

## **Impotent Rom 5:6**

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. NKJV

On October 28 of 2006 a 47-year-old man from Newport Beach, California, hoped to become the first American to circumnavigate the world in a solo, nonstop voyage from the West Coast. Ken Barnes set sail in 44-foot ketch, Privateer, which he spent years equipping for what he expected to be a six to eight month voyage. He said he knew the attempt would be dangerous.

But last Tuesday his boat was hit with winds between 40 to 50 miles per hour and waves of about 40 feet. "The boat rolled 360 degrees. I was inside the boat, if I would have been outside, I wouldn't be here today," he said. "But like I say, I went around with the boat as everything else did inside the boat. The batteries ended up in the sink, all the tools, the floorboards, one of them came up and broke in half."

Now why didn't he just stop those waves and save his ship?

Members of an Iowa church were on their way to Colorado for a ski trip. Darren Johnson was traveling in a four-car caravan with members of the Oakwood Road Church in Ames, Iowa.

When at about 10 a.m. or 10:30 an avalanche about 100 feet wide and 15 feet deep, sweep two of the vehicles off the highway and down the slope about 150 to 200 feet up against some trees.

Now why didn't they just put all their strength into it and stop the avalanche and save themselves all the trouble.

On August 29, 2005 Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Louisiana and Mississippi killing at least 1,836 people, making it the deadliest U.S. hurricane since the 1928. The storm is estimated to have been responsible for \$81.2 billion (2005 U.S. dollars) in damage, making it the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history.

Now why didn't the government and the people of this great nation just put all their power together and keep that from happening?

Let me ask you a question. If man cannot control the waves on the sea, if they cannot control avalanches and they cannot stop hurricanes, what makes you think they can triumph over sin, a much harder thing to control.

We have people and churches today that teach that a little water and a little effort can change a sinner into a saint. Some people think that everyone has a big enough spark of good in them that if they just find that spark they can turn their lives around. It is all a lie. Man might as well try to create a world as to deliver himself from the power of sin in his life. We are so blamed arrogant to think that we are the masters of our own lives and that anytime we please we could become sinless and perfect, if only we wanted to bad enough.

In our text today, Paul has a different message for us. Not a popular message, not one accepted by the world, but a message of truth essential for a right relationship with God.

It is interesting to note that the word impotent comes from the same Latin root as impossible. Man is impotent powerless helpless. It is impossible for him to do anything for himself.

I. For when we were still without strength

A. “Man’s helplessness, his inability to do anything for himself, is at the basis of the divine revelation concerning salvation.” Donald Gray Barnhouse

1. John 3:3 except a man be born again and he cannot see the kingdom of God
  - a. Notice that it does not say unless a man is born again he does not see the kingdom of God but that he cannot see.
  - b. Our Lord is saying in unequivocal terms that the man who has not been born again is incapable of comprehending and receiving the things of the Spirit of God.
2. Once again Jesus says, why do you not understand my speech? Even because you cannot hear my word. John 8:43.
  - a. Jesus was speaking here to the Pharisees who never did like anything that Jesus said.
  - b. But what he is saying is that they are spiritually deaf, they cannot hear his word.
  - c. It is impossible for the word of God to reach the inner ear of their consciousness.
3. Later on in the same gospel, John 14 Jesus says this to his disciples, and I will pray the father, and he should give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it see is him not neither know with him. Verses 16 and 17
  - a. Once more Jesus here says in a very flat statement the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit.
  - b. The reason is that man is dead in trespasses and sins.
4. Then in Romans chapter 8: 7-8, Paul says, the carnal mine is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.
  - a. Hear God tells us that the unsaved man is not only not subject to the law of God but he cannot possibly be subject to the law of God.
  - b. The reason is man’s nature is sinful and sand can never be subject to God.

- c. Oftentimes I hear people say God never asked you to do something that is impossible.
  - d. But Jesus said, be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect.
  - e. The fact is that God requires what we cannot accomplish.
  - f. If that were not true, we would not need a Savior.
5. Without strength
- a. What Paul is telling us here is that we do not have strength, not enough strength to matter.
  - b. The man whose boat capsized had strength but not nearly enough.
  - c. The people whose cars were swept from the highway by the avalanche of snow had strength but not nearly enough.
  - d. The peoples lives who were devastated and taken in Katrina were not without any strength but their strength was so insignificant that it did not even matter.
  - e. The problem with man is not that we do not have any strength, it is that we have such a little strength that it is of no consequence.
  - f. The very basic reason why Christ died for the ungodly is that there was nothing they could do for themselves.
  - g. If you don't understand that then your whole concept of God, sin, salvation, and a Savior are totally inadequate.

## II. In due time

- A. Why does Paul include this little phrase?
  - 1. Us to tell us that it's always God's plan and not ours they got operates by.
  - 2. Salvation is not man's plan to keep out of Hell it's God's plan to deliver us from the power of sin.
- B. God never operates by our plan nor does he wait on us.
  - 1. Everyone makes plans.
  - 2. Governments make plans, generals make plans, politicians make plans, many preachers make plans, but we have no ultimate power to assure the our plans are carried out.
  - 3. But for God there is no uncertainty. The scriptures firmly declare, that whatsoever Lord pleased that did he in heaven and in earth.
  - 4. So in due time does not just mean some time but it means that God's

declared time.

III. Christ died for the ungodly

A. Now we come to the best part of this passage.

1. For if you know that you are powerless to save yourself, then you will be looking for a Savior.
  - a. The fellow whose ship capsized phoned his family for help on his satellite phone. He didn't say, I get me a piece of wood here and start paddling towards what I think is land.
  - b. The people whose cars were buried in the snow could not dig themselves out, only others to get them clear.
  - c. One hurricane Katrina at the southern coast in 2005 it moves the immovable, it destroyed the permanent and it changed the unchangeable. And not even the mighty power of the USA could change it.
2. By the death of Christ God made satisfaction of his holy requirements for his children.
  - a. God did not ask for us to help, we were without strength.
  - b. God did not expect us to meet him halfway, we were dead in trespasses and sins.
  - c. God was not waiting for us to finally discover what the blind can never discover.
3. He took charge and made a full provision for all those who will have it.

Friend let me ask you a question. Do you suppose that someone here going to make it by yourself, on your own?

One time after Jesus had spoken to a very rich man, he said, it is easier to get a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is to get a rich man into the kingdom of God. When the disciples heard that they were quite shocked. For they suppose that assuredly the rich were going to heaven. In amazement the disciples then asked, who then can be saved? To this Jesus responded, with men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

The reason why it's impossible with men is because we are impotent. And the reason why all things are possible with God is God is omnipotent.