

“My Grace Is Sufficient!”
2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Introduction:

1. This Morning - I Would Like For Us To Head In Our Bibles To:
 - The New Testament Book Of:
 - 2 Corinthians – Chapter 12!
 - As You Well Know, We Live In A World Of Great Suffering!
 - All You Have To Do Is:
 - Read The Newspaper!
 - Or Turn On Any News Channel Or Station!
 - Or - To Bring Things Even Closer To Home:
 - Just Go To A Hospital!
 - Or Even Into A Rescue Mission!
 - Suffering Is Everywhere!
 - We Also Know:
 - That Christians Are Not Immune:
 - To Suffering In This World!
 - Christians As Well As Non-Christians:
 - Experience Disease & Disabilities!
 - Believers As Well As Un-Believers:
 - Will Have Problems With Their Jobs Or Their Finances Or In Their Marriages!
 - The World In Which We Live:
 - Is Very Dysfunctional!
 - That Is, It Does Not Function The Way God Originally Intended & Created It To Function!
 - But A **True** Christian Can:
 - Suffer & Struggle & Experience Sorrow:
 - **Differently** – Because Of What We Learn From Bible Verses Like The Ones We Have Before Us This Morning!
2. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 Tell Us This:
 - “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. / Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong!”
 - A True Christian Can:
 - Suffer & Struggle & Experience Sorrow:
 - Differently!
 - Because A True Christian – As A Child Of God:
 - Can Rest In The Promises That We Find Here!
 - The Promise Of God’s Grace!
 - And The Promise Of God’s Strength!
 - That God’s Grace Is Sufficient For You!
 - It Is Enough! More Than Enough!
 - For You To “Meet Your Trials Here!”
 - So - I Would Like For Us To Look More Closely At These Verses:
 - To **Help** You:
 - If You Are Suffering Today! Or:
 - To **Prepare** You:
 - For The Struggles You Will Face Tomorrow!
 - Because The Words That We Just Read:
 - Are Timeless!
 - And Are For You & For Me! So:

* First, We Need To:

1. **Realize Our Need Of The Lord’s Grace!**
 - The Words That We Just Read Were Written By:
 - The Apostle Paul!
 - And He, Of Course, Was No Stranger To:

- Suffering!
- Earlier In This Book, He Described His Suffering & His Struggles:
 - In This Way - 7:5 - "Our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears!"
- He Felt Like His Struggles:
 - Were Surrounding Him!
 - Have You Ever Felt This Way?
- But Then We Come To This Chapter - Chapter 12:
 - And Listen To What He Says About These Struggles:
 - In 12:5 - "Yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities!"
 - How Could He Say These Words?
 - How Could He Feel This Way?
 - To "Glory" In - Even To "Boast" About His Own Infirmities & Weaknesses & Struggles?
- I Believe It All Started When:
 - He Saw How Weak He Really Was!
 - And He Realized His Great Need For God's Grace!
 - Do You Realize Your Need For God's Grace:
 - In Your Own Suffering & Struggles & Even Sorrow?
 - You Will When You Understand How Weak You Really Are!
 - You Will Realize That You Need God's Grace:
 - All The Time!
- When You Are Physically Weak!
 - Paul Had This In Mind When He Wrote:
 - 12:7 - "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!"
 - God Had Blessed Paul:
 - By Revealing Much Truth To Him Directly:
 - And Then Inspiring Him & Having Him Share That Truth With Others!
 - Yet God, In His Great Wisdom:
 - Allowed Paul To Have A Physical Problem / A Physical Infirmity & Weakness / In Order To Help Him Remain Humble Through It All!
 - A "Thorn In The Flesh!"
 - Not Sure What It Was! Some Believe It Had Something To Do With His Eyes!
 - Now: God May Have A Different Purpose & Plan For Us:
 - But He Also Allows Physical Struggles:
 - Into Our Lives!
 - But Why?
 - He Wants Us To Realize:
 - Just How Weak We Really Are Without Him!
 - That We Need His Grace!
- But We Don't Just Need His Grace & Strength:
 - When We Are Physically Weak!
 - Aren't There Other Weaknesses That We Face In Our Lives As Well?
 - Yes! There Are Many! Like:
 - When You Are Mentally Weak!
 - When You Are Weak In Your Understanding!
 - James 1:5 Assumes This Weakness When It Says: " If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God!"
 - Do We Lack Wisdom?
 - Do We Lack Understanding?
 - Are There Ever Times Of Confusion & Even Mental Conflict?
 - That Is When You Need God's Grace! Or:
 - When You Are Emotionally Weak!
 - When Your Struggles & Your Sorrows:
 - Seem To Surround You Like The Waters Of The Ocean!
 - And There Is No Peace For Your Heart & No Rest For Your Soul!
 - This Is When You Need God's Grace! Or:

- When You Are Spiritually Weak!
 - When The Temptations You Face Feel So Strong:
 - And You Succumb To Them! You Give In To Them! And You Sin!
 - And Shame & Guilt Once Again Floods Your Soul!
 - This Is When You Need God's Grace!
- There Are All Kinds Of Infirmities & Weaknesses In Our Lives!
 - Physical & Mental! Emotional & Spiritual! And Others!
 - But What Do We Do With Our Struggles?
 - We Need To Realize Our Need For God's Grace:
 - In All Of Our Struggles!
 - And This Is Why Paul Brought His Infirmity / Weakness To The Lord:
 - In 12:8 - "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me!"
 - He Prayed! Three Times!
 - And We Should Too!
 - Because Our Lord Jesus Christ:
 - Cares For Our Struggles!
 - Listen To The Words Of:
 - Hebrews 4:14-16 - "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. / For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. / Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!"
 - We Need To Realize Our Need For God's Grace!
 - But Then We Need To Take Our Need To God's Throne!
 - Because Jesus Himself:
 - Understands Our Weaknesses & Struggles!
 - He Faced Them All Himself!
 - So What Did The Lord Do For Paul?
 - Did He Hear His Prayer?
 - Did He Answer His Request?
 - The Lord Did Hear & He Does Answer Paul's Prayer!
 - And We Find These Amazing Words From Jesus Himself In 12:9a - " And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness!"

* And This Leads To A Second Thing We Must Do When We Face Struggles:

2. Remember The Truth About The Lord's Grace!

- The Answer That The Lord Gives To Paul In 12:9:
 - Is So Important For Us Today!
 - The Lord Was Not Just Providing This Answer To Meet Paul's Needs Back Then, But To Meet Our Needs Today As Well!
 - So Often We Think That:
 - The Suffering & Struggles We Face Today:
 - Are Different Than Before!
 - And Can Be Handled Differently!
 - But They Can't!
 - "There Is No New Thing Under The Sun!" (Ecclesiastes 1:9)
 - We Often Think That:
 - Our Modern Trials Are More Difficult:
 - Than Those In The Past!
 - But They Aren't!
 - We Often Think That:
 - Our Modern Solutions Will Really Help Us Better:
 - Than Those In The Past!
 - But They Really Can't!
 - And Although Science & Technology:
 - Have Advanced Us In Some Ways!
 - We Must Never Forget Who We Must Turn To First & Foremost With Our Struggles In Life!
 - To The Lord!
 - And The Lord Gives Us This Truth:

- To Help Us Through All Of Our Struggles:
 - “My Grace Is Sufficient For Thee: For My Strength Is Made Perfect In Weakness!”
- This Is A Comprehensive Truth!
 - That Is - It Covers Everything!
 - Every Infirmary! Every Weakness!
 - Every Struggle! Every Trial & Temptation!
 - Jesus Says To You:
 - “My Grace Is Sufficient For You!”
 - This Means That His Grace:
 - Really Is Enough For You! It:
 - Really Is All You Need!
 - And Not Just When You Face A Physical Struggle:
 - But Any Struggle You May Have!
 - So - Where Do We Turn First In Times Of Need?
 - Remember The Truth About God’s Grace!
 - That It Is Enough!
 - And That It Is Comprehensive!
- This Is A Continuous Truth!
 - That Is - It Never Stops Being True!
 - Jesus Says - “My Grace **IS** Sufficient For You!”
 - In An Ongoing & Continuous Way!
 - There Is Never A Time:
 - There Is Never A Situation:
 - When This Will Not Be True!
 - So - Who Do We Turn To First In Times Of Need?
 - Remember The Truth About God’s Grace!
 - That It Is Enough!
 - And That It Is Continuous!
- This Is A Contenting Truth!
 - That Is - It Will Genuinely Help & Bring Real Contentment:
 - When You Are Suffering / Struggling / Sorrowing!
 - Because Jesus Says:
 - “For My Strength Is Made Perfect In Weakness!”
 - Sometimes - The Grace Of God:
 - Is Not Entirely In The Grasp Of Our Understanding:
 - When We Are Going Through A Time Of Struggle Or Difficulty!
 - We Wonder:
 - Why Did God Allow This!
 - What Is God Doing Through This!
 - The Truth About God’s Grace & Goodness Grace Does Not Change / But Sometimes It Seems Hard For Us To Understand!
 - But His Strength & His Power:
 - Is Within The Grasp Of Our Understanding!
 - We Hear About It God’s Strength & Power!
 - In The Bible! Over & Over Again!
 - We See God’s Strength & Power!
 - In The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - Power To Heal! Physical Needs!
 - Power To Teach! Mental Needs!
 - Power To Comfort! Emotional Needs!
 - Power To Save! Spiritual Needs!
 - We Have Even Experienced God’s Strength & Power In Our Own Lives!
 - First - To Save!
 - Then - To Sanctify!
 - And - To Sustain & To Supply Our Needs!
 - “He Is Able! He Is Able! I Know He Is Able! I Know My Lord Is Able To Carry Me Through!”
 - Remember This Truth About God’s Grace!
- Because - When You Do:
 - The Lord Tells Us That:

- “My Strength / Power Is Made Perfect In Weakness!”
- What This Means Is That:
 - The Strength & Power Of The Lord:
 - Can Shine More Brightly In Your Life When You Are Weak!
- Do You Want To See The Strength / Power Of God In Your Life?
 - Then Whenever You Are Struggling:
 - Rest In & Trust In These Truths About:
 - God’s Grace & Strength!
 - Because It Is In Those Times Of Your Life:
 - That His Grace & Strength:
 - Will Shine More Brightly!
- And When We Understand This Truth:
 - I Believe That We Will:

3. ***Respond To The Promise Of The Lord’s Grace!***

- The Rest Of 12:9 & 12:10 Records:
 - Paul’s Own Response To The Truth He Learned:
 - About God’s Grace & Strength!
 - He Says - “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong!”
 - How Did Paul Respond?
- With A New Desire!
 - In 12:8:
 - Paul Wanted His “Thorn In The Flesh” To “Depart” From Him!
 - That Was His Desire!
 - And It Is So Often Our Desire!
 - But In 12:10:
 - Paul Wants The “Power Of Christ” To “Rest” Upon Him!
 - To “Rest” Upon Him:
 - Like The Covering Of A Tent Or The Roof Over Your Head!
 - Paul’s New Desire:
 - Was To See More Of:
 - God’s Power In His Life!
 - Than To See More Of:
 - His Struggles In Life Go Away!
 - What Changed?
 - The Truth About Christ’s Grace & Strength!
 - Paul Also Responded:
- With A New Delight!
 - In 12:9 Paul Says:
 - “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities!”
 - And In 12:10 Paul Says:
 - “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake!” “Well-Pleased!”
 - Now - At First Glance - We Might Think:
 - Paul - You Are Insane!
 - How Can You “Glory In” & Even “Take Pleasure In” Your Suffering & Struggles!
 - But If You Look A Bit Closer:
 - You Will Realize That Paul Is Not Getting Pleasure & Delight:
 - ***From*** These Struggles!
 - But ***In*** These Struggles!
 - When He Is Facing Any Of These Trials:
 - He Lists 5 Of Them Here!
 - His Focus Is Not On The Struggle:
 - But On His Savior!
 - Paul’s New Delight:
 - Was In The Truth That The Lord’s:
 - Grace & Strength Were Available To Him & Rested Upon Him Through Whatever Trial

He Faced!

- The Apostle Peter Understood This As Well:
 - 1 Peter 4:13-15 - "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: / But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. / If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified!"
 - Another Response Of Paul:
- With A New Determination!
 - 12:10 - "For when I am weak, then am I strong!"
 - Paul Understood That:
 - His Strength Was Nothing!
 - But Christ's Grace & Strength Were Everything!
 - And This Helps Us To See That:
 - It Is Better To Let The Strength Of Christ Be Displayed In Your Weakness, Then To Attempt Anything For Christ In Your Own Strength!
 - After All:
 - Whose Power / Strength Is Greater?
 - And Whose Work Will Last?

Conclusion:

1. What A Change Took Place In Paul's Heart & Mind!
 - When He Was Given This Truth By The Lord:
 - "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness!"
 - A New Desire!
 - A New Delight!
 - And A New Determination!
2. And What A Change Can Take Place In Our Lives:
 - When We Remember This Truth About The Lord:
 - Whenever We Are Struggling:
 - Or Suffering Or Sorrowing!
 - About Anything!
 - Look To & Trust In The Lord!
 - And These Truths About The Lord:
 - About His Grace & His Strength!
 - Because It Is Only Through Him:
 - That The "Weak" Can Say "I Am Strong!"
3. And Whenever You Are Struggling:
 - Realize Your Need!
 - Remember The Truth!
 - And Respond To The Promise:
 - Of The Lord's Grace:
 - And His Strength!
4. "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. / Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: / Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; / Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; / Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's!" (Psalm 103:1-5)

* "Day By Day!"

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, Indiana 46140
317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com