

## **EMBRACE ORDER and ZEAL**

**Week #5 of the 6-Week Series, "Embrace Your Power"**

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*So this guy wants to get a hundred-dollar check cashed, and he goes to the bank teller and says, "I'd like this hundred-dollar check cashed, but I want you to give me the hundred dollars first and I'll sign it and give it to you."*

*She said, "Well, that's not the way it works. You have got to endorse it, give it to me, and then I'll give you the hundred dollars."*

*He said, "But that's not the way I want it. I want you to give me the hundred dollars, then I'll endorse it."*

*"Well, sorry; that's not going to happen."*

*He said, "Well, I'll find a place who will do it."*

*And she said, "Well, good luck."*

*He goes to the second bank; same thing. Teller says, "You've got to endorse it; then I'll give you the hundred."*

*He says, "No, I want the hundred."*

*And then he gets to the sixth bank. Five have already turned him down. He insists again, "I would like you to give me the hundred dollars, I'll endorse it and then give it to you."*

*The lady's having a long day. She's really frustrated; he's annoying. He keeps asking about this. She reaches underneath, grabs a two by four, whacks him in the head, and he signs it and gives it to her. He gets his hundred dollars.*

*A week later he goes back to the original bank and the teller says, "So how'd that work out? Did you get the way you wanted?"*

*He said, "No, I had to sign the check first and then I got my hundred dollars."*

*She said, "Well, isn't that what I said to you? And isn't that what probably the other five told you?"*

*He said, "Yeah, but no one explained it quite as clearly as she did." [Congregants laugh]*

Okay.

So, we are in Week #5 of our six -week series where we're having a closer look at co-founder of Unity Charles Fillmore's concept of the 12 powers of man. Charles Fillmore believed that we are all endowed with twelve spiritual powers: 12 spiritual attributes that make up the 12 Christ qualities that Jesus fully demonstrated and lived. And these powers are within each and every one of us in potential.

And these 12 powers really give a framework to help us understand, apply and express our divine nature -- our spiritual powers to create the life we desire, the divine purpose for which we've been sent by utilizing and expressing these 12 powers.

You know, this year's theme -- and the theme of this six-week series -- is called Embrace Your Power. And the reason is: because as powerful as we are told we are -- as powerful as we actually are -- we don't always believe it. That we don't always trust it; we don't always own it; we do not always embrace it and use it.

In the Book of James, Chapter 1, Verse 23 and 24, it says this: *“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in the mirror, and after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.”* That when we do not do what we know is the truth; when we do not live the way we are know we are meant to live, it is like forgetting what we look like.

How many people here have at least one area in your life where you know that you are not living up to, doing or being as much as you know that you absolutely could in those areas? Anybody? I think we all know that we can show up bigger; that we can do better; that we could live more fully than we're living right now. But the problem is: we just keep forgetting what we look like. We keep forgetting who we are. We forget how powerful we actually are.

*“I am a child of God.”*

Together: *“I am a child of God.”*

Take a deep breath. Now say it half voice together: [with congregants] *“I am a child of God.”*

*“I embrace my spiritual power.”*

Half voice: [with congregants] *“I embrace my spiritual power.”* Deep breath.

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*

Half voice: [with congregants] *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* Take a deep breath.

That power and these 12 powers are all within every single one of us. The question is: Are we willing to recognize it, embody it, and express it, and use it in our lives?

So, we've been looking at two powers per week. The first week we looked at the spiritual power of FAITH and strength. Week #2, we looked at the spiritual powers of LOVE and WISDOM. Week #3, the spiritual power of MASTERY and IMAGINATION; the spiritual power of WILL and UNDERSTANDING last week, Week #4.

**And Week #5, today, we will look at the spiritual powers of ORDER and ZEAL** (or enthusiasm).

Now **ORDER** is more powerful than we realize in our lives. The spiritual power of order is the ability to organize, to arrange, to sequence, to align, and to adjust. And this power of order within us, when it is not developed fully or well, it shows up in our lives as being disorganized; of being out of balance and having a difficult time adapting to change. And in the extreme, it can show up as being chaotic or feeling disheveled.

When it's overdeveloped with this power of order, we can be overly fastidious. We can be hyper-detailed about everything, thinking that everything has to be perfect and everything's got to be in its right position all the time. And in the extreme, it can show up as being obsessive/compulsive.

Order is a powerful faculty and attribute that we all have. And it helps us, I think, in three ways.

The first one: **Order helps bring balance and ease and a sense of peace and harmony to our lives.** How many people have ever had a time where your house was a mess, and your desk, your office, everywhere was disorganized and messy? Anybody ever have that experience? And my question is: How did that make you feel? Did you feel uncomfortable? Stressed? Okay.

And then, have you had a time when your house was perfectly clean, your desk was organized, the garage -- everything -- was organized? Anybody ever have *that* experience? Apparently not as many. [Congregants laugh] But how does it make you feel when your house is clean and well organized? Doesn't that make you feel good? You're lighter; you're brighter; you feel a sense of ease and joy. There

is something about a clean and tidy desk, or office, or garage that just makes us feel better. We feel a sense of calm and a sense of peace, a sense of clarity, a sense of ease, a sense of balance and harmony.

And even if our house is a mess, we yearn for order, because we know there's benefits. We know there's blessings; we know that there is power in it.

You know, having order in our lives makes us aware of what we've gotten; where it is. You know, it gives us more time. It helps us to have less stress and more balance in our play and work relationship and our self-care. And it also makes it a little bit easier to decide what our priorities are. And so from that sense, order creates a sense of balance and ease.

**And the second thing that order really helps do, it helps in the creative process.** Unity talks about the creative process as Mind-Idea-Expression. That, whether you are starting a business, trying to plan a vacation, or trying to lose some weight and become more fit, it all begins with an idea ... and some thoughts and a plan and a vision and the action, and then the manifestation of it.

And there's a certain sequence and a natural order from the conception of an idea and a plan to the full unfoldment of it of being actually realized. There is an orderly process to the manifestation of anything in our lives. And the other aspect of order that helps us in the creative process is, when we have a goal, order gives us the ability to sequence those activities to know that which ones need to be done before the other to help us get to where we want to go.

Order creates peace and ease. It helps us in the creative process.

And the third thing it does: **it helps us adjust to the inevitable changes of life.** We all know that life does not always go according to our plans. And sometimes there are obstacles, and sometimes there are detours, and sometimes there are all kinds of unexpected things that happen that require us to re-sequence, to recalibrate, to reorder our steps or our plans.

Let me give you a very simple example. You drive to work the same way every day. And then one day, that area is all closed off. The power of order helps you readjust to find a different route to get there. It helps us be able to get a little bit creative and find some alternative workarounds to help us achieve the very thing that we want.

We all have goals in life, and life shifts; life changes. Someone unexpectedly leaves that's an important part of what our plan was. Or we lose some funding, and we have to come up with new ways to develop some new ideas and a new plan. Life might throw us out of sync, but order can help get us refocused on where we were going.

So, here are three ways to improve the spiritual power of order.

And the first one is to **TRUST THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE AND THE PROCESS OF LIFE.** Alexander Pope said, *"Order is the first law of the universe. A structured and organized system is fundamental to the way the universe functions, implying that chaos is not a natural state. Essentially, it highlights the importance of order in all aspects of existence."*

Order is in the universe. There's order in nature. There's order in the four seasons and the ebbs and flows of the tide. There is a rhythm of life. Order governs the universe.

In Mark 4, Verse 28, it says, *"First the blade, then the ear, then the full ear in the corn."* And what it is saying is that there is a natural sequence of growth. Just like a farmer knows you have to plant, and there's some watering time, and growth; eventually there'll be a harvest. And all of this process takes time and follows a certain order.

If we want to transform our lives, our health, our relationship; if we want to make changes; if we want to evolve; every one of them take a certain order, a sequence, and a natural process. And we have got to trust that, even when things appear to be dormant -- like in winter -- that it is a part of the process. And trust that things are still working together, preparing us for our highest good.

How many people have ever tried to rush or force things to happen on your own timetable? Anybody? It's like trying to be like the guy with a hundred dollars. We think life should work *my way*. And the fact is: we need to know and trust the process of creation; the process of growth; the process of unfoldment and success.

1 Corinthians 14:33 says, "*For God is not a God of disorder, but a God of peace.*" So, the first thing we need to do to develop the power of order is to trust the order of the universe and trust the process of life.

The second way to improve our faculty of order is to **ADD SOME STRUCTURE**. How many people find that you need some structure in your life to be more productive and effective in your life? Anybody need some structure?

And I ask you right now to think about: Where in your life do you need a little more structure? Where in your life would a little bit more structure help you be more successful and more efficient and effective? I truly believe that adding structure -- things like setting goals or having deadlines or creating certain routines -- are a helpful way to channel the creative spiritual energies and mental focus that we have, and not dissipate them.

Structure brings a level of clarity of purpose. It brings a level of direction and planning and sequencing of the things that we do. Even something as simple of adding structure through calendaring things that are important to us -- like family dinner, or date nights, or exercise, or quiet time, or study or self-care or massage ... or whatever it is that can support us in being more effective -- will help the overall power of order in our lives.

The last one I want to talk about to help with order is to **CLEAN OUT THE CLUTTER IN OUR LIVES**. You know, it helps our order by eliminating the disorder. You know, sometimes we need to just let go of some stuff.

You know, sometimes we think automatically happiness is about addition, adding more: more friends, more family, more money, more possessions. More, more, more! But sometimes, happiness can be about less, less, less! Sometimes, a happier and more orderly life is about less than more. It's more about letting go than holding on. It's more about subtraction than it is an addition.

And so, sometimes we just need to clear out the clutter and create some more space ... but not space for more stuff. [Congregants laugh] Sometimes more space just to give us a sense of peace. We don't need to fill every single spot in our calendar and every spot in our home. Sometimes that open space actually is very peaceful and calming, so that we're more engaged in life. We're more present to life. That we actually are enjoying the things in our lives, and not just insuring them and cleaning them, but actually being fully present and enjoying those things.

I think every time I clean out my clutter -- I try to do it once a year; sometimes twice a year -- but there's always some clutter. And at the end of it, I always feel better. I always feel lighter. I always see ... And this is stuff that even I didn't see, but it's there. It's taking up spiritual energy; clogging up aspects of our lives. And letting it go gives us a lot of freedom and liberates us.

It's interesting when we hear words like we're reducing; we're downsizing; we're simplifying; we're minimizing, it sounds like it's failure. "*Oh, they're stepping back; they're playing smaller.*" But I don't

think it's failure; I think it's freedom. I think sometimes, when we get rid of some of this stuff, we actually feel happier, more fulfilled. And we can make new and better choices that we may not have thought, because the other things were just taking up so much space and time ... in our physical lives, but in our mental lives, as well.

*"My life unfolds in an orderly manner."*

Together: [with congregants]: *"My life unfolds in an orderly manner."*

*"All things are working together for my highest good."*

Together: [with congregants] *"All things are working together for my highest good."*

Order is a powerful spiritual quality. And life is calling us to embody and express that at a higher level to know the fullness of who we are.

The next power we look at is the spiritual power of **ZEAL**. Zeal is the ability to be enthusiastic; to be excited; to be energized. Zeal is a divine energy. It is an inner fire that fuels our passion; that drives us, inspires us, motivates us towards our goals and being our best. And it is also the ability to inspire and motivate others.

The underdeveloped zeal expresses itself in our lives sometimes as being unmotivated, uninspired, listless, and having no drive, and unable to inspire and engage others.

Overdeveloped zeal can express itself like being impulsive, compulsive, overly ambitious; coming on too strong; kind of always pressuring people to do what we would like them to do ... you know, sometimes an energy that's frenetic and frantic in the extreme.

One of Charles Fillmore's most famous quotes and affirmations is this one: *"I fairly sizzle with zeal and enthusiasm as I spring forth with a mighty faith to do what is mine to do."*

I fairly sizzle with zeal and enthusiasm and I spring forth with a mighty faith to do what is mine to do! I love that affirmation! You know what I love even more about it? He said it at 94. [Congregants laugh] He was sizzling at 94! [Congregants laugh]

So how much enthusiasm and zeal do you live with and express in your life? I mean, when it comes to living your best life with a great attitude and a lot of energy and joy and passion, are you closer to sizzling? Or are you closer to fizzling? [Congregants laugh]

I mean, we all should be sizzling and dazzling and sparkling ... not fizzling, drizzling and muzzling. [Congregants laugh] Enthusiasm and zeal are powerful! *"Fo shizzle my nizzle."* [Congregants laugh] Alright; I thought I'd throw that in. Anyway ...

So here are some ways that we can increase the zeal in our lives.

And the first one is to **RECHARGE OUR GOD ENERGY**. The word "enthusiasm" comes from the word "entheos," which means "God within." That the vitality of life is the Spirit of God within us expressing itself. It doesn't mean you've got to be bouncing up and down on walls and being loud. But there is a life force energy that is in us: the God within, the entheos, enthusiasm. And the more we can connect with that on a regular basis, the more our verse and an expression of enthusiasm will begin to radiate and express for us more in greater ways.

It's like a constant fire that needs stoking. It needs stoking! It needs a little more fuel. It needs a little more oxygen. You've got to keep it going. It's there, but it's our job to keep it alive and vibrant. That enthusiasm is there, but it's our job to keep it alive and keep it thriving.

In the Book of Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 11, it says: *"Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor serving the Lord."* That the more you're connected to God -- the more you're serving God: hat entheos, that God within, that fire within us -- our enthusiasm will come forth and radiate from us. Our light will shine in the way that we are meant it to shine.

The second thing about how to increase our zeal is just **EXPRESS ENTHUSIASM IN ALL THAT WE DO.** When I was a kid, we used to go to this church called Centenary United. And they always had these little quotes: *"Live life by the inch and it's a cinch."* *"A smile is like a carnation in the buttonhole of life."* They weren't great quotes, I just want to say that, but .... [congregants laugh] which is pretty evident.

But my favorite quote they always had every single week was, *"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."* Famous quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson, *"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."* And he knew the truth! You can't do anything great without passion, without energy, without joy, without excitement.

And so, it's calling us to put joy and excitement in the things that we do. And it's not about doing it for other people, but it's for us. It's contagious, and other people will pick out and love it, but it is for us. It's not for show.

I'm going to give you one simple example of how we can add more enthusiasm to what we do by changing some languaging. And the language is changing *from "I have to" to "I get to."* I'll bet every one of us has said something like, *"I have to go to work."* *"I have to spend time with my in-laws."* *"I have to pay my bills."* You know, *"I have to go to the dentist."* You know, *"I have to do the laundry."* You know, *"I have to get my taxes done."*

And that sounds so onerous and so horrible, does it not? There's no joy about that: in just saying, *"I have to do this. I have to do this."* But the fact is, we get to do this. We get to be alive today. We get to live. We get to learn. We get to love. I mean, we should be saying, *"I get to go to work today."* You know, *"I get to go visit the in-laws today."* *"I get to pay my bills."* *"I get to go see the dentist."* *"I get to do my taxes."* We get to live this day! And we need to not say, *"I have to."* No, *"I get to,"* because we won't get to forever.

I mean, life is a precious and wonderful gift! And so, every day we should wake up and say, *"I get to live this day; I get I get to do these things."* Enthusiasm is clearly a key to success. You don't get enthusiasm from success; you get success from enthusiasm. And it's an important thing for us to do.

The third one is **STAY AROUND PEOPLE WHO BRING OUT THE BEST IN YOU INSTEAD OF BRING OUT THE STRESS IN YOU.** [Congregants laugh] Jim Rowan said, *"You are average of the five people you spend the most time with."* So, if you find yourself moaning and whining, gossiping and complaining, it could be you ... [congregants laugh] ... but it could be the people you're hanging with, as well. And so, hang with people that bring out your best; that cause you to look at life in a deeper and more profound way. And who want to contribute to a greater and better world.

Number four: **BE A WARRIOR AND NOT A WORRIER.** Take the same time you spent in worrying, and be a warrior, and let it have you take action. Get after it! Be the man in the arena! Take a risk! Get out of your comfort zone. Don't sit on the sidelines. Let's get in the game of life! Be a warrior and not a worrier.

Number five: REMIND YOURSELF, **"I AM STRONGER THAN THIS" AND MOVE ON.** We will inevitably fail and fall and make mistakes and embarrass ourselves. But you are stronger than that! You are better than that! Keep fighting!

Winston Churchill put us this way. He said, *"Success consists of going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm."* [Congregants laugh] You are stronger than this. Keep believing.

Number six: **FIND A WAY OR BUILD A WAY**. Just because you can't see it right now, you've got a creative mind, and we live in a universe of possibilities. Keep thinking; keep opening your mind to what the solution might be, what the answer might be.

The next one, seven: **DON'T GIVE UP ON YOURSELF; BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!** God brought you here for a purpose and a reason. And some days you'll feel down, but keep believing in you.

And then the final one is: **CELEBRATE THE SMALL VICTORIES OF YOUR LIFE**. Do not wait until just the big things. Celebrate the small things. I'm celebrating the fact that my nephew, Joshua, came down to see me for three weeks. And because of the wonderful ... I'm thankful that the technology allows him to continue to do work where he works in Montreal and Canada, and still gets to be with me and hang out.

I'm celebrating the fact I celebrate the fact that he really cooks well and I don't ... and so I'm eating very well while he's visiting. [Congregants laugh] I'm celebrating the fact that he got a promotion, and last Tuesday was the second day of promotion, and he got a big sale. So, we celebrated that.

We celebrated Richard Rogers' farewell last week, and that was a beautiful and important celebration.

I've been celebrating how fabulous the weather is. I mean, celebrate if you did ten push-ups -- and that's the most you've ever done -- celebrate that. You go to the gym five days in a row and you've never done it before: celebrate that. You said, "No" to somebody that you've had a hard time saying, "No" to: celebrate that! You stop smoking: celebrate that!

There are so many things in this beautiful, amazing life to celebrate every single day. We don't need to wait for some big home run to happen to allow ourselves to find joy and celebration in those things. The Bible says over 300 times, *"Rejoice!"* That means express joy. Three hundred times it says *"Rejoice!"* Every day we should rejoice. You know that line: *"This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."*

A new pastor was enthusiastic and filled with zeal to get to know his new parishioners, so he went around one weekend to each of their houses, knocking and having little visits.

He came to one house that obviously there was somebody home, but no one came to answer, even in spite of his repeated knocks. So he took out one of his business cards and he wrote Revelation 3:20 on the back and stuck it in the door.

When the offering was processed the following Sunday, he found his card that he wrote Revelation 3:20 on it. On the backside was written Genesis 3:10. He went to his Bible and checked out each of the Scriptures, and he broke up with laughter. Revelation 3:20 says, *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."* Genesis 3:10 says, *"I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, for I was naked."* [Congregants laugh]

Our goal, our challenge, our calling that we get to do is to learn and embody and express these 12 Christ qualities: these spiritual qualities that our teacher and wayshower, Jesus, fully demonstrated. We are being called to and get to challenge ourselves to express these in greater ways. Let's keep striving to live our best life; be our best self; lift our lives by embracing the spiritual powers of order and zeal.

God bless you all.