

Greatest Questions



Ever Asked

Is Anything Too Difficult For Me?

Steve Flatt

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God asked Jeremiah, the prophet, "Is anything too difficult for me?" (Jeremiah 32:26) What a question! Is anything too difficult for me? Let me tell you the context of that question. Babylon is about to conquer Judah, the southern kingdom. Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, has been prophesying about that for a long time. Babylon is right at the door. Jeremiah said, "They built the siege ramps and they're putting them up against the wall of Jerusalem." God requested a most unusual thing of Jeremiah. He said, "Jeremiah, what I want you to do is go buy a field." Now folks, when an invading force is about to conquer your land, real estate investment is not a real good idea. Jeremiah said, "Lord, the siege ramps are right there, you don't understand." He said, "You don't understand, this is a symbol. I want witnesses to see the transaction so that they will know that this land is still yours. Though I am going to use Babylon to conquer Judah, I'm going to bring you back home. Then God asked the question: "Is there anything too difficult for me?"

Scripture is filled with instances of "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" God came to Abraham and Sarah after they waited a quarter of a century for a child. (Genesis 18:14) Job said, "I know that you can do all things." (Job 42:2) The prophet Isaiah said "The Lord is the everlasting Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary." (Isaiah 40:28) Our Lord Jesus said "What is impossible with men is possible with God." (Luke 18:27) That's our God. He's all-powerful, he's Almighty and he has unlimited power. He never gets tired or frustrated. Everything he does, he does effortlessly, whether it's creating a universe or answering a prayer.

Examine his power based upon those promises.

1. His power in Creation.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies declare the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge." (Psalm 19:1-2) Every one of us has stood and gazed over a mountain range or looked out over the ocean. Perhaps you've flown on an airplane and stared at the horizon and marveled at God's awesome power and design. Every moment of creation is a witness to the reality that our God is all-powerful.

I read not long ago that each second, our sun emits more energy and raw power than has been used on the face of the earth throughout history—each second. Scientists say that if nothing were to happen to interrupt it our sun will burn for thirty billion more years. Our sun is one of one hundred billion stars in the Milky Way Galaxy which is one of one trillion galaxies. Our God spoke those things into existence. He just said, "Let there be light and there was light. He said, "Stars," and stars were everywhere. That's what I call power. Surely, David knew exactly what he was talking about when he said, "Only a fool says in his heart there is no God." (Psalms 14:1)

2. His power found in the miracles

But it's not just Creation that proclaims it. The tremendous power found in the miracles in Scripture proclaims His mighty power. The parting of the Red Sea, the fall of the wall of Jericho, the day the sun stood still, the dead raised to life and then the miracles culminated in the life of Jesus. Jesus is the

supreme example of God's great power. Nobody ever did and nobody ever claimed to do all that our Lord did. He demonstrated power over nature. He walked on water, he calmed the storms and he spoke to a tree and it withered. He had power over illness, healing the blind, the lame, the deaf and the lepers. Jesus raised the dead on three occasions. He broke the shackles of the grave himself. Jesus even demonstrated power over Satan and all of his evil forces. On one occasion, he commanded a whole legion of demons to come out of a man and go into a bunch of pigs. That's just the hem of the garment. But we've touched enough for jaws to drop, knees to shake and voices to tremble. God's power is awesome.

3. God wants to share his power with you.

The truly amazing thing is that God wants to share his power with you. "And his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms." (Ephesians 1:19-20) Now I hope you understood what was being said. That's incredible. God wants to share his limitless power with you, the same power that fuels the sun, the same power that spoke the ocean into existence, the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead. He wants to channel that power through you and through me.

There are people everywhere who go through life, powerless. They just walk along as victims. They see themselves as victims of their circumstances, victims of society, victims of other people and victims of unfair treatment. They go through life weak, miserable and getting by. God says, "I want to give you power. I want to give you power to do some incredible things." What incredible things?

a. *The power to conquer sin in your life* "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ

Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:1-2) "Those who walk by the sinful nature they do the things of the sinful nature, but those who walk by the Spirit, they don't do the things of the sinful nature, they find themselves walking by the Spirit's life." (v. 5)

Is anybody here a slave to sin? Do you keep falling to the same temptation over and over and over again? Every time you say "I'm sorry, I'm never going to do that again," and lo and behold, you do it again, and again, and again. If the truth be told, that sin is your master. But do you know that God didn't design it to work that way and that he will give you the power to break that cycle? He will.

b. *Power for peace in your life.* "The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace." (Romans 8:6) Maybe you can't readily think of one sin that is controlling you, you're just sitting there saying, "I'm just kind of blah, I don't know what life is all about. I don't have a peace of my existence. I don't understand." God is giving you the power to have that peace.

c. *Empower your prayer life through his Spirit living in you.* "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express." (Romans 8:26)

d. *Power to overcome circumstances.* "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) God wants to empower you to live above your circumstances.

Have you ever asked anybody, "How are you doing?" They say, "I guess I'm doing all right under the circumstances." I always want to ask them, "Well, what are you doing under your circumstances? You've got no business being under them. Get on top of them. God doesn't want you under the circumstances. He doesn't want you going through life as a victim. He will give you the power to climb out from under those things that would devastate you and show you something positive you could never have seen or known otherwise." That's the promise of Romans 8:28.

e. *Empower you to be more Christ-like.* "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son." (Romans 8:29) That is what God wants for you more than anything else. He wants you to be free from sin, to know peace and to have a great prayer life. He wants you on top of your circumstances, but more than anything else, our God wants you to be like Jesus Christ. Let me summarize the way God would channel power through your life. He wants to enable you to live the richest, fullest, happiest and most productive life possible. No doubt some of you are thinking, "That works for you but it doesn't work for me. O, I'm a Christian, I've obeyed the gospel and I'm going to go to heaven, I guess. But I've never felt God's power in my life. I hear those things preached, but I don't know if it really works." That thinking leads to the fourth and most important.

4. Does it really have application in your life?

You better believe it does. Let's look at the process of applying his power. Most Christians don't think God's power is in their lives to any significant degree. I base that upon observation. I don't think most Christians sense God's power to any significant degree. It's not automatic. There are some things you must do to key into it. Unless you follow God's counsel for receiving his power, you'll live your life just as powerless and just as defeated as an unbeliever.

So how do I apply His power on a consistent basis?

a. I admit to a lack of power in my life. Most of us think we're omnipotent. We think we're God. We don't say it out loud, but deep in our hearts, we think: Is there anything too difficult for me? I can do anything and everything. If you don't believe that, look at your schedule, you are trying to do absolutely anything and everything. You think it's all up to you. Somebody says, "If you burn the candle at both ends, you're not as bright as you think you are." A lot of us need to learn that. Sooner or later stress, tension, and frustration mount. Then, BOOM!

There's a lot of talk today about a mid-life crisis. A mid-life crisis really is simply waking up to your limitations. It's realizing that you're not God. It's realizing that you can't control everything, you're not going to reach every goal, you are a human being, you're weak and you're getting older. Your body is settling, and your hairline is receding.

What do you do when you realize that you're weak? Listen to God! Paul said, "But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast

all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." (2 Corinthians 12:9) If you will not admit your weakness, forget the power of God. As long as you pretend to be self-sufficient you shortcircuit God's power in your life. As long as you feel I've got life by the tail, then God will step back and say, "Okay, take it. Let's see what it does to you."

- b. Believe in faith. This is the key—write it down and inscribe it on your heart. The key to God channeling power in our lives is faith. Jesus taught, "Everything is possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:23) and "According to your faith it will be done to you." (Matthew 9:29)

If that's true, and it is, then two critical questions naturally follow: 1) what are you expecting God to do in your life? and 2) what are you expecting God to do through your life? Because he works according to faith, God has unlimited power. Let's don't limit him by our expectations of him. Many times, we've talked about this, but remember God is the ultimate power source and faith is our connector. Faith is our conduit, and the amount of power that God channels into our lives directly correlates to the amount of faith that we are using to connect.

The other day my battery died, or something died, and the car wouldn't start. I fellow pulled over and said, "I've got some jumper cables." They were these little old bitty things just made out of tinfoil. He hooked them up to his battery and mine and it still wouldn't crank. I thought we couldn't solve it at all. Then this other fellow came up. He had a pick-up truck. He had everything in there. He took out jumper cables that took two of us to carry. They were big cables, he said, "Let me hook them up for you, son." I said, "Okay." Sure enough, he hooked them up, and VAROOOOM! What was the difference? The difference was neither in the recipient nor the power source, it was in the connection. It was in the strength of that connection.

A lot of us have faith that is like a little electrical cord for a 110-outlet and God wants us to have cable so that we can really know the power. Vince Hefner once said, "God has given us an atomic bomb power and yet we live firecracker lives." There is not a problem too big for God. There is no request he cannot handle. Then the issue is my faith. What am I willing to believe? If you want to see God's power in your life, you must first believe in faith.

- c. Speak in faith. I find most preachers leave this out. Paul says, "It is written: (and he quotes Psalm 116) 'I believed; therefore I have spoken.' With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak." (2 Corinthians 4:13) Paul says, "After you believe, you also need to speak." You must verbalize your faith. There must be an announcement of what you're intending to see God do. You don't just think it; you announce it and speak it. Folks, that's what a goal is. A goal is a statement of faith. Now if you don't believe in God or if you're not following the prescription, then your goal is only a statement of faith in your own power. But a well-crafted goal can and should be a statement of faith in God's power. I believe God can and will bless my life this way.

Well-constructed goals are statements of faith. The size of your goals is determined by the size of your God. You show me the goals in your life and I'll show you what you really think in the power of God. How many of you have a goal "I believe God will use me to bless hundreds of people." He can. The question is: Do you believe that and will you state that? If you've got a family that's fractured right now, do you believe that God can use you to be the spark of light and blessing in

your family? He can. Do you believe that? Would you say it? Folks, it's very important that you announce your faith. James says, "The tongue is the rudder of your life. It sets the direction, it charts the course." It has the power of life and it has the power of death.

What are you saying about your marriage? What are you saying about your job? What are you saying about your finances? What are you saying about your children? What are you saying about your church? Many of you are sitting around waiting for God to do something in your lives, but you're short-circuiting it all by the way you talk. You say you believe it but then deny it by your complaints. How many times have I heard somebody say, "Well, I'm praying God will save my marriage, but it's the pits?" They say, "I'm praying my kids will make the right choices, oh, but sometimes I think they're hopeless." Or, "I believe that God has the power to allow me to break those bad habits, but that's just the way I am." Don't short-circuit God's power by your thoughts and utterances. God's power is not automatic. You must first admit you need His power, believe in faith that He can supply your need, and speak and act in faith.

- d. Act in faith. This point is vital and most people miss it. If you want God's power in your life, you step out in advance before the power is released. See, God wants you to take an action for him before you ever feel anything. Did you catch that? Somebody says, "Are you saying that I've got to act as if I have the power, even though I don't yet have the power, in order to get the power?" Yes. That's acting in faith. You go ahead and act in faith before you feel it and God rewards it. You don't wait for a feeling.

Some of you right now are waiting for a feeling. You're waiting for God to move you. "I'm waiting for a feeling in order to get involved in a ministry." "I'm waiting for that one sermon to suddenly just move me and I'll plug right in." Some are saying "I'm waiting for God to move me to give generously." "I'm waiting for God to move me to share my faith at work." "I'm waiting for God to give me the feeling to get my marriage in order." If the only time that you do things is when you feel like it, rest assured, the devil will make sure you never feel like it. He has tremendous influence over our emotions. You've got to act in faith. Take the step before you feel like it, whether you ever feel like it or not. Immaturity is living by your feelings, and maturity is living by faith, and your commitments. So act now.

Many people miss God's blessing because they've never tried. If you don't try, you don't receive the power.

Do you remember when Peter had fished all night without catching anything? Jesus said, "Peter, I want you to go out, launch out into the deep, (and remember those great words) and cast your nets." (Luke 5:6) Peter said "Lord, we've fished all night. They're not biting." He said, "I didn't ask if they were biting, I didn't ask if you felt like going, I said launch out into the deep." What did Peter do? He launched out into the deep and the nets began to break and the boats began to sink. You act in faith.

The children of Israel were finally going to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land under Joshua.

They put the Ark of the Covenant on the shoulders of the priests carrying it by the poles and Joshua said, "Walk, walk right into the water, and as you walk into the water don't worry, it's going to subside." I've often wondered what they thought as they got close to the edge and they felt the water hit their toes, then their ankles, and maybe mid-calf. Were they wondering, "What are we doing here?" But all of a sudden the water just backed up and they walked across on dry ground.

Peter in Matthew 14 saw the Lord walking on the water. He stepped out and he acted in faith receiving the power to walk on that water. Many of you are waiting thinking you are waiting on God. But, God is waiting on you. The power is there to heal whatever is really injurious in your life. He just wants you to admit you need it, believe in faith, speak in faith, then step out and act in faith. "Is anything too difficult for me?" No, nothing is too difficult for God. Amazing Grace #1272 Steve Flatt July 14, 1996