

The Power of Man

I have a confession to make. I was baptized a Catholic. Granted, it didn't mean anything to me. I was a baby at the time and could barely put a thought together let alone a belief. And granted, I was just sprinkled so I guess only my forehead was metaphorically dead and buried to sin, but it still meant that I would be raised in or around a Catholic family.

My dad was raised Catholic. He went to a Catholic school and was slapped through his youth by penguins. By the time he was an adult, he had decided that the Catholic church was not for him and I don't think he's been to one since.

My aunts, however, were devout and would try to drag me and my sister to church whenever they could. I think that I had been to Catholic church five or six times by the time I was a teenager (aside from weddings), and that was enough. Something deeply scarred me in those few short trips. Aside from being insanely boring, I found the ceremony and pomp of church revolting. Hearing preaching or religious type music would make me feel ill, and I vowed that I would never be a churchgoer.

That is, until I met my future wife. She was a Baptist and would go to church every Wednesday and twice on Sunday. And no matter how hard I tried to keep her from it, she wouldn't waver. I tested her every week. "Why are you going to church today? Do you *have* to go? Who is making you go? You are your own person. Don't follow anything that tells you that you *have* to do something . . . especially not blindly." These were a few of my arguments. Her response was always, "no, I don't *have* to go . . . I *want* to go."

I didn't understand her stubbornness until I went to church with her. Although some of the words they used there reminded me of the Catholic church of my youth, which made me feel a little sick to my stomach, I didn't find the religious pomp. Everything rang true and honest and I felt extremely welcome and loved. Soon, I came with her every week. If it weren't for her perseverance I may never have recovered from my childhood scars.

You know . . . in biblical times, people had all sorts of powers. When the Holy Spirit filled the early church on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were given all sorts of exceptional powers (Acts 2:1-4). They could speak in tongues so that anyone that heard their words could understand (Acts 2:3-12). They could heal the afflicted (Acts 3:6, 7). And they could even raise the dead (Acts 9:40). All of these powers were given to aid them in their great commission, "**Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age**" (Matthew 28:19, 20). Today, the church has the same commission, but I don't often see the dead resurrected or hear anyone speaking in tongues.

Modern man may not have the powers that we read about in the Bible, but he is not powerless. He still has a power and my wife used it on me to get me into church. Her church had it and used it on me to keep me there. The mighty power that won me over was their testimonies.

Our power comes from how we are, what we do, and how we live our lives. We should always keep in mind what our testimony is doing for others. Because of my wife's testimony, I am over my loath for church and a saved and baptized member of one myself. I hope my testimony will do the same for someone else.