

## Plenty of Power, But No Payload

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Trains are fascinating contraptions. I love to watch them and many times find myself counting cars or checking out where the various cars have come from or wondering what the cars are carrying and where they are heading. I haven't ridden very many, but the ones I have ridden have left me with special memories. Perhaps my fascination stems from an unfulfilled desire to have a model train as a child, or perhaps I just find it intriguing about one locomotive pulling so many cars. Perhaps it comes from playing along railroad tracks as a kid and finding all of those fossilized clams, or from watching a train flatten a penny that was left on the track.

At any rate, I find myself checking out trains whenever I have the opportunity. Sometimes it is a long freight with four or five engines and over a hundred cars. At other times it is a single engine with ten to twenty cars. Occasionally it's the silver Amtrak passenger train. I have even enjoyed watching the cane trains being loaded and unloaded. About the only time that my fascination wanes is when I'm in a hurry to go somewhere and the train is between me and my desired destination.

At one such time the railroad crossing bars came down and forced me to stop, but I spotted no train coming. Then I saw it coming in the distance and thanked God that it was a short train, and assumed that it was an engine pulling a few cars. That assumption was proved wrong as the train passed. The seven cars consisted of six locomotives and a caboose. There was all that power or potential power but no payload.

If you think about it, many of us Christians are like that train. We have a lot of power or potential power at our disposal which we can tap into. This power and potential power is given to us from God through the Holy Spirit. We can access this power through worship, Bible study, and prayer. Not being fully connected in each of these areas leaves us short of the power at our disposal.

This raises several questions for us. "Are we going down the tracks of life pulling our payloads with only one engine, when there are more available to help us?" "Are we using that power to deliver a payload of the fruits of the spirit?" (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control – Galatians 5:22). "Or are we going down the tracks of life with all of that power and no payload?"

If we find ourselves in that latter position, we should, like the six locomotives, focus our forward momentum towards going to pick up a payload and then deliver it. For "what does the Lord require of us but this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God" (Micah 6:8). If we can do this, then we will find that we won't go through life just spinning our wheels, and we won't get de-railed.