

Russell Kelfer

My Grace is Sufficient

#1242-B

Series: The Character of God

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org

My Grace is Sufficient

It is the kind of moment you pray will never come. The phone rings late in the night. The voice on the other end says, “I hate to be the one to tell you this, but...” Or you open the mail, and it is a letter from someone you love. It begins, “I prayed I would never have to tell you this, but...” Or you sit in the doctor’s office, awaiting the results of your regular checkup, reading the latest magazine, expecting the usual “all’s well” report, when the nurse says to you, “The doctor needs to speak to you privately about your test results.” Or your child comes home from college and says, “Mom, Dad, I know you won’t understand, but...”.

Suddenly your whole world collapses beneath your feet. The sky overhead instantly turns an ashen gray. Your head is spinning. You can’t think straight. “How could this happen to me?” you cry. You can’t even begin to fathom how you will cope with something this tragic. You’ve read all your life about people suffering unexpected tragedies, and you’ve wondered how you would react. You knew that, as a Christian, you had resources available to you that those outside of Christ do not have. Now you are beginning to wonder how to tap into those resources before you fall apart.

A friend calls on the phone. You tell them of your tragedy. They respond, “I’ll be praying that God will give you extra grace.” You thank them, wondering to a degree how they could utter such trite phrases at a time like this. “Extra grace”? What did they mean by that? You walk around for a few minutes trying to get a handle on where you are and what to do next. Before long, you begin to be aware of something you cannot explain. An uncanny peace has settled into your spirit. The fear is dissolving. You are beginning to think of how to help others who are affected by this tragedy rather than thinking only of yourself.

As the hours and days pass and you pass through the crisis, your friends are amazed at how calm, how serene, how at rest you are. They know you are grieving and hurting, but they comment that there is something supernatural about your responses. You

My Grace is Sufficient

have been able to witness to your neighbors at a time when you did not even know where the words would come from. Your family has said they have gained immeasurable strength just watching you, and you cannot explain it. You...of all people. There is simply no explanation for it. Or is there? You are lying in bed one night praising God for what He has done, and suddenly you find yourself thanking Him for the “immeasurable grace” He has given you in this time of great testing. And as you do, you remember the words of your friend, “I’ll be praying that God will give you extra grace”, they had said. You ask yourself, “Could this be what has happened? Dear God, is this where that power has come from?” Suddenly, a passage of Scripture passes through your mind. It says this:

... “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”
(II Corinthians 12:9 NKJV)

It all begins to make sense at last. You reached a mountain in life you could not climb. You came to the end of yourself. There was nothing you could do that would change the circumstances, and nothing in you sufficient to pass through them. But someone asked your God to do for you what you could not. They asked for free, unmerited, sovereign, eternal power to infuse you and inhabit you as though Christ living in you were handling this crisis, not you. And He did. And strangely enough, you are amazed. Why?

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might
He increases strength.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall,;

But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

(Isaiah 40:28-31 NKJV)

You have just read an Old Testament explanation of grace. It is God giving power to those who have none. And the more they know they need it, the more of His grace they can receive. Those who are faint...those who have no might...those who are weary, even the young men (those who in and of themselves normally have the strength to carry on) sometimes get to the end of themselves and cannot go on. But if they rest in the Lord, something supernatural

My Grace is Sufficient

happens. Their strength is renewed. They are infused with eternal power. Suddenly they are soaring like eagles, though they ought to be crawling like insects.

Their endurance becomes supernatural as well. They are forced to press themselves beyond their ability, but the usual weariness is temporarily replaced by an inner staying power that no one can explain. They can run and not be weary; they can walk and not faint. They keep on keeping on as long as is necessary because something inside of them...no, make that someone inside of them is functioning in a totally different realm. It is physical strength, but it is of a spiritual nature. You cannot explain it. You cannot presume upon it. You can only quietly acknowledge it, and thank God for His amazing grace.

What we have been doing these past two lessons is thanking God for His amazing grace. Now we come to one of the most incredible expressions of God's grace...His grace in adversity.

Oh, the amazing grace of God. It is like a gentle breeze that refreshes us on a hot summer day and quietly cools our fevered brow, though no one may feel it but us. And yet it can also be like a whirlwind that comes at the very last moment before destruction deals its final blow and captures us and carries us off into the arms of God where the enemy's taunts are of no avail.

On occasion, the grace of God means the power to remain in place when there is no earthly reason to do so. At still other times, it is the quiet courage to take a stand when no one else is willing. Sometimes it is the ability to endure that which is crippling, debilitating, or humiliating without giving in to the defeats of self-pity or bitterness or addiction. Sometimes God's grace steals ever so silently into our souls and takes us out of the storm. More often, God's grace allows the storm to rage, even intensify, while giving us a kind of quiet calm in the midst of the storm that no one can explain. But however God chooses to demonstrate His awesome grace, one thing is certain. It will always be free. It will always be undeserved. It will always be supernatural, and it will always be sovereign.

THE PROBLEM

The problem, then, is man's incredible need to be able to do that which is supernatural in a natural world. It is what he longs for. It is what he prays for. The problem is that man, in his natural state,

My Grace is Sufficient

looks for supernatural acts of God in the natural realm, the result of which will be to alter his circumstances or ease his burdens. And so he begins to see God as a kind of genie that pops out of His eternal bottle on call, in order to serve us by doing our will. And so we see in our day, as we did in Paul's day, people looking not for internal strength, but external deliverance; not for internal comfort, but for external authority. And God does, on occasion, provide that deliverance and authority. But the truth of the matter is that, unless that deliverance brings God ultimate glory, it does not come from Him at all, but is a counterfeit from the hand of Satan who has incredible, though limited, powers on this earth to change circumstances or remove trials.

Paul was struggling with just such a problem in the opening passage we quoted in II Corinthians 12. A closer look at that incident might better help us to understand just what it is God is trying to do for us and why. Paul was fighting the primary enemy of the grace of God...pride. Some fourteen years before, Paul had been part of a magnificent spiritual experience, resulting in new insights, but giving Satan new opportunities to infiltrate his life with spiritual pride. And so in verse 7 (Amplified Translation) we read:

And to keep me from being puffed up and too much elated by the exceeding greatness (pre-eminence) of the revelations, there was given me a thorn (a splinter) in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to rack and buffet and harass me, to keep me from being excessively exalted.

(II Corinthians 12:7 Amplified Bible)

So the surface problem was one of spiritual pride, and the solution God came up with was to create for Paul a set of ongoing circumstances over which he had absolutely no control, which would bring him back to reality, and cause his self-sufficiency to dissolve into an ocean of dependence on God. In this case, it was neither a short-term onslaught which would soon go away, nor a terminal intrusion, the obvious end of which was death. It was described as a "thorn" in the King James version. The amplified uses the word "splinter". A splinter is something which seems small to those watching, but if it's in your foot, it can paralyze you until you cannot walk. If you let it, a splinter will affect your walk. This was no ordinary splinter. We know several things about it:

1- We know where it came from.

It was a "messenger from Satan". It came straight from the

My Grace is Sufficient

pit, but it was basically (according to verse 7) God's idea; much, I suppose, the way He approached Satan about Job, in Job, chapter one. "Have you considered my servant?" God asked Satan. And sure enough, he had. It came from Satan, at God's suggestion, and with God's permission. We often attribute these problems to Satan, but we seldom remember that God often initiates them, always allows them, and according to Romans 8:28, always uses them for His glory.

2- We know the kind of problem it was.

It was a physical ailment that was both debilitating and humiliating. (vs 7)

3- We know the extent of its impact.

This was no "inconvenience". It was, according to verse 7, sent by Satan to "rack and buffet and harass me". It was warfare. It was heavy ammo time. This problem was enough to sideline the apostle, put him on the bench, and take him out of the contest (from a human perspective). That was Satan's goal.

4- We know God's divine purpose in allowing it.

It was to "keep me from being excessively exalted". It was to keep Paul helpless, so God could help him. It was to keep Paul needy, so God could meet his needs. It was to keep Paul dependent, so He could depend on God. Paul was one of those kinds of guys who could do it on his own. So God let Satan "buffet" him, and humiliate him, and reduce him to what the world calls "useless", so God could finally use him.

5- We know Paul's response.

It wasn't a bad response. He didn't curse God, or get bitter, or try to work it off through good works. He didn't blame either God or man. What he did would be applauded in most churches even today. He went to God. Then, when nothing happened, He went to God again. Finally, a third time he went to God. Still nothing. These were not light, bedtime prayers. The Amplified Bible says:

Three times I called upon the Lord and besought [Him] about this and begged that it might depart from me.

Consistently, fervently, by faith he prayed. He persisted when God said nothing. Finally, God said, "no". Here was God's amazing answer:

But He said to me, My grace—My favor and lovingkindness

My Grace is Sufficient

and mercy—are enough for you, [that is, sufficient against any danger and to enable you to bear the trouble manfully]; for My strength and power are made perfect—fulfilled and complete and show themselves most effective—in [your] weakness. Therefore, I will all the more gladly glory in my weaknesses and infirmities, that the strength and power of Christ, the Messiah, may rest—yes may pitch a tent over and dwell—upon me!

II Corinthians 12:9 Amplified Bible)

“Paul, my grace is enough for you.” That was God’s answer. God’s grace plus nothing equals everything. God’s grace plus our dependence equals spiritual victory. God was saying, “Paul, I can easily take away what’s troubling you. In the twinkling of an eye, I can speak to that disease or that infirmity or that handicap, and it will disappear. Haven’t you seen all the people I’ve made whole?” Paul could relate to that. That’s what he was expecting God to do. But it was as though God added, “But Paul, should I do that, you would know a God of power, but you would never come to know a God of grace.”

God wasn’t looking for someone who needed a miracle. The world was full of those. He was looking for someone to be a miracle. They were more difficult to find. He needed someone so yielded to Christ that they would gladly suffer if the suffering meant more grace. And so He handpicked Paul for the job. He said, “Paul, for me to release my power, you have to be powerless. For me to release my help, you have to be helpless.” God was looking for grace material. He still is, because His grace is sufficient. That means that grace, by itself, is enough. Grace plus nothing. That’s the formula for standing in the midst of adversity. Paul slowly began to catch on. Finally, he reached the point where he could say that he actually looked forward to adversity and infirmities and calamities because every time he was rendered powerless, he experienced God’s power. In fact, the weaker he became, the stronger God revealed Himself to be.

So in verse 10^o, Paul gives us his list of expectations and anticipations for victory in the Christian experience. It wasn’t what we would have written. It says this:

So for the sake of Christ, I am well pleased and take pleasure in infirmities, insults, hardships, persecutions, perplexities, and distresses; for when I am weak (in human strength), then I am [truly] strong—able, powerful in divine strength.

(II Corinthians 12:10 Amplified Bible)

My Grace is Sufficient

Here was Paul's "wish list" for maturity:

infirmities

insults

hardships

persecutions

perplexities

distresses...

He was saying, "God, let the bad times roll." The "Son" shines through stormy skies. When my strength is gone, His grace multiplies.

There you have the perfect environment for grace. Extreme difficulties coupled with the absence of human solutions create a vessel into which grace can be poured with guaranteed results. It is II Corinthians in action. It says this:

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

(II Corinthians 3:5 NKJV)

THE PROMISE

That's the divine promise we all need to hear. Once we come to see that we are not sufficient of ourselves even to think anything as of ourselves (as possible in the flesh), we are then totally helpless until we come to realize that our sufficiency is of God II Corinthians 9 finishes the promise. It reads like this:

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

(II Corinthians 9:8 NKJV)

Oh, what a wonderful word that little word "all" is. All sufficiency in all things. Why? Because God has enough grace, that's why. So the problem is that we need to be dependent to receive grace, and often God's solution is to take away what we think we have to have in order to give us what we need. But once He has done that, He reminds us that He has enough grace to be sufficient for everything that might ever come our way. In other words, His grace is sufficient. And if His grace is sufficient, and it is all we need; then we, like Paul, must come progressively to see life's circumstances simply as vehicles to release the grace of God, and must also gradually come to the inescapable conclusion that the tougher the circumstance, the greater the grace. Perhaps, a very few may even come to the final conclusion Paul reached...that they,

My Grace is Sufficient

therefore, actually glory in (get excited about) tribulation, distress, perplexity, persecution, and infirmity. You may be saying, “What kind of person would actually welcome sickness or trouble, simply because God could reveal more of Himself in those circumstances?” The answer: A godly man; a godly woman. It isn’t some kind of sick personality that delights in calamity because it justifies self-pity. It’s a spiritually healthy person who rejoices in tribulation because he or she lives for another kingdom, and stock in that kingdom goes up when the values in this one come down.

THE PURPOSE

The purpose is more than just what God wants to do in us, however. God’s purposes are always broader than that. In addition to what God wants to do in you, His grace through you is like a projector displaying His nature to those who are lost and to those who are believers seeking to grow. So He puts men and women in tough places in order for their testimony through the storms to radiate the nature of God.

Paul writes:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy,

for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,

being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.

(Philippians 1:2-7 NKJV)

Paul is saying that the grace God has given him is a contagious commodity. All of those believers in Philippi and elsewhere were actually “partakers” of the grace that God was giving Paul. Paul was stuck in a Roman prison for a crime he didn’t commit, and he was rejoicing in it, praising God for it, and trusting God through it to use it for His glory. Before long, the entire church was aflame with excitement. Instead of doom and gloom, there was joy and hope. In verse twelve, he explains:

...that the things which happened to me have actually turned

My Grace is Sufficient

out for the furtherance of the gospel,
so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and
to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;
and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident
by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without
fear.
(Philippians 1:12b-14 NKJV)

That's what Paul meant when he said "ye are all partakers of my grace." He meant that the grace God had given him was being broadcast by divine satellite throughout the Roman Empire to slave and free, to king and subject, even to the guards in the palace. And beyond that, believers all over the then known world were suddenly on fire for Christ, witnessing boldly because of the grace God had given Paul. So the very thing Satan designed for evil God used for good. The very incident that the church could have used to signal its demise became the springboard for its future. All because God's grace is sufficient.

Over and over Paul makes this point. In Galatians 2, Peter, James and John were trying to discern Paul's role in the ministry of the church, and we read:

and when James, Cephas [Peter], and John, who seemed to be [the] pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised [the Jews].
(Galatians 2:9 NKJV)

When they saw the supernatural, undeserved power that God had bestowed upon this man who was once the church's greatest enemy, that grace convinced them that God was working in him. God demonstrated who He was by demonstrating His grace through one of His most unlikely servants, and He will do the same through you and me. That is His divine purpose for filling you with His grace and for allowing the situations in the first place that require that grace to flow.

THE PORTRAITS

The Scripture is filled with examples of how God looks when He is inhabiting man in "grace-life" situations, (times when man could not in and of himself do anything). If you will catalog these illustrations and use them as springboards for praise when you find yourself in similar situations, you will begin to see the grace of God flow through you as never before. The reason is "these things were given to us as examples". They serve as maximum illustrations of

My Grace is Sufficient

the grace of God. Here are a few illustrations:

You are trying to obey God when what He is asking you to do is contrary to human reasoning. In Genesis, chapter 22, a man named Abraham had the same problem. He had prayed all his life for a son... a son that God had promised him. God gave him that son, and then, just as the boy reached the age where he could begin to become God's man, God told Abraham to take him up to the top of a mountain and slay him. God was asking him to give up the very thing He had given him. It made no sense. You and I would have assumed we had misinterpreted the Word of God. "God couldn't have meant that!" we'd have argued. But God did mean that. If the child was a gift from God, and God wanted to be sure that Abraham never forgot that, then God would have to test his man by asking him to give up the gift, rather than defy the Giver. And on occasion, He does the same thing to us. We cry out in anguish, "God, what right do you have to do this?" His answer, of course, is, "Every right. The gift was mine. It was of grace. If I ask for it back, do not question my right, simply ask for grace." As God gives you that grace, you will find Him sufficient for the test. In Abe's case, God's grace allowed him to do what man cannot do, offer up his only son. But God can do that...we have seen God do that. So it was not Abraham, but God working in Abraham giving him grace. In this case, he spared the boy. In David's case, he didn't. But in both cases, he gave amazing grace. If God is calling you to do something or go somewhere or stay somewhere or stay with someone and, according to man's wisdom there is absolutely no reason to obey, it is time to pray for grace. And Christ in you will enable you, supernaturally, to do what you cannot do yourself. The end result will be His glory, and that is why you are alive.

There seems to be no answer to what lies before you. You are proceeding by doing the only thing you know to do, but there is absolutely no open door. As far as you can see, all that lies ahead is a blind alley. There are no other options, but the option you have is a "no win" situation. A man named Moses had the same problem in Exodus, chapter 14. The enemy was behind him, gaining on him every minute. In front of him was an uncrossable sea, raging waters that were like open graves, waiting for their victims. His only hope was for a miracle, and so he just kept going until he could go no farther. Then he took the rod of God which was a visual representation of the grace of God (free, undeserved, supernatural, and sovereign) and he touched the water. Only at that moment did

My Grace is Sufficient

the answer come. Grace intervened when man had no hope. Had there been any other way, it would not have been grace. But apart from something supernatural happening, there was no hope. So God led them into that impossible situation in order to demonstrate His amazing grace, and He will do the same for you. First, you must allow Him to get you to the place where you cannot, so He can.

You've failed and you cannot see how God could ever use you again. Once again, you are a candidate for God's amazing grace. A man named Peter had the same problem. You can read about it in John, chapter 18. It was almost as if his whole life was a practice session for this one moment, his big chance. Stand up and be counted for Jesus. The moment came. He blew it. It came again. He was a miserable failure. The final chance to redeem himself arrived. His failure became a volatile act of rebellion. His heart was broken. He had always known that should he have the opportunity, though all else would fail, he would stand up for the Lord. How could he ever face the others? How could he ever live with himself? Except for a miracle, Peter was finished. Maybe you can relate. But something wonderful happened. We read about it in John, chapter 21. The grace of God took over Peter's life. The mercy of God forgave him, and the grace of God intervened and enabled him to begin a ministry of feeding God's sheep. How could God use the likes of him? Or the likes of you? Or the likes of me? Well, Beloved, failures are the raw materials out of which grace is born. And Peter, the defeated, became Peter, the powerhouse, because now the one who always could, knew he couldn't, and God's amazing grace took over.

You are facing undeserved humiliation and persecution for having done the will of God. Why not take a walk through Acts, chapter 7, and follow a man named Stephen who, when called upon to testify of the grace of God, did so without apology. Then, when the results were hostility and humiliation, and eventually the prospects of dying for his faith, Stephen received an outpouring of the grace of God that was so phenomenal that a young man named Saul, who stood by, was eternally affected. That's what the grace of God does. It manifests itself so supernaturally that others, looking on, are amazed and cannot help but want that same grace. The grace of God. It is sufficient. It is, indeed.

You are grieving over the loss of a loved one, and are not sure you can go on. Once again, few situations more clearly exhibit the grace of God than His enabling power in the midst of grief. You have

My Grace is Sufficient

all witnessed someone who has experienced the loss of a loved one, and yet who seems to be undergirded by some kind of supernatural peace and stamina. The grief is there, but there is a spiritual kind of physical strength that supersedes human understanding. It often includes the ability to bear testimony amidst the grief that amazes and astounds the unbelieving world. In John, chapter 11, we see a picture of that grace in action. One of Jesus' best friends has died. And in Jesus, in Martha, and in Mary, we see different aspects of God's grace surface that are an amazing pattern for how to focus on the person of Jesus when a loved one has gone home. It is another illustration that even when life has dealt us the most severe of all blows, the grace of God is sufficient.

You are lonely and weary, and wonder if God has forsaken you. Journey through I Kings, chapter 17. A man named Elijah had been sentenced by God to a season of loneliness by a quiet brook. His only companionship came from a raven who appeared at mealtime with a "Lean Cuisine" in his beak. Then he, too, would disappear. Soon, even the quiet little brook began to dry up. Elijah had no evidence that God planned to use him again. He had no assurance that what he was doing was necessary, but he had no choice but to stay there and wait and wait and wait. Maybe you feel like that. You want to cut and run. Look at the grace that God gave Elijah. He could take no pride in his ministry. He had none. He couldn't boast of his profession. He was a prophet with no one to preach to. He was totally dependent on God. What a place to be in. What a place to prove that His grace is sufficient.

The enemy is attacking from every direction. There appears to be no way to withstand his onslaught. It is a familiar feeling to most of us. Satan usually sends his torrents of evil in waves. And, like Job, after attack after attack has blind-sided us, we get to the place where we just don't think we can handle anymore. That's a good time to take a walk back to II Chronicles 20:12 and watch Jehoshaphat again as he crawls up into God and cries out, ...*"We have no might against this company that comes against us, neither know we what to do... But our eyes are on You."* And we hear the magnificent sound of God's grace as He answers,

You will not need to fight in this battle...

...for the battle is not yours, but God's.

(II Chronicles 20:17a,15 NKJV)

Oh, Beloved, the sweet melody of His amazing grace poured

My Grace is Sufficient

through the lips of the Israelites, and at that moment the enemy fell in utter defeat before them. They reached that wonderful place where they knew they couldn't win. Then, and only then, can God come center stage and do what only He can do. He calls it grace, and that grace is sufficient indeed.

There are more. For a look at the grace of God in the midst of rejection, look at Joseph in Genesis 37 through 50. For a visible portrait of how grace looks when the pain goes on and on and there is no cure, go back and study II Corinthians 12 again. To study God's grace when your most trusted friends let you down, look at Matthew 26, and watch Jesus in the Garden. There you also see the grace of God when death becomes a clear prospect on the horizon of life and you have to deal with it.

There is really no situation that can arise in your life or mine that the Scripture has not already clearly used to demonstrate the grace of God. Every trauma, every trial, every tribulation has been experienced and recorded by the Holy Spirit, so that we can see how grace performs when man cannot.

Which brings us to the prayer we each ought to pray every day. It is a personalization of that passage we read in II Corinthians 9:8. It reads like this:

“Dear Lord, you are able to make all grace abound towards me, so that I, always having all sufficiency in all things, might be invincible by the grace of God.” Amen.

All sufficiency. All things. Literally it says, “There is no situation in which God is not adequate. Therefore, my job is to constantly recognize my inadequacy, that the grace of God might pour through me, doing what I cannot do...saying what I cannot say, being what I cannot be...for His glory alone.”

That prayer frees God to be God, and it frees us from the ridiculous charade of trying to do in our energy what only He can do in His. It further means that anytime we can't and know it, He is about to come on stage and do something special. We have two choices. We can drown in the circumstances and complain because we have no answers, or we can rejoice in the circumstances, knowing that the fact that we have no answers leaves Jesus room to demonstrate His mighty grace on our behalf.

The grace of God...is it sufficient? Paul answers:

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above

My Grace is Sufficient

all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20,21 NKJV)

IS HE ABLE?

So is He able? Can He meet this crisis in my life?
Can my Jesus demonstrate His power amidst this strife?
Is there hope as grief and sorrow fill my life with loss?
Can my God empower me to bear this dreadful cross?

Is He able? Oh, Beloved, He has set you free.
Promising that yes, sufficient, is His grace for thee.
Never can you ever have too difficult a need
For He promises, "My grace is adequate indeed".

Sickness, death, rejection, sorrow, Jesus understands,
And as long as you will place that trauma in His hands,
He will take the fact that there is nothing you can do
And with power, He will give amazing grace to you.

Freedom, joy, peace, and victory all will flood your soul
Just because you cannot do it, Christ will make you whole.
And a watching world will view what time cannot erase
A portrait of The Living God...and His amazing grace.

Let's pray.

Father,

We thank You that we're not the ones who can. We thank You for the things that You even brought into our lives to further illustrate that apart from you we can do nothing. We thank You for the hardships. We thank You for the sicknesses. We thank You for the crises. We thank You for the problems, the splinters, the thorns that will never go away. Without them, Father, we would never know how amazing Your grace really is.

Lord, so long as we can do it, we will. Thanks for allowing Satan to bring things into our lives to prove we can't so You will.

Some of us need to thank You this morning, maybe for the first time, for the things in our lives we always wished You had left out, realizing that without them we would never be the person You want us to be.

My Grace is Sufficient

Thank You that You care enough to listen to all our complaining. Thank You that You love us enough to do with us what needs to be done rather than what we want to be done. Thank You for caring. And above all, Father, thank You for that amazing grace that enables us when we reach the sea that will not part, to put our foot in the ocean and let You do the rest.

Take us through this week, Father, more than conquerors through Your amazing grace.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.

A Challenge to Further Study

1- See if you can recall three instances in your life when you have seen others in situations beyond their ability to handle, who seemed to be supernaturally enabled to handle the crisis. You have witnessed the grace of God. Has there been such an experience in your life? Have you ever stopped to thank God for His grace? Do so now.

2- Why do you think God gave Paul a “thorn”? Has He given you one? Has it made you dependent? Have you ever thanked Him for it?

3- Memorize Isaiah 40:28-31.

4- Memorize II Corinthians 9:8.

5- How has your life been affected by seeing God's grace in adversity in the life of others? Have you ever told them God used them? Do it.

6- Read the passages that are used as examples on pages 8-10. Ask God to give you other examples from Scripture. Ask Him to use those passages to comfort your heart when you are confronted with your inadequacy, claiming God's adequacy as your own.

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230

210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778

www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer