *are* and *where* you *are* means *God's power* is at *your fingertips* – if you'll just take a *leap of faith!*** Maybe it's the *apology* only *you* can offer that might change a life; maybe it's signing up to *serve* that might change *yours*, or maybe it's spending time in Scripture to change your perspective on who you are and what to do! Whatever it is, *jump!* Cuz I *guarantee* you'll be *shocked* by the impact of *every* move *you make* from a *position of faith!*



[Like Jesus said] "Truly I tell you, if *you* have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you. – Matthew 17:20 NIV

And *that* leads to *principle three* on our path: ***patience* fulfills potential.**








Say you've got a slab of concrete to move, and all you've got is an *acorn* – *what's the move?* You gonna get on your *hands and knees* and smack that sidewalk all day? I mean, that *is* kinda how most of *my* chores *feel*… so I know how it goes: *no progress and an angry acorn!* And that's when you blame the tools and say, **"It's impossible – I need a *jackhammer*!"**

But *you know* where I'm going with this: if you're willing to *plant* that acorn *next* to the sidewalk and wait – it'll slowly *grow* enough power to *obliterate* any obstacle! Well, we need the same *acorn eyes* to see **fulfilled potential requires patient faith.**

But that's hard cuz *earthly* eyes tend to measure potential by the power we have in the *present* – even though we *know* the future is where potential comes to fruition! So **we gotta stop asking for *jackhammers* and accept God's *acorns!*** Cuz Jesus says *that's* how *our* future *grows:*

> A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain – Mark 4:26-28 NIV

The farmer doesn't force it, he just plants, waits, and faithfully shows up. And **the more patient we are in *seed power* the more potential power we'll discover!** Don't believe me? Check out this jar of 2,000-year-old date seeds from an *extinct* palm tree found while excavating King Herod's temple. And in 2005, they got planted – *and grew!* This one's '*Methuselah*' and after it pollinated another ancient palm – *boom!* Judean dates are back in action! Cuz the moral of the story is this: **potential doesn't *expire* when comes from the Creator.** Cuz God *finishes* what He plants:

> [Paul says,] [I'm] confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion [*that's* fulfilled potential!] until the day of Christ Jesus. – Philippians 1:6 NIV

And He does it like Bruce's tugboat turning a tanker. That's why *potential* takes *patience!* Bump – *open your Bible*. Bump – *forgive them again*. Bump – *hold your tongue*. Cuz **each faithful jump is a tiny bump that slowly unlocks unimaginable potential.** So, you *still* picked a *fight* with your wife after a *rough day* – *but this time* you *noticed*, *paused*, and *apologized*. *That's huge!* Cuz ***small* growth is still *real* growth;** cuz it's *actual* growth! And that's part of *God's plan* for *your path* to *His power!*

So, **are you living up to your potential?** *No chance!* But for *God's kids*, that's *not* an *accusation* – that's an *invitation!* Cuz your *adoption* gave you the *position*, your *faith* puts it in *motion*, and the Spirit brings it to completion. So, ***check your boot, take the jump,* and *trust the bump!***

Cuz **God seated you *higher* so *His* power could reach *lower* – into *your* Monday, *your* marriage, and *your* mess.** So, if *you* want to *see* the impact *His power* has on all *your problems* – climb into *His Word*, follow *His lead,* and transform *His potential* into *spiritual progress* with a *leap of faith!*

Father God, thank You for loving me in spite of my sin; forgive me and cleanse me by the sacrifice of Your Son, my Savior; and free me and lead me by Your Spirit and Word, as I seek to trust and follow Jesus Christ, as the Lord of my life. Amen.