“20 God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. 22 And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in all places.”

**COMMENTARY**

In the last section (Eph. 1:15-19), Paul had prayed for the Ephesian Christians that they would be given wisdom and revelation from the Holy Spirit so they would have a greater understanding of God. In addition, Paul prays that they may understand their (1) current and future hope in Christ, (2) God’s value of those who believe, (3) and the great power of God. In the current section, Paul elaborates on the last point. Paul proves to the Christians in Ephesus that God’s power is visible through Christ being raised from the dead. Moreover, after Jesus died and rose from death he assumed a position in heaven and on earth as the supreme king. Jesus is now king in heaven and earth; everything is under the authority of King Jesus. All power is in Jesus alone, and Paul reassures the Christians in Ephesus that there is no possibility of King Jesus being overthrown or stripped of His kingship.

In prior weeks, we observed that the city of Ephesus was highly influenced by magic and the magical arts.1 Evil spiritual forces / beings—in verse 21 called rule, authority, power, and dominion—were often summoned through incantations to effect the physical world around them. People believed that these spiritual forces / beings were able to interact with the physical world and change circumstances in the lives of people. For example, the Ephesian Artemis would be summoned to change a love attraction felt from one person to another.2 In addition, the gods were called upon, through spells, to execute deadly illnesses.3 People lived in fear of these “hostile powers,” and Paul reassures those who once dabbled in these practices that King Jesus would protect them and render the “hostile powers” useless, now and forever—“in this age and also in the age to come”.4 As Christians, we should recognize the existence of evil powers / beings in the world, pray against and defeat them, but relegate them as powerless beings that Christ has already dealt with. We can live life securely knowing that there will never be a point in time, which Jesus is removed from his throne.

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1 Acts 19:1-20  
2 PGM LXXVIII. 1-14  
3 PGM IV. 2496-2499  
4 Ephesians 1:21
Thank you God for the power you have given the church through the death and resurrection of King Jesus. I ask that you would help me realize the power accessible to me, and that I would use it for the cause of Jesus. I pray that the world would see the power of you (God) through me. Amen.

**DAILY CHALLENGE**

**DAY 1 (TUESDAY):**
Prayer Goal: **POWER**
1. Do you know that you are empowered by God? If yes, how so? If not, why?
2. What are some areas in your life that you have lacked using the power of God? Write down specific areas that you feel powerless and ask God to empower you.
3. Do you recognize that God has given you power to overcome all things?

**DAY 2 (WEDNESDAY):**
Prayer Goal: **RAISED HIM**
1. Why is Jesus being raised from death so important? (Look to: Eph. 1:20; 1 Cor. 15:17)
2. Do you see the resurrection as significant in your own life? How so?

**DAY 3 (THURSDAY):**
Prayer Goal: **SEATED WITH HIM**
1. Read Psalm 110:1 and Ephesians 1:20 together. What does it mean that God seated him (Jesus) at his right hand?

**DAY 4 (FRIDAY):**
Prayer Goal: **EVERY NAME**
1. Why is the name of Jesus so important?
2. Read Acts 19:13-20 (Notice that they are in Ephesus). This is how people received power, by invoking the “name” of someone. What does that mean for the context of our current verse (Ephesians 1:21)?

**DAY 5 (SATURDAY):**
Prayer Goal: **UNDER HIS FEET**
1. Paul is quoting Psalm 8:6 when he states, “he [God] has put all things under his (Jesus) feet.” Compare Psalm 8:6 and Ephesians 1:22. What context does Psalm 8:6 give to Ephesians 1:22?
2. Do you see Jesus as one having dominion over the world? How so?
3. Does Jesus have dominion in your life? How so?

**DAY 6 (SUNDAY):**
Prayer Goal: **HEAD**
1. What does it mean that Christ is the “head” of the church?
2. Do you see Jesus as the “head” pastor at your church? How so?
3. Do you feel like Jesus functions as the “head” in your life? How so?

**DAY 7 (MONDAY):**
Prayer Goal: **CHURCH**
1. Define the “church”? Is it people or a building?
2. Paul uses an example that Christ is the “head” and the church is the “body.” How do these two images correlate?
3. How does the church function like a body? (Use examples from 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 or Romans 12:4-8) Explain.
In modernity, and ever since the enlightenment, there is a tendency to discredit the realization of a spiritual world. This is in part due to “un-provable” nature of the spiritual world by scientific standards—because it is not material, and one cannot “touch” it per se, it is reduced to fluff. Often the academic, and a majority of the non-religious population, believe that the miracle, demonic, and supernatural stories told in the New Testament are nothing more than fanatical fairy tales and spruced up stories intended to make Jesus and the early Christians appear more “divine” than they truly were. This type of thinking has infiltrated much of the way Christians tend to think about the world. When Christians hear of demon possessions or evil spirits there are usually two distinct responses: (1) complete disbelief because it is something that is impossible and unreal or (2) excessive interest in the demonic, so much that you empower the enemy. These two streams of thought have impacted our world significantly. On the one hand, the demonic is recognized in places like Hollywood, where, through films, “true stories” about demonic possession are filling theatres, yet in places such as the academic world, belief in the demonic is cheapened to superstitious religiosity – and those who believe in a spiritual world are pushed aside as “crack-jobs.” The discussion for this group study should engage questions of bias and reality. Most of us have a bias because of where we grew up. For example, if you grew up in a witch-filled place in Africa, then believing in the demonic is nothing new, and actually a normal part of life. If you grew up in an “educated” suburban home, you are probably less likely to recognize or acknowledge the demonic in your daily life. In addition, you were probably taught not to take those types of spiritual matters seriously. Either way, we all have biases. As Christians, we should be able to recognize those biases and align ourselves with the heart of God and scripture, in order to sustain a balance in our Christian walk. Both streams are helpful in creating balance, but we must be careful not to show dedicated allegiance to one or the other as we can easily fall into an unbalanced view of the spiritual world.

**GROUP QUESTIONS**

1. Do you have any pre-conceived biases towards the spiritual world or demonic world? (i.e. You have either not paid any attention to it or too much attention) Explain.

2. Do you believe in a spiritual world? Both demonic and angelic? Explain why?

3. Do you find it difficult to believe in a spiritual world in our modern society? How so? Where is it most difficult? (i.e. School, work, home, etc.)

4. Share a couple stories of how you have personally encountered the spiritual world (i.e. healings, worship, demonic possession, deliverance, demonic encounters, etc.) (Try not to focus only on demonic possession).

5. Read our study verse, Ephesians 1:20-23, and discuss how this verse effects your view of the demonic and spiritual world.

6. Pray together, asking God to help you understand the power that is in Christ to overcome the demonic world. Also, pray for a renewed understanding of the power Christ has equipped the church (you) with and how to use it properly.