

(The Better Covenant) 2 - All-Sufficient Grace

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's all-sufficient grace and its power to deliver us from sin, leading to a life of victory and freedom.

Duration: 49:36

Scripture: Psalm 103:2, Ephesians 4:31

Topics: "Overcoming Temptation", "Gods Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of relying on God's grace to overcome temptation and sin. He encourages listeners to humbly ask God for help before they fall into temptation, rather than after. The speaker uses the analogy of a tap that constantly releases sin, and questions whether the gospel only provides a mop and bucket to clean up the mess, or if Jesus can actually turn off the tap of sin. He also highlights the universal struggle with sin and the law of gravity, which constantly pulls us down, but shares a story of a dream where God reveals that He can raise the level of the water to help us overcome obstacles.

Transcript

So, continuing our study on the Better Covenant, we were looking at Hebrews in Chapter 8, where we find that expression, that the New Agreement or the New Covenant God has made with man is better than the old one. And we looked at the terms of that New Covenant in Hebrews Chapter 8, verses 10 to 12. Today we want to look at the word grace, all-sufficient grace, which is a very important part of the New Covenant.

This is a distinctively New Testament word. The word grace is not found in the Old Testament in the same meaning as we find it in the New Testament. It says, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, means he only found favour.

But grace, we are told in John 1, verse 14, came through Jesus Christ. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. There was no grace in the world until Christ came.

The law came through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. It is very clear in John 1, verse 17. And this means that grace cannot be unmerited favour, as many Christians have defined it.

Because unmerited favour every human being receives. Even the unbeliever, every blessing he receives from God is unmerited. Nobody receives merited favour from God.

But grace is much more than that. Grace is God's power to help us, to see us through every need we can ever face in our life. It begins with forgiveness of sins because that is our first need.

So the Bible says in Ephesians 1 that we have forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. The word that the Lord spoke to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12, my grace is sufficient for you. There was a need that Paul had and God said my grace is sufficient for you.

Grace is the power of God, the help that God gives to meet our need whatever it is at this particular moment. In that connection I said our first need is the forgiveness of sins. So here in Hebrews 8 we read about God dealing with our sins in verse 12 first of all.

I will be merciful to their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more. Now this may be very elementary but yet I found many Christians who never seem to finish with the memory of something terrible that they did in their past life. Even though some of them have confessed it probably 10, 20, 30, 100 times and they never seem to be finished with it, with the memory of it.

It seems to come back in a nagging way and I want every Christian who has sincerely turned to the Lord and repented and confessed his sin to know that those reminders come from Satan. Satan is called the accuser of the brethren and one of his tasks if he can't lead us into sin is to keep on reminding us of sins in our past life that we confessed, repented of, forsook and that God cleansed. The Lord says here I will not remember your sins any more.

And in Revelation we are told that the only way to overcome the accuser of the brethren in Revelation 12 verse 11 is by the blood of the Lamb. We've got to understand what tremendous power there is in the blood of Christ not only to cleanse us but to justify us. In the Old Testament there was no cleansing from sin.

You know we sometimes sing I'm covered by the blood. It's not true. It's theologically not true.

There's no expression in the New Testament of being covered by the blood. That is an Old Testament expression. Blessed is the man in Psalm 32 whose sins are covered.

In the New Testament the blood of Jesus doesn't cover us. It cleanses us. And there's a lot of difference between being covered and being cleansed.

See if I were to use an illustration, if all our sins were written on a blackboard and I put a sheet over it, that's covered. But somebody could easily lift the sheet and see what you did. But cleansed is if I took a wet sponge and wiped it all out.

You could never retrieve it. It's impossible. It's cleansed.

It's gone. And that's the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. This is why it's a better covenant.

I thank God my sin's not covered. Nobody can ever lift a sheet and see what I did. God's cleansed it.

The blood of Jesus cleanses us. If we walk in the light, in other words if we are open with God to be completely honest about everything in our past life, his promise is that the blood of Jesus cleanses us. Completely.

Totally. And not only cleanses us, but I will not remember their sins anymore. Now we need to understand this.

It's not that God does not know what I did 40 years ago. He knows very well. I remember what I did 40 years ago.

How is it that God cannot know that? But what he's saying here is, I choose not to remember it. And that's important for us also when we forgive others. We can feel guilty that, hey I can't forget what that person did.

Well you'll never forget. That's the problem with my memory, not with my heart. And the memory cells in my brain may remember the evil that somebody did to me.

But that doesn't mean I haven't forgiven him. Forgiveness means I choose not to remember it. In all my relationship with that person in future, I deliberately choose, just like God does with me, not to remember what he did against me.

Because that's how God deals with me. I choose not to remember. I will not remember your sins anymore.

It's liberating to know what the grace of God does, what the blood of Jesus Christ has accomplished for us. But it's not just cleansing. It's not just blotting out our past.

In Romans 5.9 it says that we're justified by his blood. And this is a distinctively New Testament word. The way Abraham experienced justification is only a shadow of the reality of it in the New Testament.

What does it mean to be justified? Just as if I'd never sinned, to be declared righteous. I want to try and bring out this distinction by an illustration again. If I were taken to court and accused by a prosecutor of many, many charges, and the judge is merciful, and maybe I'm a great criminal and the whole town is waiting outside to see what judgment is going to be given to me.

And the judge is merciful and says, OK, I'm going to forgive you. Of course I'm excited. I'm forgiven.

And I come out of the courtroom delighted that I'm forgiven. But yet I know that I'm a criminal, a forgiven criminal. So even though I come out forgiven free, I come out with my head hanging down.

Because everybody knows I'm a criminal. Now on the other hand, if the judge goes through the charges and says there's not an atom of truth in all these charges. These are all false charges.

I declare this person righteous. He's not guilty at all. It's not just that he's forgiven me.

He's not guilty. Again I come out of the courtroom free, but this time my head's lifted up. I'm not a criminal.

This is the difference between forgiveness and justification. A lot of Christians have only experienced forgiveness. They haven't understood the joy of being justified.

That God hasn't just forgiven me. He doesn't just say that he'll not remember my sins against me. He says you're declared righteous.

The glory of this. I myself never experienced the glory of it because no preacher explained it to me in my younger days. I wish they had.

The Bible says that God is our glory and the lifter of our head. He doesn't want any Christian to go through life with his head hanging down in shame because of sin that he's confessed. The only sin that God cannot forgive is the sin that you haven't confessed.

That's all. And if you've confessed it, you don't need to confess it a second time. If you really turned and confessed it to God, we're justified.

We're declared righteous. It doesn't matter how wicked our past may have been. It doesn't matter how many times we have fallen.

We're justified by the blood of Jesus Christ. This is how we glorify and exalt the power of the blood of Jesus Christ. And it's very, very important that we have this clear foundation in our life concerning the past.

That our past has been dealt with permanently, once and for all, so that we can press on to the future. And if you're not clear in this, I want to tell you that the devil will nag you and nag you and nag you endlessly. We need to know the power of the blood of Jesus Christ.

In computer language, if you use a word processor, you know that you come across the word justify. And justify in a word processor means, you know exactly what you see here in a book. The right-hand edge comes absolutely straight.

And it's an amazing thing. You just hit a button and the entire right side of your letter is justified. Now in the old days when we used typewriters, we could never do that.

You could get your left-hand edge right in a typewriter, but the right-hand edge would all be jagged. But now we can produce these wonderful letters where you hit just one button on a computer, justify, and all your right-hand edge is justified. Whether you wrote three lines or a hundred lines, it was all jagged.

And you highlighted it, justify, and the whole thing gets straight. And that's the picture of what God does for us too. Our life could be like those jagged edges on the right side of the screen.

Whether it's been for three years or fifty years, it doesn't make a difference. In a moment, God says, justify, and that right-hand edge is absolutely straight. It's just as if we'd never sinned in our whole life.

Unless we believe what God has said, we're not really glorifying God. The Bible says in Romans chapter 4 concerning Abraham and this great truth of justification, that--let me read these words to you--he became strong in faith, Romans 4.20, giving glory to God. Do you know that we don't give any glory to God when we don't express our faith in what God has said? If God has said that my past is blotted out, I give glory to God by saying, yes, Lord, that's true.

I'm never going to think about it anymore. I'm not going to let my past weigh me down. I'm going to finish with it.

This is the foundation for something further that the grace of God offers us. The first is, we have forgiveness of his sins, justification according to the riches of his grace. It's a wonderful gospel.

It's the most wonderful news that this world has ever heard, and that's why we need to share it with other people. But going on from Romans chapter 4, grace also leads us to victory. Romans 6 and verse 14 says that God has given us grace.

Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law, but under grace. This is more than forgiveness. This is a second step.

This is talking about what grace can do to deliver us from the power of sin. Sin shall not be master over you. That's how this translation reads it.

Why? Because you're not under law. That was the old covenant. You're now under a better covenant, grace.

So if you were to give that verse to a little ten-year-old boy and ask him to read it, and then ask him a simple question, even a ten-year-old. From this verse, how do you know whether you're under grace or under law? There's only one answer. You know you're under grace when sin does not have the mastery over you.

So how is it that many imagine they're under grace when sin still has the mastery over them? They must be something wrong. We haven't availed of our privileges under the new covenant. It's so clear and so simple.

Sin shall not be master over you or shall not have dominion over you because you're not under law, but under grace. And if you were to ask that ten-year-old another question, just from this verse, how do you know whether you're under law? Well, sin has mastery over me. Then I'm under law.

So does that mean I've not experienced God's grace if I'm still defeated by sin? Yes, I may have, but not the full provision of it. I may have experienced forgiveness, but I've not availed of everything that God's provided for me in Christ. Think of a verse like Ephesians 1 in verse 3 which says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every, that's very important, every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

That verse teaches us that every single spiritual blessing that God can give any human being in Christ is already potentially mine. It's been given to me. It's like a money put into my bank account.

Now my father may put a million dollars into my bank account, and if I draw only ten dollars every month, that's all I'll get. This is how it is, where God has in Christ blessed everyone who is in Christ with every spiritual blessing, but says, how much you get depends on what you have faith for. Because that's a law of God, according to your faith, be it unto you.

And many people don't draw of the resources of God's grace, and that's why they've got forgiveness, because they took out that much from their bank, but they're hesitant to take more. Perhaps they don't know there is more. Perhaps they think that a defeated life, an up and down defeated life, is the best we can expect on earth.

No, there is more. The first step to anything God has for us is to believe that God will give it to me, that it is for me, and that it is freely available. Think of the matter of forgiveness to sins itself.

Christ died for the sins of the whole world. He took the sins of the entire world upon him, and yet why is it that millions and millions and millions of people in this world have not received the benefit of that? What is it that's holding them back? They won't believe. That's all.

Why is it multitudes of people who call themselves Christians have not become born again and have not entered into this forgiveness of sins? Christ died for their sins. The only thing missing is they will not believe. They will not humbly come and accept that provision that God made for the forgiveness of their sins on Calvary's tree.

Now apply the same logic or analogy to the believer. Here it says that sin shall not rule over you if you are really under grace. Why is it then so many believers are defeated by sin? Why is it so many believers say, I can't control my temper? Why is it so many believers are defeated by the lust of their eyes? Why is there bitterness among believers? Why is there jealousy? Why is there backbiting and gossiping? How do these sins have mastery even over people who claim to be filled and baptized in the Holy Spirit? Something is seriously wrong.

They have not understood the provisions of grace. They have not appropriated what God has for them. They have not believed that the same Lord who forgave them can also keep them.

Being saved from sin is more than being forgiven. Grace not only forgives me, but saves me. Do you know what is the first promise in the New Testament? I have often asked this question to many people and they don't know.

The very first promise in the New Testament is found in Matthew 1 verse 21. You shall call his name Jesus. The word of the angel to Joseph.

You shall call his name Jesus and here is the promise. For he shall save his people from their sins. The very name Jesus means saviour.

Jehovah is saviour. The Lord is saviour. He will save his people, not in their sins, but from their sins.

He will save his people from their sins is the very first promise in the New Testament. It is not found anywhere in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament God would forgive them.

Think of David in Psalm 103. He could stand up in the temple every week and say the words of Psalm 103. Bless the Lord O my soul and forget not all his benefits.

Who forgives all thine iniquities, who heals all thy diseases, who crowns thy life with good things, who delivers thee from the pit. These are the blessings they had in the Old Testament. Forgiveness of sins, healing from diseases, material blessings and being saved from hell.

What is it they didn't have? What David could not say was, bless the Lord O my soul who delivers me from sins power. That David couldn't say. Bless the Lord O my soul who forgives my sins, who heals my diseases, who blesses me with multitudes of material things, who saves me from the pit of hell.

That is Psalm 103. He knew where to stop. He couldn't be honest.

If he was honest he couldn't say, bless the Lord who delivers me from sins power. That is the blessing of the New Covenant. Something more than what David had.

Something more than even what John the Baptist had. And that is the wonderful message of the Gospel. He will save his people from their sins.

Now to illustrate the difference between forgiveness and salvation. You know we ask people, are you saved? But very often when we ask a person, are you saved? What we mean is, are you saved from hell? But do you know that the New Testament hardly ever speaks about being saved from hell. In fact that expression is not even there in the New Testament, being saved from hell.

It is being saved from sin. And there is a lot of difference between being saved from hell and being saved from sin. To use an illustration.

Supposing my little boy is playing outside the gate of my house and the construction workers are digging a big pit over there. And I tell him, be careful, don't go anywhere near that pit because you can fall in. And like little children do, he disobeys me and falls into the pit.

And then from there he cries out and says, daddy, daddy. And I go up and say, what happened son? He is down there in that six foot pit. Well daddy, I am sorry, I disobeyed you.

Please forgive me. I say, okay son, you are forgiven. Goodbye.

Have I forgiven him? Sure. Have I saved him? No. There is a difference between being forgiven and being saved from our sins.

If I lose my temper and I say, Lord, I am sorry I fell, forgive me. He forgives me. But if he hasn't saved me from that habit, I am just going to keep on losing my temper for the rest of my life and assume that that is the normal Christian life.

I want to tell you, it is not. It may be what you see in a lot of Christians around you, but it is not the normal Christian life. That is not the will of God.

Let me show you a verse in Ephesians chapter 4. Ephesians chapter 4, it says, Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, verse 30, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness be washed away and all wrath and all anger and all clamor and all slander be put away from you along with all malice. You know that one verse alone we could work with for a long time.

Does God mean what he says? Is it possible? Is this book full of suggestions or commands? Is that a suggestion? Does God say, well, if you can, do this? No, he doesn't say that. It is a command. Don't grieve the Holy Spirit.

Let all anger be put away from you. Now if I put away all the chairs from this hall, how many chairs will be left? None. If I obey that command to put away all anger from my life, how much anger will be left in my life? None.

Why is it Christians don't take these commands seriously? I believe the reason is because they look too much at the standard of life of other believers around them and because they see hardly anybody who is living a life free from anger, they say, well, I suppose it's not possible. They assume that this is the normal. We fall, we ask the Lord to forgive us and then we fall again and we ask the Lord to forgive us and we fall again and we ask the Lord to forgive us.

But that is not the normal Christian life. That is a sub-standard Christian life. The normal Christian life in the New Covenant is what we read in Romans 6.14. Sin shall not have the mastery over you.

I remember years ago hearing a story of how they would test people in a lunatic asylum to see whether they had come to their senses or not. It was a very simple test. They would put that person in a room where a tap was open and the water was flowing and they'd give him a mop and a bucket and ask him to dry the room.

And if he tried to dry the room without turning off the tap, then you knew that he hadn't come to his senses yet. He needed to stay there a little longer. What would you do if you were given that mop and a bucket? Well, the first thing you'd do is turn off the tap.

Now, what does the Lord do for us? We have a tap in us where sin is gushing out all the time. We know that every day through our eyes, through our tongue. What does the gospel promise? Does it only give us a mop and a bucket that we endlessly dry the floor? Or can Jesus do something about that tap? I would say it's not really good news if all that the Lord's given me is a mop and a bucket.

It's pretty depressing to keep on mopping up the floor. Is it possible, dear brother or sister, that you could have experienced something far more in your Christian life if you had known the truth about the grace of God? Grace is a power that is sufficient for every need. When the Lord said, My grace is sufficient for you, it means whatever your need is, it's sufficient for that.

If you send your son to the market to get something worth \$5, you'll give him \$5. If you send him to the market to get something worth \$50, you'll give him \$50. That's the meaning of sufficient.

That means whatever the need is, God's grace is going to match up to that need. Okay, you may have inherited a bad temper from your parents, so what? Grace is sufficient for that. Maybe you have a tremendous problem in some other area.

Maybe someone's done some terrible evil to you, and you find it so difficult to get over the bitterness. Is God's grace not sufficient? Where sin abounded, doesn't it say grace abounded even more? Is grace greater than our sin or less than our sin? We've insulted God by our unbelief. You do not have because you do not ask.

You ask and do not receive because you don't believe that you will receive. Some of the saddest words written in the scriptures are Matthew 13, 58, where it says, He could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. God's grace is sufficient.

The Bible says in Jude verse 24, He is able to keep us from falling. Is that true or not? That's all we need to know. There are some wonderful promises like this.

He is able to keep us from falling. It's not a question of what I am able to do. He is able to keep us from falling.

See, Romans chapter 8, it says here, He is able to keep us from falling. It says here, first of all, that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. That's the first part of God's grace.

And the second is the law of the Spirit. Now, here it speaks of a law. Not the Old Testament law of commandments.

This is called the law of the Holy Spirit. And the law of the Holy Spirit is not found in written words. The law of the Spirit is life in Christ Jesus.

This law is not a written law of ten commandments like in the Old Testament. It's the life of Jesus Christ, which is the law of the Spirit. What did it do? It has set me free from this other law of sin and death, which is in my body.

There is a law of sin and death in my body, always dragging me down into sin. But the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets me free from this law. The law of sin in our body is something like the law of gravity.

It operates just the same in every generation, in every country, in every part of the world, the law of gravity. It always pulls things down. And we who are born of the race of Adam, we've got this law which always pulls us down.

It's easier to be angry than to be patient. It's easier to tell lies than to speak the truth. It's easier to hate than to love.

It's easier to be anxious than to be at rest. This is the law pulling us down. It's like saying it's easier to go down than to go up.

But think of this book for example. The law of gravity operates on this book. And wherever you take it, you cannot escape gravity.

And our life is something like that. The law of gravity is just pulling it down all the time. But now see what happens.

It's not falling. Why isn't it falling? Is it because the law of gravity is not operating in this area? It's operating very much. But the law of life in my body is setting this book free from the law of gravity.

He is able to keep us from falling. He is able to keep us from falling. What does this book have to do? It has to just submit and rest in the Master's hand.

It's real. It's not just an illustration. This is exactly how the Lord keeps us.

The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. Now if this were only a theory, I wouldn't waste my time talking about it. But it's real.

It actually works. According to your faith, be it unto you, it's based on the promises of God. He is able to keep us from falling.

This is what grace does. Let me turn you to another verse in Hebrews in chapter 4. I believe that if we would only hunger and thirst for this, we could come to a level of the Christian life that perhaps some of us have never experienced so far. A lot of the frustration and the gloom and depression and many other things are because we're not availing of the riches of God's grace.

There's so much that our Father has put in our bank account, but we're living on a measly little amount every month and struggling to survive when there's millions out there. Riches of His grace. Hebrews chapter 4, it says in verse 16, let us therefore draw near with confidence.

You know it's like my going to the bank with confidence because I've got a million dollars there. I mean I'm not going in there like a beggar saying, can you give me a handout today? I'm again hungry. No.

I'm going there as the son of a millionaire who's got my father's inheritance put there into my account and I can go and boldly present my check because my dad's name is at the bottom. He signed it and said, could you give me a hundred thousand dollars please? Think of that. Let us draw near with boldness, with confidence to this bank of grace, to the throne of grace.

What for? That we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Now here's another thing that I never understood for many years in my Christian life, that there was a difference between mercy and grace. Mercy is an Old Testament word.

It's found frequently in the Old Testament. His mercy endures forever. His mercy endures forever.

But grace is New Testament. Now when we come to the throne of grace, we first need mercy because we have sinned. Mercy deals with my past.

Grace deals with the future. We have a past and a future. A past where we have fallen so many times.

What do we need for that? Mercy. Forgiveness. And that's the first thing we get so that there's no more condemnation.

There's no more sense of guilt about my past. I get mercy. But am I to stop with mercy? No.

It says after I've received mercy, there's something more at the throne of grace for me. To deal with this sinful nature in the future, to deal with this wretched temperament of mine, this temper of mine, this, the lusts in my flesh, to deal with them, there's grace. And grace to help me in my time of need.

So we can say grace is something which comes to help. Grace is help in time of need. That's what grace is.

Mercy is also God's help, but grace is something more. It's like if you were climbing a mountain and you slip, like a lot of mountaineers do, and you're hanging there by your fingertips about to fall, but you're too proud to ask for help. You say, no, I can make it.

This is the Christian struggling for victory. I can make it. I can.

I can. And he struggles and struggles and he falls to the bottom and breaks his bones. And then he cries for help.

And the ambulance comes along and picks him up. That's mercy. After he's fallen, the ambulance is coming and picking him up and taking him to the hospital and binding him up and fixing his fractures and things like that.

Oh yeah, that's good. The ambulance is available and God's mercy is always available. Okay, once you're healed, you go back climbing again.

And again, you're too proud to ask for help when you're about to fall. And again you fall down and break your bones. And you say, God, please help me.

And the ambulance comes along. This is the experience of most Christians. They're always calling for the ambulance.

And thank God it's always there, available. Mercy, mercy, mercy. But the good news is that there's something else we can get there if we are humble enough to say, God, I can't do this.

I'm about to slip. I'm about to fall. Will you please give me grace to help me? And before I fall, not after I've fallen, and a few moments later I find that somebody has lifted me up and placed me on top of that cliff.

I say, how did that happen? That was grace. Now, if you don't believe this, let me give you a little homework. This is real.

This is practical. This is not a theory. This is not theology.

This is real life. Think of what is your greatest problem? What's the area where you're tempted the most? Which is the area where you find yourself falling frequently? Is it lust? Is it anger? Okay. The next time you're tempted in that area, before you actually fall, you know the pressure coming.

You're going to fall. You're going to lose your temper now. You're going to fall into lust now.

Pray this little prayer. The prayer that Peter prayed when he was about to sink. The prayer that Peter, who had overcome the law of gravity, walking on that water for a number of minutes, suddenly found himself losing that power, and gravity was taking over and was pulling him down.

He prayed a simple prayer, Lord, save me. That's all. And it says immediately Jesus held his hand.

He didn't scold him. James chapter 1 says, God never scolds. Praise God for that.

Our parents may have scolded us, but God never scolds us. He's always there to help us to stretch out his hand, to help us to stand. You'll find the same Lord who helped Peter to overcome the law of gravity that day and to stand will help you.

Grace to help me in my time of need. God, I'm falling. I'm falling.

Please help me. And you'll suddenly find a little later, hey, how is that? I didn't lose my temper this time. I didn't lust this time.

And after you go through a few experiences like that, you discover that grace is a real power sufficient for every need in life. It's not just forgiveness of sins. It's not just victory over sin.

Paul had a thorn in the flesh, we read in 2 Corinthians 12. He had a thorn which he calls a messenger of Satan that kept on buffeting him. I don't know what it was.

It could have been a physical ailment. It could have been a human being who kept on harassing and hounding Paul wherever he went. But whatever it was, it was a messenger of Satan.

Now this is another thing that grace can do for us. When we are being harassed or troubled, not by sin, but maybe by a persistent sickness or some human being who is nasty and troublesome, a difficult son, a difficult boss, anything. Messengers of Satan take different forms.

Buffeting us, buffeting us, buffeting us. And we pray, God please deliver me from this. And he doesn't.

But he says, my grace is sufficient for you. You can be an overcomer even though this messenger of Satan remains. Isn't that wonderful? I remember hearing of a servant of the Lord who was facing a difficult

problem in his life and he was asking God to remove that problem and it was not removed.

And one day God gave him a dream at night. He saw himself trying to cross a river in a boat and he was always hitting a hidden rock under the surface of the water. The water, the boat was hitting that rock.

He moved aside and he found the rock was there too. He just couldn't get across. And he found himself praying in his dream, God remove this rock, remove this rock.

And God said, no. I'll raise the level of the water. You can still go across.

My grace is sufficient for you. That difficult person who is harassing you will remain. But you will get grace to be an overcomer.

And that won't bother you anymore. You'll be an overcomer. I'll put my character into you through this difficult person, through this sickness, through this trial.

And you will be an overcomer. Grace is sufficient for every need we can ever face in our life. Let's believe that.

Let's trust him. Say, Lord, it's not just mercy that I want now. I want grace that justifies me so that my past doesn't bother me anymore.

That gives me power, real power to help me in the moment when I'm slipping and falling into sin. So that I'm no longer that mean-tempered wife or husband that I have been till now. But grace takes over.

That I'm no longer disturbed by that person who is harassing me, harassing me. I'm going to use that to be a conqueror in Christ. To allow God to transform my character.

Make me Christ-like. Grace is the wonderful message of the new covenant. And it's freely available.

If we hunger and thirst, Jesus said, we'll be satisfied. If, however, we are satisfied with our defeated condition, then there's not much hope for us. But if you say, Lord, I'm not satisfied with the substandard life I've been living so far.

I'm not the type of Christian husband or wife or mother or father that I should be. I'm impatient, irritable, upset, anxious, worried. In church I present a good face.

I'm not the same person at home. Lord, can grace do something for me? Yes, it can. It can change you from a mean-tempered person to a gracious person whose life at home is just like the front you present to other people at church.

But there's no difference. This is what grace can do. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Let's pray. Again, I want to invite you to respond to the word of God that you've heard this evening, this morning. What does God expect of you? You don't have to take a decision.

You don't have to say, I'm determined, Lord. Just say, Lord, I trust you. I want to believe your word this morning.

That's the first step. I want to believe that there's a power and grace that I've not experienced so far in my life. I believe this is the answer to every problem I ever have in my life, the grace of God.

Lord, I believe and I want you to explain this to me more clearly through the Holy Spirit and the circumstances of life. I trust you this day. Lead me to a life of victory over the sin that easily besets me and over to be an overcomer in the trials that I face in life.

You want me to be more than a conqueror and I believe you can keep me from falling. Thank you, Lord. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7012.mp3>

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