

GOD'S GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

Let's think very carefully about a statement (which we will read in a few minutes as our text verse):

My grace is sufficient for thee:

and try to get an understanding of how it pertains in all aspects of our lives.

Let us realize that God's grace is, in fact, sufficient for

• Our salvation

• Our security

• Our suffering.

Now, let's look at each one of those aspects:

• Our salvation --- We are saved by God's grace:

Eph 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves:
it is the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

• Our security --- We are secured by God's grace:

Eph 1:3-7 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:
4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:
5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself,
according to the good pleasure of his will,
6 To the praise of the glory of his grace,
wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.
7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,
according to the riches of his grace;

• Our suffering --- We are under-girded by God's grace in suffering:

2 Cor 12:7-9 And lest I should be exalted above measure
through the abundance of the revelations,
there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me,
lest I should be exalted above measure.
8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.
9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee:
for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather
glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Yes, God's grace is adequate and abundant for ALL of our needs.

Since we're talking today about grace -- let's define the word: What is GRACE?

1. Grace is the free, unmerited favor of God
happily lavished upon those that deserve nothing but judgment.
2. Grace is all that God is free to do for us because of Calvary.

There are 2 truths about grace that make its meaning very clear in the Bible:

FIRST --- GRACE AND WORKS ARE NOT 'BUDDIES.'
They do not go together.

Rom 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works:
otherwise grace is no more grace.
But if it be of works, then is it no more grace:
otherwise work is no more work.

Grace and works do not co-exist when it comes to salvation. It is entirely by grace.

SECOND --- GRACE WILL ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE FROM MAN.
That is FAITH.

Rom 4:4-5 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.
5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly,
his faith is counted for righteousness.

Faith was excluded there as being a work. It is belief which is faith that counts!

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God
must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

The only response that grace can acknowledge is something that is NOT a work.

It is important to note that the MERIT of faith is NOT 'IN' the FAITH itself

It is the OBJECT 'OF' the faith. It's what (or who) you place your faith in.

Faith alone does not save. You can have faith in lots of things, such as

- a chair
- a bed
- a car
- a job
- a spouse
- children
- a church building
- a doctor
- medicine

The point is there is no merit in faith itself the merit is in the object of faith.

Faith in Christ will save because there is merit in HIM.

Remember, faith is not a work ---- Faith is an act of belief.

Faith is a response to information you know.

Faith is the only thing that GRACE will accept.

Now let's think back about the verse we read in Eph. 2:8-9 about being Saved by Grace

No one can measure up to His perfect bar of holiness:

Rom 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

God has already evaluated our works and found them to be 'not good enough.'

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

That leaves you and me in the position of being a total failure helpless in our sin.

God won't accept our works ... but thank God there is Someone's work He does accept.

That is the work of Jesus Christ, His Son, on the cross at Calvary.

You and I had no part in doing that work although we can benefit from it:

Rom 3:24-25a Being justified freely by his grace
through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,

2 Cor 5:19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,
not imputing their trespasses unto them;
and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

In God's mercy and grace, He transfers the work that Christ did at Calvary to OUR account when we believe it by faith.

Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Our salvation comes when we respond in faith to God's work of grace, by Christ at Calvary.

Man has 2 choices:

1. God's offer of judgment and everlasting damnation based upon man's own works.
2. Believe by faith that God's judgment already found us in need of help, and accept God's offer of salvation and eternal life as a free gift of grace.

You can't have it both ways!

You would have to keep the entire law your whole, entire life without even ONE mistake --- just ONE time:

James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

But NO one can do that. If anyone ever could, then Christ would not have had to die for sinners:

Gal 2:21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Next, let's think again about the verse we read in Eph. 1:3-7 about being Secured by Grace.

After the issue of our salvation, then comes the matter of our security.

Many think that after one is saved, it is their responsibility to keep that salvation by their good works thereafter.

That doctrine is teaching that salvation only deals with past sins just with sins committed up to the point of salvation. They think you must walk the straight and narrow in order to maintain your salvation.

Others think that you must confess your sins in order to receive parental forgiveness for them, as if you have daily sins held against you UNTIL you confess in order to get rid of them. That doctrine is mainly taken from

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

It is the same grace that saves us that secures us --- and keeps us saved.

The truth of the matter is this: The maintenance of our salvation is NOT up to us!

Gal 3:1-3 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Neither the flesh nor our works can perfect the salvation that we receive by grace.

Col 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

We received salvation by grace now we should live the same way -- by grace.

Remember that if God looked at our works --- He would see ALL of them --- and just ONE would condemn us.

Our security, as well as our salvation, is all of grace --- and NONE of works.

The scripture explains HOW this is effected.

When we believe the gospel, God places us INTO His Son, so that we are IN Him:

Rom 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

The Holy Spirit puts us INTO Jesus Christ and we become a member of His body:

1 Cor 12:12-13 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

The creation of the new body and our placement in it is completely by God's grace. It is because of our position there in the Body that we are secure.

Col 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

After the Holy Spirit places us into the Body of Christ, He SEALS us there to pre-vent us from being removed:

Eph 1:13-14 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,
14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

We are secure in our salvation because of the Holy Spirit placing us into Christ. That is what the Spirit does NOT what WE do.

As with our salvation so also is our security ---- a free gift of God's grace.

For the 3rd point, let's remember that we are Strengthened by Grace.

God's grace is what strengthens us in our suffering.

It is important to understand that suffering is a part of EVERY person's life --- whether they are a believer or not.

But in this dispensation of grace in which we live, it is also important to realize that we are not promised deliverance from the presence of suffering.

God through Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, lets us know that we can expect to suffer infirmities and tribulations:

2 Cor 11:23-27 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

1 Cor 4:11-13 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;

12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

2 Tim 3:10-12 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Phil 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

Every person has the same 'outer' experience, that is that we all get sick and eventually die:

2 Cor 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

In our text passage of 2 Cor. 12:7-9, it is in the context of all this suffering that we find God's statement that His grace is sufficient.

In Paul's problem of the thorn in his flesh, God did not remove it even though Paul asked Him to 3 times.

God provided Paul with another option My grace is sufficient.

Paul could rest in the fact that the blessings which he had 'in Christ' were totally unaffected by his infirmity.

Paul has complete assurance that the same grace that guaranteed his salvation and security, also promised his future delivery from a fleshly body of corruption:

1 Cor 15:42-43 So also is the resurrection of the dead.

It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory:

it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

God's grace has promised us a complete redemption. That will be our deliverance from suffering:

1 Cor 15:53-54 For this corruptible must put on incorruption,
and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption,
and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

We are encouraged to patiently wait for it:

Rom 8:22-25 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope:
for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

The promise of the redemption of our body is sufficient to sustain us in times of suffering.

We do not need to be delivered from our sicknesses and tribulations now, when we have God's promise of grace that we will have deliverance in the future.

It is this HOPE that saves us from being discouraged when trials come.

This is David Dowell, saying "Think about it!"