

STAND IN YOUR POWER

Final Week of the 5-Week Series, "The Unlimited Me"

June 2, 2021

Rev. Richard Rogers

OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Richard Rogers: Hello; I'm Richard Rogers, and I want to welcome you to Unity of Phoenix Spiritual Center. This is our last Wednesday night with no one in the house! You know, we've had one or two people here each Wednesday night as we've recorded it. But we will have (a video version of the live service) available the day after; it will be available on Thursday.

So June 9th is our first night back Wednesday night. I want to see you here; I want you to be a part of it! I want you to know that, if you're vaccinated, masks are optional; if you're vaccinated, we request that you do wear a mask. But everyone is welcome! Come and be a part of this really special, special experience!

We are looking for volunteers, both greeters/ushers; people to work on our audio/visual team and help in the sound booth. It would be so helpful! If this is something that you've always wanted to do, we have a very professional sound booth. We will train you! So you can call Sue Thompson and she'll put you to work.

Alright! That's all the announcements. Cerise is going to sing us in tonight. Let's set our intention with a moment of prayer.

OPENING PRAYER

Take a deep breath. Feel the presence and power of God that's within you and all around you. And today we come to fully express the power of God within us. To know the very power of God that is able to heal, to bless, to transform in every imaginable way. So take another deep breath. Feel the power of God within you. And that miracles are happening in your life. And so it is. Amen.

SOLO

Guest artist Cerise Patron sings, "Tell Your Heart to Beat Again"

Shattered
Like you've never been before
The life you knew
In a thousand pieces on the floor
And words fall short in times like these
When this world drives you to your knees
You think you're never gonna get back
To the you that used to be

Tell your heart to beat again
Close your eyes and breathe it in
Let the shadows fall away
Step into the light of grace
Yesterday's a closing door
You don't live there anymore
Say goodbye to where you've been
And tell your heart to beat again

Beginning

Just let that word wash over you
It's alright now
Love's healing hands have pulled you through
So get back up, take step one
Leave the darkness, feel the sun
Cause your story's far from over
And your journey's just begun

Tell your heart to beat again
Close your eyes and breathe it in
Let the shadows fall away
Step into the light of grace
Yesterday's a closing door
You don't live there anymore
Say goodbye to where you've been
And tell your heart to beat again

Let every heartache
And every scar
Be a picture that reminds you
Who has carried you this far
'Cause love sees farther than you ever could
In this moment heaven's working
Everything for your good

Tell your heart to beat again
Close your eyes and breathe it in
Let the shadows fall away
Step into the light of grace
Yesterday's a closing door
You don't live there anymore
Say goodbye to where you've been
And tell your heart to beat again
Beat again
Beat again

MESSAGE

Rev. Richard Rogers: Okay; so tonight I want to talk about power. And I want to talk about where our power comes from. I even want to talk about how we use our power. And, for many of us, we've always maybe struggled with this whole idea of power. Like, how powerful can I be? How powerful should I be? Is it okay for me to use my power in this situation? Is it okay for me to do this?

And what I want you to really see – and to really look at: where your power comes from now. Like, when you think of yourself as a powerful being, where does your power come from?

For some of us, it's this idea that our power comes from our money. That money creates power. That, if I have enough money, then I can get people to do what I want them to do. And I can move this or change that. And money opens the door. And many people believe that their power comes from – or their lack of power – comes from their money.

For some of us, our power comes from looks. You know, we're powerful because we're good looking. People pay attention to us. You know, we're powerful because we look this way, or we look that way.

For some of us, it's because of who we know. Right? That we're powerful because, *"I know this person, or I've got this person on my phone. Or I can call this person. I know the mayor. I know the City Council people."* Or, you know, *"I know the minister, and I can call the minister up."* So, you know, our power comes from our sense of who we know.

For some of us, our power is: we think we're smart. Like, I'm powerful because, you know ... We just think we're smart if we're educated, we're smart. We think we're powerful.

For some of us, it's *[laughs]* – our greatest sense of power – is because we're angry! Right? Have you ever come across somebody who thought they were powerful just because they could raise their voice? Or they were angry; they'd shout, they'd get all excited? And sometimes it's not even just like the loudest; sometimes some of the most angry people are kind of even kind of quiet. They use their quiet little anger-self; they make commotion and they make a big deal out of everything.

And sometimes people use power in their sadness. Have you ever had anybody who was just so sad, and they let everybody know how sad they were? And you feel guilty if you didn't help them out, because they were already so sad? And they learn to use their sadness as their power; for some people, it's hard work.

So if you had to look at all the ways that we think that we're powerful, how is your dominant way? Where do you get your power from? Is it because you have money? Is it because you're smart? Is it because you're good looking? Is it because you're angry? You know, is it because you're a nice guy? Like, *"I'm a nice guy, and so people help me!"* Right?

So I want you to really look at where your power comes from. Because what I know to be true is that our personality is always trying to become more powerful. We know that, to make the world work – to make things happen – we need to be powerful. And our ego steps in, and our personality steps in and says, *"You know; if power makes the world go 'round, I want to make sure that I have as much power as possible. So I'm gonna be the nice guy. I'm gonna be angry. I'm gonna be sad. I'm gonna rich. I'm gonna be good-looking."* Whatever it is, right?

We find our little niche of power: the little niche we have to become powerful in our world. And we do that over again. We exploit it over and over and over again to try to get our needs met. And it's always out of this sense of lack and limitation. And, even if you have all the money in the world – and you're trying to manipulate everyone around you with your money – it still comes from a sense of lack and limitation.

And what I want you to see today: When power is derived out of a sense of lack or limitation, it's never highly function. Right? It's always being led by a sense of need, a sense of brokenness, a sense of "less than." And I want you to see ...

Now, also, some people use their spiritual understanding, and they're going to try to define that differently than spiritual power. They say, *"I'm powerful because I've read this book."* Or, *"I'm powerful because I've studied with this person."* Or, *"I know how many angels can dance on the head of a pin."* Right?

And so what I want you to see is: Each one of us – in our own way – is trying to carve out a little bit of power in our life for our ego, for our personality, to get our needs met, to try to live a happy life. And over and over again, we're doing all these things out of a sense of neediness. Out of a sense of emptiness. Even out of a sense of brokenness. Like, sometimes we just do the weirdest things to get our needs met! And today ...

You know, I've been focusing for the last several weeks on this series of talks entitled, "The Unlimited Me." And the final one is tonight. And I want to talk about your unlimited self as it relates to power. Because what I'd like to suggest today is that our ego – our personality – is doing all these things to try to feel more powerful, instead of really going within and tapping into the infinite power of God within us. And until we really come to terms with our true inner power, we're doing all these outer things to try to feel more powerful. But it leaves us feeling empty. It leaves us feeling like that we're just trying to control and manipulate the world to get our needs met. And it leaves us feeling exhausted!

But when we really learn to tap into the power that is within us – when we really learn to tap into the power of God – then everything in our life begins to flow. We begin to live in grace. Everything becomes easier!

So if you told yourself the truth tonight, is your power based on the power of God within you? Or is your power based on your personality? Your ego? What you do? Or what you have? Because until we can really make that change to the power within us, then life tends to be very exhausting. But when we tap in and really know that power, it really is the power of faith.

Jesus said, *"If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, then you will say to the mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will be done."* See, Jesus was not against you using your power; Jesus just wanted you to use the power of God. Jesus wanted you to be willing to let go of your personality – of your ego power – and try your divine power: your godly power.

I one time heard a minister say that we have the spark of the Divine within us. Right? And on the surface, that sounds really great. We have the spark of the Divine within us! But have you ever seen a spark? *[Laughs]* Like, really? Have you ever seen a spark? A spark is the tiniest little thing, right? So if the God in me – if the Spirit in me, if the presence within me – is just a little spark ... Like, I get that a spark can be powerful. It can light a flame, and it can light a whole forest. And, you know, when we look at an atomic bomb, it's just one little atom. And one little atom is powerful.

But when we think that the presence of God within us is one little spark. And then what's the rest of us? Like, what's the other 99.99% of us? Like, is that our personality? Is that our humanness? What is that? And what I really want us to see is that the power of God within you is greater than anything in the world! And that, as we discover the true power of God – which is faith! Faith is the power of God! Faith is the power that allows us to move mountains. Faith is the power that allows us to open doors. Faith is the power that allows us to heal. Faith is the true power because – as we have faith in the power of God within us – everything in our life begins to move.

You know, there's a story that Eric Butterworth tells in the prologue of *Discover the Power Within You*. And it goes on; it's an old Hindu story that there was a time when all men were gods. But they so abused their divinity – they so abused their power – that Brahma, the chief god, decided to take away men's power. And the idea was that they were going to hide this power somewhere that men would never find it. So all the lesser gods – all the other gods – got together and said, *"Where can we hide this divinity? Where we can hide this power of man that man will never find it?"*

One person said – one god said – *"Well, let's bury it deep in the sea. They'll never find it there."* Brahma said, *"You know, one day – with technology – man will be able to discover the depths of the ocean, and he might find it there."* And one god said, *"Well, let's put it on the tallest peak. Let's put it and hide the divinity on the tallest peak."* And Brahma again said, *"Well, one day man might be exploring that tallest peak. He might find his divinity."* Another god said, *"Well, let's bury it deep in a hole: deep in the center of the earth."* And again Brahma said, *"Well, maybe one day they would find it. They would dig it up and they would find their divinity."* And then, finally, another god said, *"Well, let's place it within them. Let's place it within their heart; let's place it within their soul. Because they'll never look there."*

And that's really where we are at this point, right? We're at this point in our own spiritual evolution where we're going to have to make peace. Either that I'm going to live my life based on external forces. I'm going to live my life based on my personality and my ego. And I'm going to live my life based on how much – my power comes from how much money I have, how smart I am, who I know, how good-looking I am, how sad I am, how angry I am ... Whatever our personality has done to create and kind of carve out a little power for ourselves.

OR ... we're going to really begin to search for the power of God within us, and really learn to allow that power to express who we really are. To believe – to have faith – that the power of God within us is greater than anything in the world. That it can actually doors, heal, transform, and do all the things that Jesus promised us. If that's the case, then everything in our life begins to move. Everything in our life begins to change, because we have discovered the true power of ourselves.

Now, the deal is – from the spiritual point of view – that if it's within us, it's not like we're going to go into surgery and say, "Excuse me, could you take this out? Like, I'm not ready for my power, and I know there's a little power-pocket in there somewhere. And I'd like you to release my little power-pocket. You know, I'm like a Power Ranger; I want you to release my little power-pocket. And I'm going to put on a little outfit, and I'm going to become as powerful as all get-out!"

Marcelle Proust said this: "The real voyage of discovery consists of not seeing new sights, but looking with new eyes."

See, this whole series on "The Unlimited Me," I've invited you to look at yourself – to see yourself – in a new way. I invited you, not only to look and see yourself with the old eyes – the way you've been trained to see yourself – but really to see yourself in the image and likeness of God.

Reading from 1 James, Chapter 4: "Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials. For you know the testing of your faith produces steadfastness, and let steadfastness have its full effect that you may be perfect and complete and lacking in nothing."

See, I want you to really begin to discover the power of your faith to move mountains. The power of your faith to open doors. The power of your faith to heal, to transform, to create levels of peace, love, joy and abundance.

Tennyson said it this way: "Self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control: these three, alone, lead to sovereign power." Isn't that cool? I want to read it again: "Self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control: these three, alone, lead to sovereign power." [Laughs] I love it! I've got to read it one more time! "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control: these three, alone, lead to sovereign power." Right? So let's begin! Right?

Let's begin with self-reverence. Like, when you were growing up, did people teach you to actually revere yourself? Were you taught to hold yourself in high esteem? Were you taught that you were broken or "less than," or were you taught that you were created – truly created – in the image and likeness of God?

The definition of "reverence" is: "A deep respect for someone or something." Like, who do you hold in high reverence? And what would it look like if you held yourself in a degree of high reverence? Right? And I'm not talking about self-esteem! Now, is self-esteem a factor in this? Or can it be a factor? Absolutely! But self-esteem ... Reverence is actually more than that! Like, if you're not holding yourself in self-reverence, you ... To get to self-reverence, you automatically have to have self-esteem. But it's actually more than that! That you actually revere – that you actually see yourself as an expression of God. You actually see yourself as of the highest order. That you actually revere yourself!

"Well, Richard, people are going to think I'm just a little bit too conceited if I start revering myself." [Laughs] So let's look at that! Okay, so let's just imagine the Dalai Lama, His Holiness, is going to come to

your house for dinner. Right? Imagine that you won a contest; the Dalai Lama's coming to your home. You're going to make the Dalai Lama dinner. Now, how do you prepare for that? [Laughs] Well, first I sell my house! [Laughs] I mean, I have to buy a new house! I have to start by just buying a new house; I'm going to blow this one up. Start over. Right? It'll be too much work just to get this house clean and painted and prepared for the Dalai Lama, right? And then what I'd have to do: I'd have to figure out the meal. And I'd spend months. And I'd be worried. I'd be worried. Right? And then I'd go and find the highest and the best ingredients. I might even hire a chef! I might even go find the best chef I could find! I would hire him for that evening: bring him in to cook us the best meal. Because I would His Holiness to really have the best meal of his life. Right?

Now, that's reverence! Right? That's holding something in high esteem! Right? That's acknowledging a distinguished individual! And what I want you to see: When you treat yourself at that level, that is self-reverence!

You were created in the image and likeness of God! You are an instrument of God! You are an expression of God! You are created from the Infinite to express the Divine! When you hold yourself down – when you believe that you're "less than" – you are not seeing yourself with self-reverence.

Reverence! I want you to really pray about that. Like, if I was to really see myself – if I was to really live my life from self-reverence – what would that look like? What would that feel like? To live every day revering who I am? Acknowledging who I am? Celebrating who I am? Acknowledging that I was created in the image and likeness of God.

The next one is self-knowledge. Right? That, when you begin to revere yourself – when you begin to really see that you're created in the image and likeness of God – you actually have to know yourself in a deeper way. I'm not talking about knowing your short-comings, or knowing what a jerk you are. Knowing the ways you've made a mistake in the past. But knowing yourself at a higher level. I want you to be really focused on knowing your possibilities. Knowing how great you are. Knowing the things that you're truly capable of.

Because knowing the problems: that's kind of easy! Right? I mean, I'm sure people have been pointing out what the problems are with you from pretty much the first day you showed up! Right? You can always find somebody who's willing to point out your problems, point out your difficulties, point out your limitations, point out your past mistakes, you know! [Laughs] It's kind of easy, right?

And the people who are committed to pointing out your mistakes, you know, tend to be louder! You know, in ministry, what I know is that the vast majority of people in ministry love what's going on. You know? But there's about this 10% of ministry that is always telling you what you're doing wrong. And when you listen to that 10%, you begin to think that it has to much more than 10%! Because they're always kibitzing! They're always, "Blah, bah, blah, buh." They're always doing that! And you forget that 80% of the congregation – 70, 80% of the congregation – is happy! They're in! They're doing ... They're loving life! Then there's this 10% that are never going to be happy. And then there's about 20% that are kind of on the fence. Right? They kind of come and go. But that's it! Like 60, 70, 80% of the people are literally happy with what's going on! But we tend to focus on the 10%, thinking that when we can get that 10% happy, that everything's going to be okay. And they're never going to be happy! They just go from one upset to the next upset! Right?

And so what I want you to really look at is not the knowledge of the 10%, but I want you to really discover what the 60 or 70% of your life is really talking about: that you're doing well. And that you're doing really well. To really celebrate your successes. To celebrate what's happening in your life. To really go deeper into the celebration of you.

In the temple of Apollo in Delphi it read, "Know thyself." I want you to know yourself! Not just the problems, not just the challenges, not just the mistakes of the past. But I want you to know yourself the

way that God knows you. I want you to see yourself the way God sees you. I want you to see your potential as created in the image and likeness of God.

And then the final one is self-control. Now, for many of us, self-discipline/self-control is really a challenge. Like, we want to be free spirits, and we want to be able to do this and that. And, spiritually, we've been given free will, so we just want to kind of flitter off in all the places we want to flitter off. But self-control is really the way that opens the door to a higher level of good. Until I can make consistently good choices for myself – for my life ... Until I can make consistently spiritual choices for myself and for my life, for my world, I'm really not my most powerful self.

If I don't have self-control ... If I can't choose the good over the less-than-good ... If I can't choose the highest and the best over the less than, over the mistakes of the past ... It really never works.

Recently I gave this quote, but I want to do it again. From Romans 7:15: *"I do not understand my own actions. I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing that I hate. Now, if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But, in fact, it is no longer I that it is doing, but it is the sin that dwells within me."* Right? [Laughs]

And I want you to see: What's the big sin? Right? The big sin is not knowing yourself! The big sin is not revering yourself! It's not understanding yourself! And not having the self-control to choose the highest and the best within you over and over again!

And the number one thing I want you to really work on mastering and getting your arms around – getting control over – is your own mind. Right? That, for many of us, the problem is that, when we master our mind, everything in our life gets easier. When our mind is out of control – and that's why we practice meditation, right? Because meditation is a form of, literally, mind discipline. That, when we can focus on an idea or a thought, or just be still – when we can really begin to master our mind – everything becomes easier.

I'm going to do a series of talks later this summer. And I'm going to focus on mastering your mind. And I'm going to focus on four areas that I really want you to look at as we prepare for this series of talks.

And the first one is mastering the inner critic. See, if you're going to live your best life – if you're going to be the best version of you – having your inner critic run rampant in your life is not helpful. If your inner critic is always affirming what's wrong with you, it is not helpful. But as you learn to master your mind, one of the elements of mastering your mind is that you learn to master your inner critic. And it's not that you're not going to have an inner critic; but it's not going to go wild. It's not going to be in charge. You're actually going to be able to hear your inner critic: know when it's wisdom, know when it's truth, know when it's for your highest good, and when it's just trying to take you down.

There is no value in an inner critic that is just making you smaller. There is no value in an inner critic that is making your life harder and more difficult, more painful, because you're focusing on every mistake instead of what's good and glorious about you. So the first one we're going to focus on is your inner critic.

The second one we're going to focus on is your inner worrier. [Laughs] Right? Do you have an inner worrier? Right? An inner worrier is always looking for what could go wrong. Right? They are surveying the horizon, thinking, *"This could go wrong; this could go wrong; this could go wrong!"* And they can give you a list – a hundred, a thousand different things that could go wrong! They never focus on what could go right; they never focus on faith. They never focus on what God is doing in your life. They focus on what's going wrong.

And the idea of the worrier is that: if the worrier can point it out, then the worrier believes that you can stop it. It's kind of this negative focus on life. That, if you see the problem, somehow it's going to make you better able to solve it.

What happens over and over again is: when we focus on worry – when we spend all of our time and energy on worry – we’re actually visualizing what we don’t want. And we never really focus on all the power that we have to create the next version of ourselves.

And the third aspect is mastering the inner reactor. The one that just reacts to life. And when we’re operating from the reaction – when we’re operating from the reactor – we don’t really move into conscious choice. We haven’t made the decision to be mature in our spirituality. We just react. Somebody cuts us off, and we tell them they’re number one. Or whatever it is for us, right? We’re just reacting to the moment.

And when we just react to the moment, we never really fully move into conscious choice. Conscious choice. We need to learn how to take a breath. We need to learn how to pray about something. We need to reserve the right – before we move into action – to really decide what is the highest and the best action. And until we learn to really master our mind – and master the reactor – we’re always just reacting to life.

And then the fourth one is mastering our need to be unconscious. When we just want to turn it off. When we just want to pull the covers over our head and go back to bed. *“I don’t see it; I don’t want it; I can’t deal with it.”* And we just go unconscious.

But when we really learn to master our inner critic, the worrier, the reactor, and that unconscious part of us, then we become conscious. Then we move into choice. Then we move into higher possibilities. And then we actually begin to own who we are.

See, I believe that you were created – truly created – in the image and likeness of God. I believe that you are unlimited. I believe that the full power of God is within you. And I am committed to you living your best life. That, for us to be as happy – as prosperous, as loving, as kind, as joyous – as we can be, we have to really begin to discover The Unlimited Me.

We have to discover the truly unlimited aspect of each and every one of us. I don’t know what’s going on in your life today. I don’t. I wish I did. But today what I know to be true: As you tap into the power of God – as you tap into the faith within you – that you’ll begin to move mountains in your life. You’ll begin to open doors. You’ll begin to have healings. You’ll begin to have experiences of greater and greater levels of peace, love, joy and abundance. And it all starts when you begin to tap into the power of God within you.

We’ve all spent so much time and energy trying to manipulate the people around us with our power. Claiming being rich or sad or angry or sexy, or whatever the thing we used. And today what I want you to see is that God in you really is the way. God in you knows exactly how to do this. And the power of God can open every door in your life. The power of God in you can move mountains. The power of God can heal you, prosper you, and create miracle after miracle in your life.

Today I’m ready for each and every one of us to awaken to the full power of God within us! To feel the power of God! And to live our life with a sense of confidence, knowing that we can open whatever door is in front of us.

Let’s move into our time of prayer and meditation.

MEDITATION

I want you to take a deep breath, and I want you to feel God right where you are. And I want you to feel the full power of God to move mountains in your life. To open the doors that have felt stuck or jammed. To create the miracles, the healing, the transformation that your soul has always wanted. God in me is my power! God in me is my power! God in me is opening new doors of possibility! God in me is blessing me, healing me, restoring me! God in me is prospering every aspect of my life! God in me is my way!

Take another deep breath. I want you to feel that. I want you to feel the power of God in you. I want you to feel the faith that comes every day, knowing that you're living in confidence. That you're living at a high level of expectancy. That you expect your life to work. You expect it to be good! You expect to be blessed. You expect doors to open. That there is a power within you that is greater than you could ever have imagined.

I want you to take another deep breath. And I want you to just allow that power. First I want you to own it for yourself. God in me is powerful! God in me is powerful! And let it just build within you. Let yourself just feel that. And now in a moment of silence, I want you just to feel that power expanding into every area of your life.

SILENCE

And so we say: thank you, God! Thank you, God, for the power that is within me. Thank you, God, for the opportunities that await me. Thank you, God, for the abundance that is mine. For the love that is eternal. For the peace. For a quiet mind. That I can master my mind today. I can master self-doubt and all the other conditions that have plagued me. Thank you, God; thank you, God; thank you, God! And so it is. Amen.

COLLECTION/CLOSING

Alright; this is the time of giving of our gifts and tithes. I invite you to hold them in your hand. Even if you're giving electronically, I want you to imagine your electronic gift in your hand as we're going to bless these together.

Together: *"Divine love, through me, blesses and multiplies all that I have, all that I give, and all that I receive. Divine love, through me, blesses and multiplies all that I have, all that I give, and all that I receive."* In the name and through the power of the Living Christ, we give thanks for every gift and every giver. And we dedicate it all to God: to the greater outworking of God in and through this ministry. Thank you, God; thank you, God; thank you, God! And so it is. Amen.

Alright; I want you to really feel the power of God within you this week! I look forward to seeing you next week! June 9th; be here: 7 o'clock. It's going to be a hoot! I want you to be a part of it! It's time to get back together. It's time for the church to come back together, and to know our oneness with God. So come and be a part of it! Also June 6th for Sunday. Thank you very much! Have a great week! And the choir's going to sing us out.

The light of God surrounds us;
The love of God enfolds us;
The power of God protects us;
And the presence of God watches over us.
Wherever we are, God is.

God bless you, friend!

Unity of Phoenix Choir sings the "Peace Song":

Let there be peace on earth
and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth;
the peace that was meant to be.

With God as Creator,
family all are we.
Let us walk with each other
in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me;
let this be the moment now.
With every step I take,
Let this be my joyous vow:

To take each moment
and live each moment
in peace eternally!

Let there be peace on earth
and let it begin with me!

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