

The Believer's Sufficiency of God

by Octavius Winslow

The believer's sufficiency is of God, and it is found in Christ, who gives us strength, wisdom, and patience for every need.

Scripture: Jeremiah 1:6

Topics: "Divine Calling", "Sufficiency in God"

Description

Octavius Winslow emphasizes the believer's sufficiency in God, drawing from the experience of the prophet Jeremiah, who felt inadequate for his divine mission. Winslow teaches that before God elevates us for service, He often humbles us, stripping away our self-reliance and instilling a spirit of obedience. He reassures believers that despite feelings of unworthiness or lack of experience, God's presence and strength are sufficient to empower them for their calling. The sermon encourages believers to rely on Christ as the source of all grace and strength, reminding them that their sufficiency comes from God alone. Winslow concludes with a call to move forward in faith, trusting that God will provide the necessary strength for every trial and service.

Transcript

"Then I said, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak--for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child--for you shall go to all that I shall send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Be not afraid of their faces--for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord."--Jer. 1:6-8

Such was the spirit, and such the prayer, of the weeping prophet Jeremiah, in view of the great mission to which God now called him. How instructive the words! Learn, my soul, this, among other lessons taught by His servant, that before the Lord exalts, He lays us low; before He places a believer in some position of distinction in the Church, or calls him to any great and holy service in the world, He first empties him of all vain and foolish conceit of his own wisdom, power, and holiness; imbuing him with a lowly, obedient, and docile spirit; acknowledging, "Lord, I am but a child; I know not how to go out or how to come in." Is the Lord thus dealing with you, my soul? is He mowing down by His Spirit your fancied strength, worthiness, and importance? or, is He causing you to pass through some fiery trial, and the flame scorching and consuming? Accept this discipline of God as but intended to prepare you for a higher office, a holier mission, greater usefulness in the Church and the world, for which, in the purpose of His grace, He has ordained you. By this training of sorrow and suffering and emptying, you shall become a "vessel unto honor, sanctified and fit for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

"You shall go to all that I shall send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Be not afraid, for I am with you, to deliver you, says the Lord." This "thus says the Lord" is enough to quell every fear, to meet every objection, and to inspire the timid servant of the Lord with a giant's strength, and a martyr's fortitude in the "kingdom and patience of Christ." "I am with you, says the Lord." You may shrink at the call of God from a sense of personal unfitness; you may plead your educational deficiency--your lack of wisdom--of years--or of eloquence--exclaiming, "Lord, I know not how to speak, or how to act, for I am but a child in knowledge, in experience, in strength;"--but, listen to the word of the Lord, "Fear not, I am with you." Enough! O my Lord, put forth Your hand and touch my mouth as You did Your servant Jeremiah, clothing and sanctifying my tongue with heavenly wisdom and grace, that, with a power and a wisdom higher and holier than my own, I may speak a word for You, for Christ, for truth.

Learn, my soul, that in all holy service for God and for man, your true sufficiency is of God. Ever be anxious only to obey His call, to go where He shall send you, to speak what He shall command you, not afraid of the stern look, and frowning brow, and angry countenance of man; for your God is with you to defend you, and to give you a mouth and wisdom, such as all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. In all your needs, trials, and service, do not forget, O my soul, that it has pleased the Father that all fullness of grace, and wisdom, and strength, and sympathy, should dwell in Jesus. To Him repair with every need, spiritual and temporal. Draw frequently and largely from this inexhaustible Treasury, living by faith as a personal pensioner upon His personal bounty. He can make you strong to bear, eloquent to speak, patient to endure, meek to suffer, wise as the serpent, harmless as the dove, a lamb in your gentleness, a giant in your might, a martyr in your fortitude. "With Christ strengthening me, I can do all things." "My grace is sufficient for you." Forward, then, in duty, forward in service, forward in suffering, mortifying the flesh, crucifying the world, resisting the devil, strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and realizing moment by moment that, "as your day is so shall your strength be." "OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD."

"One trial more must yet be past,
One pang--the keenest and the last;
And when, with brow convulsed and pale,
My feeble, quivering heart-strings fail,
Redeemer! grant my soul to see
That, 'as her days, her strength shall be."

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