

"My Grace Is Sufficient For You," Highlights The Glory Of His Deliverance



"Gideon's Army Of Three Hundred"
God loves to deliver His people when the stakes are highest and the odds are the worst. He loves to come through in do-or-die situations. When everything arounds us

cries out 'impossible' is when God's Grace is Glorified. Remember when God wouldn't let Gideon use 30,000 or 3,000 men. He carved his army down to a measly 300 men, making the odds of victory so unfathomably small that only God could bring deliverance.

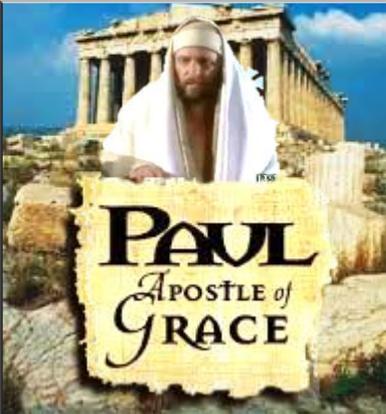


David and Goliath
"God Can Deliver"
cries out 'impossible' is when God's Grace is Glorified. Remember when God wouldn't let Gideon use 30,000 or 3,000 men. He carved his army down to a measly 300 men, making the odds of victory so unfathomably small that only God could bring deliverance. Goliath was an executioner armed with a

colossal sword and spear. David was a shepherd boy attacking with a sling and a few rocks. Only God could snatch victory from the jaws of this defeat. God's power is made perfect in weakness because it shows that God and only God can deliver. We don't have the power to rescue or deliver or save. But God's grace is sufficient to do all those things.

"When God's Grace Is Sufficient, It Shines A Spotlight On God's Power"

One of the great lies we are tempted to believe is that we are sufficient. For everything. For life, for marriage, for parenting, for working – the whole ball of wax. Trials are a match that will torch our facade and fallacy. In reality we have zero ounces of sufficiency in ourselves. This reality is highlighted all the more when we are in dire circumstances. We simply don't have the spiritual strength keep going when the Red Sea is before us and the Egyptians are behind us. If everything hinged on us, we would lose our salvation. However, God's grace IS sufficient. God is Omni-sufficient. Sufficiency and strength and power course through His Being and He is able to keep us through the bleakest struggles. When we are up against the wall, it forces us to cry out, "God, only you're grace is sufficient to sustain me!" And when He delivers me, His power, not mine, is put on full display.



One of the go-to verses for Christians in pain is 2 Corinthians 12:9. In it God told Paul, "**My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.**" In order to truly understand the context of this verse we must examine who is the intended audience and who is the writer. The audience are the Corinthians who became Christians through the Apostle Paul's ministry. Now Corinth was a city of wealth, commerce, and depravity. Sexual immorality was rampant, with prostitution being part of idol worship.

Apparently, the Corinthians had a hard time separating themselves from these cultural practices. Paul who is the writer tried, somewhat in vain it seems, to encourage Corinthian believers to higher standards – godly standards. Second Corinthians was actually his third letter (at least) to the group, after several lengthy personal visits to try to steer the church in the ways of the Lord. To put it mildly, Paul was frustrated and desperately wanted these believers to desire to be the Church – those called out of the world and into the Kingdom.

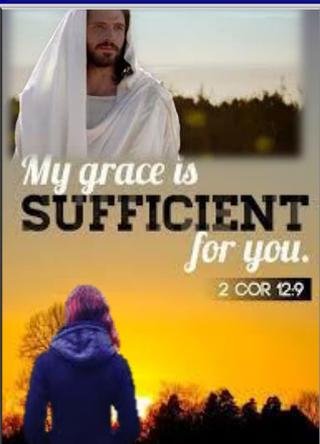


In chapters 10 and 11, Paul felt the need to answer a question the Corinthians seemed to be asking themselves – why should we listen to Paul? Paul acknowledged their grumbling, reporting his awareness that "...some say, 'His letters are

weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing," (2 Corinthians 10:10). The Corinthians were feeling a bit rebellious, and they weren't afraid to say it... when Paul wasn't around. Paul did his best to respond calmly the rest of chapter 10 and the first half of chapter 11, but he eventually decided sarcasm and mockery were the way to go. He was infuriated the Corinthians were choosing to elevate false apostles' teaching above the true Gospel he had introduced to them (2 Corinthians 11:5-6). While defending himself, though, he didn't want to give the impression the Corinthians should listen to him because there was something special about him. It was important they realized because there was something

about him. It was important they realized it was not Paul he wanted them to submit to but Christ in Paul. Paul told the story about his infamous thorn to illustrate his humanity and frailty and to emphasize only the existence of an all-powerful God could explain how a man with such a restrictive condition could be so successful. Within this context, Paul recounted how he asked God to take away his thorn three times (2 Corinthians 12:8). And God had responded this way, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness," (2 Corinthians 12:9).

"Sufficient Grace Means Enough Grace"



The Apostle Paul experienced a continuing weakness, a "thorn in the flesh" that God didn't remove (2 Corinthians 12:7). "But God said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9-10) Sufficient grace means 'Enough Grace'. God supplies us with as much grace as we need for every situation we face. Grace for facing illness or

financial need; grace for our lack of wisdom or lack of social skills; grace for dealing with rebellious children or aging parents. Whatever our need, we can rest in the knowledge that God's grace is sufficient for everything we lack and everything lacking in us. Yet these verses go much further, to the point of almost sounding absurd. Paul says that his weaknesses actually make him glad! He delights in hardships. Insults and persecution bring him joy.

"We Can Bear Witness To His Strength, Glory And Grace"

Paul had learned that the only way to experience God's power was through his weaknesses. In our journeys with Jesus we will discover the same thing. Christ invites us to stop trying to prove our worthiness and to instead accept that He had already paid for our sin. He will show us that our primary purpose is not to achieve, but to know Him. He will teach us to seek Him, talk to Him, and share with others the joy He is bringing to us. If we think we can do something on our own, God lets us go ahead and try, but we don't experience God's transforming power in our lives until we admit our inabilities. When we admit our frustrations in our inabilities He will removed our anger and replaced it

with His love and grace. That's why we can and do thank God for weakness because through our weakness God's power has been displayed in us and through us. Now we can bear witness to His Strength, Glory and Grace.

"Grace By Definition Is A Gift"

"And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace." (Romans 11:6) There is nothing you can do to make you unworthy of God's grace. In fact, by definition, grace is a gift to the unworthy. God's grace is greater than your deepest, darkest sin. God can even forgive that. "But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 5:20-21) But grace isn't just for the future. God's grace covers your inadequacies even right now. God's grace is for each moment of today. You need God's grace not just for forgiveness, but to remove sin from your life. Grace means that you can quit feeling inadequate. You're not perfect, and you'll never be in this life. You need God's grace to think of your life, your circumstances, everything around you as God does. God's grace is greater than your shortcomings, failures, weakness, sinful desires, feelings of inadequacy and your own self-image. God's grace is sufficient for every moment of every day. And we all need it.

"God Gets All The Glory"



If we could sustain ourselves through trials by our own grit and moxie, then we could take some of the glory. 'I made it on my own. I locked and loaded, buckled down, and hacked and whacked my way to the finish line'. But we can't sustain ourselves in the slightest. If

God wasn't behind us pushing and before us making a way, we would head toward apostasy at the first sign of trials. No one will be boasting of their own strength in heaven. We will be boasting about how God sustained us through our heartaches and trials. We will be boasting about how God answered our desperate prayers for our family, friends and children. God's power is made perfect in weakness because it ensures that He alone gets all the Glory. If God's grace alone is sufficient to sustain us, then we can't take credit for sustaining ourselves. God does it all, and we will boast only in Him.