Sermon:

Power is found 3 times in the passage:

**power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves** (16)

**power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ’s love** (18)

**by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of** (20)

Imran Khan – new president of Pakistan (cricketer, activist, politician)

Some are strong in their bodies (body-builders, athletes). Some are strong in status (politicians, generals)

Wouldn’t it be good to be strong inside? Many feel fractured, weak, emotionally and/or spiritually. TEXT1 But this inner strength isn’t to defeat others, or exert power over others. It is not for competition.

It is power to understand. When you ‘get it’ life starts to make sense. What is it that we are meant to ‘get’?

Life is not all about ‘me’, it is about relationships, co-operation. The primary relationship is with God.

So often we do not ‘get’ that relationship. God is not out to judge us, but to co-operate with us, integrate us into his love, shown in Jesus. TEXT2. All-encompassing love. See Jesus’ example.

A danger with Evangelical religion, it can be too personal. God’s personal love isn’t just for individuals.

Our horizons are often to narrow, which leads us to be satisfied too easily! What is our aim? To have a full church (is that all?) What is your deepest wish from God?

We might mock the typical Beauty Queens’ “world peace” – but is it that bad?

TEXT3. God’s love affects and seeks to transform the whole world - nations, cultures, societies, individuals.

Some of the greatest movements have been those that do this – slave trade, racial harmony.

There was (is?) a Nicaraguan village which studied Acts, then shared co-operatively, creating surpluses.

This is freedom: not freedom to do what you like, but freedom that comes from working together, respecting each other at all levels. This is only possible when we see differences not as threats but as opportunities to give and receive love (as we saw last week).

May God help us to receive his power deep down and do in us what we cannot believe possible!