



**The  
power  
of  
one**

# *The power of one*

When Adam rebelled against God he lost intimacy with God and lived alone on earth without divine spiritual life. Now, separated from the power of God to be holy, he was left to live by the power of one human being. From then on everyone begins life from the power of one which lives for self interest.

The idea for the title of this book “*the power of one*” came to me as I reflected on life lived independently from God. Bryce Courtney wrote a book on the power of one from his own experience. The connection with Bryce Courtney came as I looked for a suitable illustration. Because he is a normal human being his ideas suit many, so his book was a great success and was made into a movie.

Quotes from Mr Courtney: “*The power of one is above all things the power to believe in yourself, often well beyond any latent ability you may have previously demonstrated. The mind is the athlete, the body is simply the means it uses to run faster or longer, jump higher, shoot straighter, kick better, swim harder, hit further, or box better.*”

*“Always listen to yourself... It is better to be wrong than simply to follow convention.”*

*“I learned that in each of us there burns a flame of independence that must never be allowed to go out. That as long as it exists within us we cannot be destroyed.”*

*“It is better just to get on with the business of living and minding your own business and maybe, if God likes the way you do things, he may just let you flower for a day or a night. But don't go pestering and begging and telling him all your stupid little sins, that way you will spoil his day.”*

Mr Courtney has given us a good example of how the power of one is self justifying and stands over against the one sovereign and almighty God. This is exactly why we need to be saved from the power of one.

### **Life experiences of the power of one**

The power of one person is above all others.

The power of one desires what it wants.

The power of one is often the good person.

The power of one can also be a religious or spiritually minded person.

The power of one believes that life is all about what you can see in the world.

The power of one demands its rights to self determination.

### **The power of one has an impossible dream**

The power of one has lost the original purpose of its existence and is now consumed with the search for an impossible dream on earth; never really knowing what it is in the world that will satisfy that unknowable dream which can only be fulfilled by God.

It doesn't matter if they are a peasant, professional, philanthropist, prostitute, or priest; the same desire drives everyone who lives for the world of human experience, even if the role is changed, the unknown dream of completeness cannot be satisfied in the world.

The power of one doesn't believe in God enough to obey Him. The power of one also doesn't believe Satan can have immense influence in the lives of man, regardless of what God and honest common sense has revealed to anyone who has eyes that see.

The great danger for Christians is that the pursuit of happiness through pleasure in the world will lead the immature believer progressively towards greater deception and bondage to unholy deceitful desires, where all worldly desires become the gods of the world to be pursued at all cost.

### **Beware of the deception**

Identifying the difference between the power of one and the thinking of men is necessary if we are going to be able to put self to death. As the disciple is strengthened by the Spirit of God, the power of one is strengthened by the forces of darkness. Without the power of God the power of one cannot be overcome. *'So that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.'* 1 Cor 2:5

The power of one is not always as bad as it can be; the power of one can be kind, gentle, trustworthy, and devoted to its chosen path, but it remains separated from God in Christ because it is a law unto itself. *'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'* (Rom 3:23) Everyone has failed to live up to the standards God's has set for all people.

The power of one does what it deems best in its own eyes. The power of one is irresistible for the un-surrendered life. The power of one is what the Bible often calls the "*flesh*," as the self has lost its share in the spirit of the divine nature of God, only the fleshly self remains.

The only solution for those who live according to the power of one but who want eternal life is to surrender the power of one to the Spiritual power of God. The power of the Spirit must be chosen in preference to the power of one by those who want to live with God.

Spiritual life is determined by the one who has dominion in over that life. If the individual power of one wants to retain dominion over their life, there cannot be a new life with God, because life with God demands that God have dominion over all things. He alone is the One power by which man can live in peace.

Consequently, flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God. (1 Cor 15:50) Those who live by the flesh will not inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore Jesus said, you must be

born again, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*(John 3:3) *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”* John 3:6-7

The power of one cannot please God. *‘For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.’* Rom 8:6-8

In order to receive a new life, the old life in the flesh according to the power of one must be laid aside in order to come under the rule of the one power of God.

### **The truth of God is life**

The mind set on the Spirit of God is life and peace. (Rom 8:6) Whatever occupies the mind determines where the hope of fulfilment is being sought. The people of God are to set their mind on God and walk by faith and not by sight. The mind set on the flesh is short sighted and deceived by worldly self interest.

Seeking happiness from the world, or people, or experience is foolhardy; for true happiness can only be found in unity with God who is the One Father, Son, and Spirit. The mind set on the flesh is a downward spiral increasing in its decline because what is desired is never achieved, so the intensity is increased to gain the elusive unachievable goal.

### **The good news is, God cares**

God offers us the gift of eternal life in Christ which is spiritual life in fellowship with the Father and the Son. It is life as it was intended before man looked to himself in his preference for the world. Eternal life is walking by the Spirit according to spiritual values of God as believers live in the world of darkness that looks for what can be seen.

God has left believers in the world of spiritual darkness so that they can turn from the power of one and grow in faith by overcoming the ways of the world's deception about the meaning of life.

The Father has given Jesus Christ as the Lord and saviour who is the answer for all

mankind's needs and the perfect example of how the children of God are to live before God Almighty.

The world is not the answer. The fallen world and its unbelief cannot provide what is needed at any level of the truth of the knowledge of God. To seek what is needed in the world is to invite strife and disorder. The only real option is to look to Christ and follow His example by holding fast to His word.

In order for God to be God He must be an exclusive God. There is only one God. Even from the beginning man was made for the exclusive use of the one God. There cannot be any other gods either made of wood, or man's self justifying personal image of himself. God alone can meet the inner unmet needs for everyone who desires protection from evil.

### **Jesus the way**

Jesus Christ offers the impossible to the impoverished. He is the One who brings the love of almighty God to those who are naturally unlovable. He is the One who offers light instead of darkness. He offers

forgiveness for repentance. True knowledge of the Christ brings us to the point of the needed repentance, which is the beginning of the end for the power of one.

Repentance recognises the absolute authority of God to demand our obedience and humble service. It is the acceptance of the supreme authority of God and our willingness to bow down to Him. The repentance He requires is the way of self denial to obey Him alone. He alone is the one who has the answer to every impossible dream in Himself. Repentance opens the way to be born again by God with a new spirit that reflects His holiness and glory.

This new birth from God is accompanied by the Spirit of God so that those who are born of God have the ability to walk with God and walk as Jesus walked. This is the ability to be holy children and can only be given when we willing lay down our lives so that the power of one no longer dictates how we will live.

The Lord Jesus Christ came to save man from the power of one's desire for self glory, which is really a life of death concerning the truth.

He came so we can be free from a life of darkness to live in the light for the glory of God. To gain life Jesus requires exclusive possession of our life if we are to have His life. *"There said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."* Matt 16:24

*"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."* Matt 6:24

The need for the self denial that Jesus demands shows us the human will has the power over the will, and will not willingly subject itself to the rule of God unless by faith from the One power of God. The only way to get free from the power of one is to crucify self and live only for the glory of the One God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Calling on Christ as saviour requires the death of the power of one.

Surrender to the higher power of God is only possible when we realise that we really have no power to deal with our earthly passions and selfish desires. *'If anyone supposes that he knows*

*anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know.'*  
1 Cor 8:2

As Jesus calls, some hear the call but don't get the message. Some take up the offer with delight but have no real depth of reception. Some accept the offer but are soon distracted by the events of the world.

Some are glad to be forgiven and readily give themselves over to a new way of living, but there is no real intention to grow in the knowledge of God so that they can live the life of Christ in the world. They are like a dog that buries a bone for another day.

However there will be some who will gladly give up everything they have, including themselves, and consecrate themselves to growing in the knowledge of Christ with the only desire to serve Him and be fruitful disciples for the kingdom by taking the good news to others.

The life of the disciple who truly believes in Jesus is to be conformed into the image of Christ. Spiritual growth brings the disciple to spiritual maturity. The way to grow in

maturity is made possible by growing in the knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The true knowledge of God will give us a true understanding of ourselves and how the power of one has ruled in us and continues to demand our obedience. The deceptive knowledge of the power of one inflates the pride of men who think they have wisdom while all they have is the world's foolishness.

### **The truth of God's children**

The spiritual life of a child of God is a life of humbly walking before God in holiness and truth. God gives His children all they require for a life of godliness. (2 Pet 1:3-4) He gives His Spirit to enable His own to keep His commandments. His children are to love and obey Him by denying the self life of the power of one by taking up their cross to follow Christ.

When dealing with any issue faced in the world the Christian should always seek to respond accordingly to the word of God. The power of one will never consult what the Bible has to say about how we should

respond. Indeed if we are in Christ the Holy Spirit will lead us to obey God's word. For the Christian it's never about me myself and mine, because the children of God live to please the Father.

### **Life concerning God's children Rom 8:13-17**

The children of God have the divine values and priorities and preferences of their heavenly Father from the time of their new birth. They are made in His holy image so they will hate disobedience just like their Father.

Christians share in the qualities of God is because they have his Spirit who leads them into all righteousness. The Spirit gives God's children the qualities of divine life and God's preferences and values to fulfil their hearts desire.

The children of God are actively killing off the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit so they can live with God. (Rom 8:13) It is this killing off of the sinful deeds of the body that indicates they are indeed the children of God. (Rom 8:14) The Spirit of God has been given so that

believers can know and live by the truth. *"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth."* John 16:13

God's children have the Spirit to lead them into all truth which means rejecting the ways of the world. This is the evidence of belonging to Christ.

Those who belong to God will willingly follow the leading of the Spirit according to the written word of God. Therefore the evidence of belonging is how God's children war against disobedience in their lives in seeking holiness while striving to imitate the life of Christ.

*'Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.'*

1 Cor 2:11-14

## **The spirit of the world or the Spirit of God**

Human wisdom prizes personal freedom from any other control. The world's view is that everyone is to be free to make up their own minds, to decide for themselves what is right or wrong according to their own conscience. The world has the idea everyone can have their own opinion and still function together in relationship regardless of the fundamental differences with others. Interpersonal conflict shows this to be a lie.

If Christians show they have a problem with what others believe, and want to put forward their position, they are condemned for being intolerant and un-accepting. If both parties are living according to the modern world's view there shouldn't be too much of a problem. But if one person is a dedicated Christian who sees the Bible as the only truth of God and His will for life, then there will be great potential for difficulty in coming to agreement about how to live together, especially if the other person claims Christ but holds to the world's view of the power of one.

## **Jesus is the way the truth and the life**

However confusing things may get, it is possible to tell the difference between those who hold to the power of one and those who surrender to the power of God by checking their views against the truth of God's word.

True knowledge of God means the Christian can never be secure in their faith unless they are committed to holy living and thinking as is clearly written in the Bible for their benefit. To be able to hold fast to the Lord and follow Him, Christians must know what the Bible teaches.

Jesus has said His disciples are to abide in His word in order to be free. Abiding in His word means living moment by moment according to His teaching, and the overall teaching of the word of God. The power of one does not.

Abiding in His word also requires remembering what He said, because the truth of God is needed in every situation and problem the believer has to deal with in the world that doesn't accept the truth of God. Holding fast to the word builds faith in God.

Many have knowledge of the Bible and what is written between the covers, but never use that knowledge to help them live holy and godly lives as mature children of God who reflect the life of their Father.

Spiritual life requires effort to be applied to the process of learning and remembering what is written in the Bible because of the stubbornness of the power of one. This effort will guarantee spiritual growth and guard the Christian from the influence of false teachings. Jesus said: “*My kingdom is not of this world.*”  
John 18:36

If the truth will set us free we need to know what is not true. Completely blind is the one who says, “*I can see, I can see*” only to immediately walk into a great Ironbark tree. Head banging comes from always speaking words of the wisdom of the world as if it comes from God.

The truth of real sight is when Christians do what they say they know about God. Pitied is the one who claims what they have never possessed and cannot put into practice.

The blind person can only see what they want to see in order to justify their life. They may claim to be able to see, but actions speak louder than words. Their belief in themselves determines their wilful behaviour.

Having some hint of the idea of the truth is not the same as understanding the truth. The blind have no intimate daily obedient relationship with God, and because they live by the power of one they are concerned with the personal me, myself and mine; proving the absence of the Spirit who give life. For the power of one, it's all about my money, my space, my career, my stuff, my privacy, my life, my opinion and my future. Even the good they do is a testament to the values of me and myself, as if the good they do qualifies them for a place in the kingdom of God.

Those who live by the power of one are blind to the truth that the only way to heaven is to live the Christ life by the Spirit of God, which requires the death of me, myself and mine. The power of one has ears but cannot hear the truth of God so that it will deny self. The power of one has eyes but they are blind to the

terrible predicament they will face in the coming judgment of God.

### **The power of one must die**

The power of one does not see that its way is at war with the faith of God, but even conspires against the believer's faith. Therefore to call on Christ as Lord and saviour requires the death of the power of one.

To be led by the Spirit means offering our life as a living sacrifice to God. *'Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.'* Rom 12:1-2

Those who will not deny self are blind to the fact that no personal religious commitment or devotion can provide for their justification. Only absolute surrender to Jesus Christ to obey Him and learn to live as He lived brings saving grace. Only those who give up all hope of personal power gain the true knowledge needed to receive eternal life.

Absolute surrender is the only way to repentance; this change of mind is the only door to life of the kingdom of God.

Being sincere and devoted to believe what is held to be important by the power of one is not a true indication of a life hidden with Christ in God. Many people are devout believers in idols and images of god made in their likeness.

### **The power of God is in Jesus Christ**

Jesus provided the cross of self denial for our transgressions so we could take up our cross by denying our self to live for Him. Jesus gives us the truth of God so that we can walk in the light and be free from the power of one and its master the devil. Jesus is the life of God made available to all who will surrender the power of one so they can live with God.

This new life which is given by God means we shall walk as Jesus walked and do the work of God as humble servants of Christ Jesus as our Lord. Proof of having surrendered the power of one to Christ and

being born again is seen in the leading of the Spirit in a desire for complete obedience.

Proof of having a new life by the Spirit of God is seen when Christ's priorities for the growth of His church are those of His people.

Proof of life is seen when we love all His people as He loves; and when His work in leading people out from under the power of one into the kingdom of God has become the first thought and desire in the hearts and minds of those who claim Christ as Lord.

The power of one can only see worldly things as its only reality; spiritual people see the greater reality of the kingdom of God. The earthly have eyes but do not see. The spiritually minded look to things that cannot be seen by the earthly minded.

The earthly minded put their hope in what will pass away with a breath from the Lord when He comes again. The spiritual children have placed their hope in the eternal God who has created all things.

The earthly live in the darkness of a world without true personal knowledge of God.

The spiritual children of God live in the light of constant fellowship with God.

The power of one only has meaning in things which will pass away. The power of God is eternal and is the only true life for those who place their trust in God.

The earthly have placed their hope in created things, the spiritual, hope for the eternal spiritual kingdom of God. Choosing the world of man is short sighted, for the life that is sought in worldly things will perish in God's eternal judgment of the world. Those who seek life in Christ have an eternal inheritance.

The spiritual person looks forward to the time when God will be the ultimate reality and the dwelling place of all who worship Him in spirit and truth.

Everyone has the power to choose the earthly or the heavenly, choose wisely. To gain the heavenly we have to give up the earthly and take hold of Christ, and live for Jesus Christ alone. *'To those who are called, ..... Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

1 Cor 1:24

# Living Water Resources

## Come to the River

Compiled by

Robert C May

Copyright © 2018

[www.cometothestream.com](http://www.cometothestream.com)

[cometotheriver@optusnet.com.au](mailto:cometotheriver@optusnet.com.au)