

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

30 August 2026

The Grace of Sufficiency

Text: "He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness".

2 Corinthians 12:9 Full reading: *2 Corinthians 12:7-10*.

Do you have enough?

Then you have an abundance.

Remember that I say enough is an abundance.

Consider all those in the world who have never had enough.

Grace is the key to life and is sufficient for every need.

Grace emphasizes not what we do for God but what God does for us.

But it is not only his activity for us; it is his activity in us.

"For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." *Phil. 2:13*.

There are three things that God's grace does for us.

First, God's grace will do something for us in the future, in such actions as the delivering of creation, the raising of the dead, and the gathering up of the living.

All of these actions are passive, not active.

It is God's work, not ours.

Second, God's grace has done something for us in the past.

Ephesians 2:1 says that the believer has been made alive spiritually, and verses 6-10 state that it was by grace.

So, it is not by anything we do, but by the work God does.

It is grace at work!

Third, God's grace is doing something for us in the present in our daily lives.

Romans 5:10 tells us that we shall be kept saved by Jesus' resurrection life, so that we now have the privilege of reigning in life through Christ.

This is by grace.

Second Corinthians 12 testifies about just how sufficient the grace of Christ is.

It is like a many-faceted diamond, and as we look down on it, we can see the sufficiency of God's grace.

Let's look at some of these facets.

Predicament.

Verse 7 speaks of revelations a man received.

Most interpreters conclude that the man was Paul himself and that fourteen years earlier he had a divine revelation no other person ever saw or heard.

He was caught up to the third heaven into the very presence of God.

He said nothing about this experience lest he be honored more than he ought to be honored.

So God gave him a "thorn in the flesh" to keep him from exalting himself, to keep him from pride.

We don't know what it was, but his language indicates that it was physical, painful, and humiliating.

It was a divinely permitted satanic antagonism.

It constantly troubled him and consequently he suffered acutely.

Prayer.

Verse 8 records that Paul prayed about his predicament.

The manner in which he prayed indicates the depth of his spirit.
He prayed specifically: "For this thing."
He prayed earnestly: "I besought the Lord."
He prayed repeatedly: "thrice."
He prayed purposefully: "that it might depart from me."
The Lord answered Paul's prayer, and that answer is found in *verse 9*: "He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."
"He said" in the original Greek is in the present perfect tense, a tense that describes the action as started in the past and continuing in the present.
So it means that what Christ said still stands.
He gave to Paul's definite prayer a definite answer.
Paul responds positively to Christ's answer.
"My grace" is the grace of Christ himself.
This is the only time in the New Testament that this expression is found.
Christ's grace is found in such Scriptures as *John 1:16*, "grace upon grace"; *Romans 5:20*, abounding grace; and *Romans 5:21*, reigning grace.
His grace not only saves us, it also suffices in every situation.
"Is sufficient" means to be possessed of adequate strength, to be strong, to be enough for a thing.
Christ's strength is unfailing, whatever your situation.
Perfection.
"For my strength is made perfect in weakness."
"Perfected" is a present passive verb.
It means that through this "thorn" God was perfecting Paul.
He was maturing him, completing him in spirit through this means.
God is perfecting us through the "thorns" in our lives.
He perfects us through our learning to live with something rather than allowing it to be an irritation.
It is our transforming an irritation into a spiritual motivation.
How is this possible?
It is possible only through the sufficiency of the grace of Christ.
To see the difference between the perfect tense and the present tense, compare *John 19:30* with this verse.
In *John 19:30* the statement "It is finished!" is in the present perfect tense.
Redemption has been completed and continues to be.
Second Corinthians 12:9 says, "is made perfect," a present tense, passive verb.
The present tense is continual action, meaning that one's strength is continually being perfected.
God is not finished with us yet.
The passive voice means that the subject is being acted on.
So Christ is the one perfecting us.
God uses many things to perfect us.
So this may be the reason for your unchangeable situation, your suffering, your adversity.
As your master designer, the Lord has your life on a special easel, putting on his divine finishing touches.
As the master teacher, he has you in a special classroom to teach you truths you could learn no other way.
So what happens?
Christ's power is perfected in us.
Paul says, "That the power of Christ may rest upon me."
The verb here describes Christ's power like a tent covering us.
This is the only place this word is used in the New Testament.
The simple form is found in *John 1:14*, "the Word . . . Dwelt among us."

This is grace in all its sufficiency.

Praise.

Verse 9 expresses the burst of Paul's praise.

"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities."

Verse 10 describes his deep spirit of contentment and pleasure in his adversities, weaknesses, insult, distresses, persecutions, and difficulties.

How is this possible?

Only through the sufficiency of God's grace.

God's grace is so miraculous that we can even revel in our trials because they are his best.

The great lesson of this Scripture is that grace is sufficient for the unchangeable situations in our lives, the circumstance beyond our control, the handicaps we suffer, our sickness, and all other types of adversities.

Whatever you are passing through, the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for you."

Horatius Bonar wrote about Richard Camerons' father.

The aged saint was in prison for preaching God's Word.

The bloodied, mutilated head of his martyred son was brought to him by his abusive persecutors, and he was asked if he could recognize who it was.

"I know it, I know it," said the father, as he kissed the mangled forehead of his son.

"It is my son's, my own dear son's!

It is the Lord!

Good is the will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me or mine, but hath made goodness and mercy to follow us all our days."

This is sufficiency of God's grace.

Do you know it?