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## GOD'S POWER AND HIS PURPOSES

***“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.”  
(2 Peter 1:3)***

Scripture is full of references to the power of God. In all these acts of power, we are told, God shows himself sovereign. He is working out his own purpose for each individual person, human or angelic, and for the history of the universe, over which he rules and which he directs toward its climax according to his eternal plan.

With regard to the history of this world, the church is at the center. The Bible tells us what the essence of the plan is: Jesus Christ, already this world's reigning Lord, will continue to reign until, one way or another (opinions among believers differ as to just how), all created rational beings come to acknowledge his lordship. In the broadest sense, God is exerting his power here and now in order, step by step, to bring about this final consummation.

God has made his purpose a matter of promise to us. The Bible is full of particular promises in which aspects of his purpose are spelled out as a basis for our responsive trust. Were it not so, you could hardly call our contact with God a personal relationship at all. Real, personal relationships always involve personal commitments, and promises are the utterances that regulate such commitments. A promise is a word that reaches into the future, creating a bond of obligation on the part of the one who gives it and of expectation on the part of the one who receives it. In this sense it brings about a new state of affairs for those by whom and to whom it is spoken. That our mighty Creator should have bound himself to use his power in fulfilling promises to us – “precious and very great promises,” as 2 Peter 1:4 puts it – is one of the wonders of biblical religion. AMEN.

Dr. J. I. Packer

*“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:18 – 20*

