

**We Have the Same Power
(but He is in charge)
Ephesians 1:15-23**

By now you are probably familiar with something an English thinker once said about people in power, **“Power tends to corrupt; absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely.”** That was Lord Acton who said that. As important as people in power are, they are at the same time a potential bombshell for the people over whom they exercise their power. And Lord Acton knew of what he spoke. He came from a long line of powerful English lineage. “John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, 1st Baron Acton, 13th [Marquess of Groppoli](#), [KCVO](#), [DL](#) (10 January 1834 – 19 June 1902), better known as Lord Acton, was an [English Catholic](#) historian, politician, and writer. He was the only son of [Sir Ferdinand Dalberg-Acton, 7th Baronet](#), and a grandson of the [Neapolitan](#) admiral and prime minister [Sir John Acton, 6th Baronet](#).”

Lord Acton had seen first hand how easily and how quickly power can be abused. His voice is one I would suggest we heed. And thus, let’s turn to the letter to the Ephesian saints and chapter one, Eph. 1 and v.15.

¹⁵ For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints,

¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers;

¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

²⁰ which He brought about 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 every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*

²² *And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,*

²³ *which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

(Eph. 1:15-23 NAU)

CONTEXT: Nothing in this letter gives any indication that there was a power struggle going on within this very blessed congregation.

However, the apostle Paul made it clear who is in charge of that congregation and every congregation raised up by God Himself.

Who is the Head of the Church?

Who appointed Christ as the Head of the church?

To whom did God the Father leave the church?

Who has ultimate power in the church?

Who bought the church with His own blood?

Who gives life to the church?

Who gave the Spirit to the church?

Who has the first word and the last word in the church?

The church is the body of whom?

If you answered anyone but Christ, you are seriously and sadly wrong.

Now, let's look at the first words in v.15, "For this reason." For what reason? Here it is, or maybe I should say, here "they" are.

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*

⁴ *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love*

⁵ *He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,*

⁶ *to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*

⁷ *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace*

⁸ *which He lavished on us. (Eph. 1:3-8 NAU)*

We can sum it by recalling our theme here at Eastway Baptist Church, “**It’s all about Jesus.**” He graciously includes us, but, it’s all about Jesus.

Turn in your Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 2. We will begin with v.1. **1 Corinthians 2:1** *And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God.*

² *For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*

³ *I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling,*
⁴ *and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,*

⁵ *so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:1-5 NAU)*

Our brother Bryce would say, “That apostle Paul didn’t bloviate.”

² *For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*” Remember that Paul was not their pastor. He spent about 2 years teaching them about the faith, but he was never their pastor. That’s how he could say he determined to know nothing among them except Jesus Christ. Pastors have to know their people. We’re not just passing through on our way to our next assignment. And we are not the power person in the church. That goes exclusively to another.

You and I have the same power. I’m just your shepherd. But you and I have been given the same power, and that is the power of the Spirit who raised Christ from the dead. ¹⁸ *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, God’s beloved here at Eastway, **so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,***

¹⁹ ***and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.** These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might*

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²⁰ *which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

It is His power working toward and in us. It's the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. It is the power of the Holy Spirit working within us for His glory and our good.

And lest we forget, who is the Head of the church? ²² *And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,*

²³ *which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

(Eph. 1:22-2:1 NAU)

And just in case you have missed my point, read these verses:

¹⁵ *but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into **Him who is the head, even Christ,*** (Eph. 4:15 NAU)

¹⁸ ***He is also head of the body, the church;** and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.* (Col. 1:18 NAU)

¹⁰ *and in Him you have been made complete, and **He is the head over all rule and authority;*** (Col. 2:10 NAU)

¹⁸ *Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,*

¹⁹ *and not holding fast to **the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.*** (Col. 2:18-19 NAU)

I will guarantee you that if you do not acknowledge Jesus as Head of His church, you will not grow in your faith any further than where you are now, if at all. But if you confess that Jesus is Lord, raised from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of God as Head over all, your growth can be phenomenal. If there is no fear of God in your hearts, you need to examine yourself to see if you truly are in the faith.

The fear of God is the beginning. The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom. ¹⁰ *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever. (Ps. 111:10 NAU)*

⁷ *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Prov. 1:7 NAU)*

And when the apostle Paul described the entire human race, especially the unbelieving Jews, he wrote this, and I'm just quoting a part of what he wrote:

⁹ *What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;*

¹⁰ *as it is written,*

¹⁸ *"THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES." (Rom. 3:18 NAU)*

Beloved, do you fear God? I hope so.

What is it all about? Jesus. What is "all?" Everything.

Who is the Head of the Church? Jesus.

What does power tend to do? Corrupt. Lord Achton got it right because he knew of what he spoke.