

Sermon Notes – May 17, 2015, Pastor Alan Smith

“Understanding the Power”

We see the power of nature: earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados. We don't see too many devastating weather events here in the valley.

Tornado Rankings for reference:

- F0 < 73 Light damage. Some damage to chimneys; branches broken off trees; shallow-rooted trees pushed over; sign boards damaged.
- F1 73-112 Moderate damage. Peels surface off roofs; mobile homes pushed off foundations or overturned; moving autos blown off roads.
- F2 113-157 Considerable damage. Roofs torn off frame houses; mobile homes demolished; boxcars overturned; large trees snapped or uprooted; light-object missiles generated; cars lifted off ground.
- F3 158-206 Severe damage. Roofs and some walls torn off well-constructed houses; trains overturned; most trees in forest uprooted; heavy cars lifted off the ground and thrown.
- F4 207-260 Devastating damage. Well-constructed houses leveled; structures with weak foundations blown away some distance; cars thrown and large missiles generated.
- F5 261-318 Incredible damage. Strong frame houses leveled off foundations and swept away; automobile-sized missiles fly through the air in excess of 100 meters (109 yds); trees debarked; incredible phenomena will occur.

In 1996, our valley experienced an F2 tornado:

2.1	1996-07-19	2	39°23'N / 77°42'W	39°21'N / 77°42'W	2.00 Miles	125 Yards	0	0	400K	75K	Washington
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Brief Description: A moderate tornado (F2) tracked between two mountain ridges in extreme southern Washington Co, knocking down hundreds of trees, including several onto homes which caused substantial damage. At least one barn was completely destroyed in Yarrowsburg. The storm attained maximum strength just south of town (where the trees, including numerous hardwoods, were flattened). The tornado weakened considerably before dissipating along the eastern ridge. Structural and vehicle damage, though not as prevalent as the tree damage, included the following: Portions of roofs from two barns were blown off; minor residential damage, including shattered windows, unhinged shingles, and torn off trim/gutters. Some gravestones were overturned by the winds, and several power lines were knocked down. Several vehicles and vehicle windows were damaged.

When we see the power of a tornado or hurricane we stand in awe of that power. Do we stand in awe of God who created this place we live in? Are we awestruck when it comes to God's power? Do we understand the power of God? Here are some highlights of God's power:

- In Genesis 1 we see He created everything in the universe.
- In Genesis we see the story of Noah and how God restarted with Noah and his family. He destroyed the world but saved a few.
- In the story of the tower of babel he confused the people and made them speak in different languages.
- In Exodus he defeated the nation of Egypt and showed them who was truly in control. He made manna appear in the morning for his people and caused water to come out of a rock.

Joshua 10:12–14 (NLT)

12 On the day the LORD gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the LORD in front of all the people of Israel. He said, "Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon." 13 So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies.

Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jashar? The sun stayed in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day. 14 There has never been a day like this one before or since, when the LORD answered such a prayer. Surely the LORD fought for Israel that day!

Did you know that story? Do you understand how many laws of physics were broken? Now a scientist will tell you that this is impossible! It just can't happen. For the sun to stay in one place the world would have to stop spinning and if the world would stop spinning, then there wouldn't be that force we call gravity. No gravity and we all float out in to space. That is what a scientist would say.

Who are we going to believe? In our scripture Paul is telling how he has heard of their strong faith. He also tells the church at Ephesus what his prayers are for them.

Ephesians 1:16- 19

16 I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, 17 asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom* and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. 18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.*

19 I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him.

Paul prayed constantly. He prayed that they have spiritual wisdom and insight. He prayed that their hearts be flooded with light so they have confident hope. He also prayed that they would understand the incredible greatness of God's power.

I believe that the church today is living a defeated life. We live in fear of those that attack us and try to take our rights away. We live in fear of terrorist groups. I think we need to be constantly reminded of the power of God. The power that stopped the Earth from spinning; that power that controlled all the animals to come to the ark. The power that raised people from the dead, made blind people see, healed the lame. We as Christians should never live in fear.

Paul tells Timothy in **2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.**

When fear starts to fill our hearts and begins to paralyze us, we need to remember who we are and whose we are. We have the same Holy Spirit in us that the disciples had and through them people were healed. Thousands came to Jesus as their savior. If God is with us then who dare be against us!! We have been given the power over death itself through His son. We have to live our lives out in boldness before men. Not a life of fear, but a life of power and love.