

The Sufficiency of Divine Grace

by Thomas Reade

The sermon emphasizes the sufficiency of divine grace and the importance of trusting in God's promise to provide us with strength for our daily needs.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23, Isaiah 41:10, John 1:5, Romans 8:37, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 4:13, 2 Timothy 1:7, Hebrews 4:16, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Divine Grace", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Thomas Reade preaches on the sufficiency of divine grace, emphasizing the importance of self-knowledge taught by the Holy Spirit to reveal our sins and lead us to repentance. The teaching of the Spirit brings light, conviction of sin, and a longing for holiness, transforming the believer into a new creation filled with joy, peace, and communion with Christ. Despite facing internal and external battles, believers can find strength in Christ's promise that His grace is always sufficient, providing for every need and circumstance.

Transcript

9. THE SUFFICIENCY OF DIVINE GRACE

"My grace is sufficient for you." 2 Cor. 12:9

Self-knowledge is an invaluable attainment. Without it, we resemble a vessel, driven during the midnight darkness, amid rocks and quicksands, and which is every moment in danger of being dashed to pieces. Temptations and dangers surround us on every side. The stormy gusts of passion hurry us here and there; no wonder, then, while destitute of chart and compass, if we finally sink beneath the yawning waves.

Few men know themselves. This science can only be taught in the school of Christ. The Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher. He alone can make us savingly acquainted with ourselves. Unbelief and pride, the love of the world and carnal inclinations, blind the mind and corrupt the heart. Many, who esteem themselves to be wise are total fools in God's estimation. Many, who call themselves righteous, are an abomination in his sight; for God sees not as man sees; man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart.

The teaching of the Holy Spirit is enlightening, convincing, purifying, and consoling. The first operation of the Spirit is light. When darkness was upon the face of the deep, God said, "Let there be light, and there

was light." In the new creation, light springs up at the command of God. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This light, darting into the conscience, produces conviction of sin, by discovering, in all its hideousness, the monster that dwells within. "Vice is a monster of such frightful appearance, that to be hated, needs but to be seen."

Sin becomes truly odious when viewed by the light of the Eternal Spirit. Its nature and effects are then known, and felt, and deplored. This sight of ourselves is truly humbling. Self-aborrence is the fruit of deep conviction. Nothing can lay the sinner in the dust of humiliation but the searching light of the Spirit. This candle of the Lord, shining into the inward parts, into the chambers of imagery, discovers the secret abominations which are practiced there. Oh what hidden evils are made manifest by the light- evils of every name, the progeny of hell. Self-love sickens at the view. Pride shrinks before the appalling spectacle.

This loathing of sin, this prostration of soul at the foot of the Cross, is accompanied, through the power of the Spirit, with a longing after inward purity. The soul, thus enlightened, convinced, and humbled, pants after that holiness which forms so essential a part of the new creation. Everything which brings the soul into a nearer conformity to the divine image is delighted in. Holy thoughts, affections, and desires are now the natural and spontaneous workings of the new-born soul. Once it was winter, cold, barren, and gloomy. Now it is the season of warmth, fruitfulness, and cheerfulness. "For the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone. The flowers are springing up, and the time of singing birds has come, even the cooing of turtledoves. The fig trees are budding, and the grapevines are in blossom. How delicious they smell!"

Joy and peace, like the beautiful flowers of Eden, spring up and adorn the garden of the Lord. Praise and thanksgiving with the voice of melody form a concert in which angels join. Filled with gratitude for such divine consolations, the believer thus pours out his heart: "Awake, O north wind, and come O south wind, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruit." Jesus the beloved one, answers to this call in accents of love: "I have come into my garden, my sister, my spouse. I have gathered my myrrh and my spices." Oh! how delightful is this communion between Christ and his Church. Well may the believer say: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." "My beloved is the chief among ten thousand." "He is altogether lovely."

Though reconciled to God, through Jesus Christ, yet, like the Israelites of old, the believer must buckle on his armor, and prepare for the conflict, knowing that there still remains very much land to be possessed.

"Man's is laborious happiness at best,

His joys are those of conquest, not of rest."

The enemy within, will unite with the enemies without, in contending with him every inch of the way to Zion. Every day he will find that there are fightings within, and fears without, to discourage his heart, to retard his steps, to make his soul weary because of the difficulty of the way. But, as the soldier is not sent on a warfare at his own charge, so neither is the Christian warrior. Provision is made for him by the captain of his salvation, equal to his need:

"Jesus gives us in his word,

Food and medicine, shield and sword."

Oh my soul, you can never sufficiently praise the Lord your God for all his rich promises of protection and care. Many times you are cast down and sad when the enemy oppresses you; many times you tremble, as if the power of the Prince of darkness would finally overcome you. But do not be dismayed. What do you read in the word of Truth, for your support and consolation? "As your days, so shall your strength be." Do you ask, who spoke these life-inspiring words? It was not the announcement of some mighty monarch, with his fleets and armies. It was not the proclamation of some great archangel whose powers surpass all human thought. Oh delightful truth! they are the words of Him who cannot be; whose power is infinite; the Eternal Jehovah, the everlasting God, speaking through his servant Moses.

Jesus, who is God over all, blessed for evermore, is the Fountain of grace and mercy. He alone can give to his people the assurance of hope, because none but He is infinite in power, and infinite in grace. Hear his own declaration, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "My grace is sufficient for you." Rejoice, O my soul, rejoice in this, that as none but Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, could make this promise, so, He in faithfulness will assuredly fulfill it. Blessed promise indeed! how suitable to the needs and weaknesses, the fears and failings, of his people. Away, then, unbelieving fears, since Jesus has said- "My grace is sufficient for you."

What have I now to do, but to go to the strong for strength, to go in the full assurance of faith and hope. But alas! my faith is weak, and too often wavering, when the wind of temptation blows upon it. Let me, then, without delay, plead this precious promise, founded on the truth, and sealed with the blood of Christ. With this promissory note in my hand, ever payable on demand, when presented by faith and prayer in the name of Jesus, I need not despond. I shall receive in return what will supply my every need out of the fullness which is in Christ Jesus. Out of his fullness, I shall receive, and grace for grace.

Am I tempted by small temptations? There is grace sufficient. Am I assaulted by the hottest batteries of hell? There is grace sufficient. Am I brought down into the valley of poverty? There is grace sufficient. Am I raised to the dangerous heights of earthly grandeur? There is grace sufficient. Am I treated as the offscouring of all things for Jesus' sake? There is grace sufficient. Am I brought down to the chambers of death, racked with pain, and worn out by disease? Still there is grace sufficient. My needs are many, but my supplies are infinite. Though millions of weak, tempted, persecuted, dying believers, have been invigorated in every age by this living water, yet its streams are undiminished; it still remains as it ever was- Grace Sufficient! Sufficient to relieve the needy, to strengthen the weak, to pardon the guilty, to sanctify the unholy, to support the disconsolate, to comfort and save all, however vile and worthless; who sincerely, fervently, and perseveringly seek for it, through faith in Christ.

Oh for a stronger faith. Lord give me faith, and increase it. Let the dew of your grace be ever falling on my soul, that I may blossom as the rose, that I may bear fruit to your glory. Endue me with power to withstand the temptations that surround me. Enable me to fight the good fight of faith, to lay hold on eternal life. Give me persevering grace through Jesus, my only hope and stay. His grace is sufficient for me, by whose power I am rescued from the jaws of Satan, by whose blood I am cleansed from sin, by whose righteousness I am delivered from the curse of the law, and made an heir of glory. For his sake, O heavenly Father! strengthen me with strength in my soul, that I may be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus my Lord, until all my sins are subdued, Satan vanquished, and death swallowed up in victory. Then, in the glorious day of Christ's appearing, ten thousand times ten thousand voices will shout the triumphant hallelujah, praising, adoring, and blessing Him whose all-sufficient grace brought them to the realms of glory.

I will trust your promise, Lord,
Rest in your unchanging word,
Which so kindly says to me;
"As your days, your strength shall be."
Do I feel with guilt oppressed,
Rankling in my wounded breast?
Jesus sweetly calls to me;
As your days, your strength shall be.
I have borne your sins alone,
For your guilt I did atone,
Only now, believe in me,
As your days, your strength shall be.
Ask of me the Spirit's power,
In the sad, and evil hour;
Then, my goodness you shall see,
As your days, your strength shall be.
If overwhelmed with earthly care,
Banish unbelieving fear;
All my grace shall shelter thee,
As your days, your strength shall be.
When the hour of death shall come,
Hasten to your heavenly home,
Trusting on my word to thee,
As your days, your strength shall be.
Lord, I bless you for this grace,
As I run the heavenly race;
For this promise, rich and free,

"As your days, your strength shall be.

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