

# My grace is sufficient

Sunday, September 23rd 2018

## Introduction

### Our current situation

- \* Currently many are struggling with sickness, etc.
- \* Other difficulties too!
- \* We are praying and nothing seems to happen
- \* How can God be glorified?

### Message

- \* This morning we sang the song "*His grace is enough*"
- \* Based on a biblical text from 2nd Corinthians
- \* I want to look at Paul's life and his encounter with the Lord from which the words of that song come!

### Text

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10** *7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he 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 of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

## The problem

### A thorn in the flesh (messenger of Satan)

- \* We don't know what this was specifically
- \* I'm glad that we don't - makes this passage applicable
- \* Know it was a *Messenger of Satan*
- \* Discuss how the enemy uses things to attack us
- \* "Harass" me

### See v10

- \* Weaknesses: my failing and struggle
- \* Insults: attack from others
- \* Hardships: difficulties of life
- \* Persecution: more pointed attack
- \* Calamities: more difficulties of life

**Point:** whatever the specific situation was, it was designed by the enemy to keep Paul in place

## Unanswered prayers

- \* The more telling thing is that God refused to answer his prayers about it
- \* Paul through whom God had healed the sick and raised the dead - didn't get his prayers answered about this situation
- \* **Note:** wasn't a lack of faith, wasn't a lack of power on God's part, wasn't sin on Paul's part, etc!

## The promise

In this situation: after the attack and unanswered prayers, God speaks to him

**Note:** this is revelation. Paul's understanding of the purpose and his ability to be content come after this revelation. My hope and prayer today is that his revelation will help us today!

## My grace is sufficient

- \* God's grace - his unmerited love and favor to us
- \* He hasn't stopped loving us
- \* He hasn't stopped forgiving us
- \* His grace is still at work...
- \* And that's enough to get through this!

## My strength is made perfect in weakness

- \* Where my strength ends, his begins
- \* He doesn't ask us to be what we aren't
- \* He asks us to come to him in our need, and trust him to provide

## The process

### Rely on his grace

- \* He will take care of us!
- \* He still loves us - we can trust him

### Remember his purpose

- \* Paul (after the revelation) understood what God was doing: see the context - he'd received a lot of blessing from the Lord
- \* God was using this thorn to keep him humble (see v7)
- \* We may not know the specifics, but we can trust: His power, His person (he is good) and His purpose.
- \* See **Romans 8:28** *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

### Reveal my weakness

- \* Here's the struggle in our culture - we don't reveal our weakness, let alone boast about them (see the end of v9)
- \* We cover up, act like everything's ok
- \* Soldier on

### Two reasons

- \* We don't want to be judged for struggling
- \* Positive confession/lack of faith

### **Two problems**

- \* We don't avail ourselves of his provision (the body)
- \* We steal glory from God!

**Therefore:** Reveal our weaknesses

### **Outcome: Content in my weakness**

- \* We must learn how to be content with our weakness
- \* Doesn't mean we don't pray about them, but we accept the wait
- \* We know God is working for our good
- \* We trust him

### **Outcome: God gets the glory**

- \* We vocally give him the praise
- \* When others see how we handle this - even unanswered prayer - God gets the glory

## **Closing**

- \* Remind you his grace is enough
- \* Pray for your encouragement!