

Times of Greater Grace Series: 4

Acts 4.33

The All-Sufficiency of Grace

*“And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And **great grace** was upon them all.”*

When we go through trials and tests God has given us the means of escape (1 Corinthians 10.13) – His grace. He has already given us His grace so that we can bear the trials and overcome.

All that we need for salvation has already been given to us

- Jesus does not need to die again for us.
- It is already done, the price has already been paid
- all we need to do is receive the grace of God through faith.

It is the same for the trials that we go through, all that Jesus IS GOING TO DO for us HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE – all we need to do is receive the grace of God through faith.

Paul had first hand experience of this. He bore the battle scars as a servant of God, but found the power of God's grace to be His help and strength.

2 Corinthians 12.7-10

“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest on me... for when I am weak, then I am strong” (vs 9-10)

Let us look at these verses and see what he went through:

- Paul was receiving many and amazing revelations from God, which we now have as the NT, the revelations could have made him proud and have feelings of grandeur and importance.
- This 'thorn in the flesh' was not an affliction to keep Paul humble – it was a 'messenger of satan to buffet' him
 - the devil came at him to attack him and bring him down (lest he be exalted).
 - to get him to focus on himself and not in the Lord – to puff him up with pride
 - The word buffet means to 'strike with the fist, maltreat and violently abuse'
- Three times Paul pleaded with God to take it away – but God didn't
- God's reply to Paul's pleadings were “My grace is sufficient for you” - grace was all he needed to lift him up.

- “My grace is sufficient for you” - all that I will do has already been done
- we don't need to beg and plead with God for things He has already given to us. We just need to receive them by faith.

- “My strength is made perfect in weakness” - When we need it most we find God's power is at its most effective.
 - The words '*made perfect*' have the understanding of being 'complete, completeness; to be at its most effective; to bring to an end'
 - By the grace of God, His strength brings to an end our weakness.

- Because of the grace of God, Paul could declare “when I am weak, then I am strong”.
 - Grace lifted him from a time of weakness to a time of strength.
 - So Paul could say here that he will glory in troubles and afflictions, not because they bring him down and weary him, but rather that he knows that it is an opportunity for the grace of God to be manifest in his life

Writing to the Ephesian church in Ephesians 3.13-16, he says to them: “*don't lose heart, don't faint or be wearied or quit because of tribulation and affliction, I'm praying that you will be strengthened with might in the inner man by the Spirit of God (who is the Spirit of Grace [Hebrews 10.29; Zechariah 12.10])*” (my paraphrase)