**Finding Grace**

**Understanding Grace**

**Sufficient Grace**

**Hebrews 4:14-16** - *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

* **Romans 5:1-2** - *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.*
* **Romans 5:20** - *The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more…*
* **Romans 5:21** - …*so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
* **2 Corinthians 4:15** - *For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.*

 **2 Corinthians 6:11** - *Our mouth has spoken freely to you, O Corinthians, our heart is opened wide.*

5 steps to finding the treasure of God’s sufficient grace

**I. Value the Humility that Suffering Can Bring**

**James 4:6** - *But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”*

**2 Corinthians 12:7** - …*to keep me from exalting myself...*

A. Paul knew that God’s blessing and bounty in his life had to be balanced

1. His past upbringing and education – Philippians 3:4-6

2. His marvelous conversion – Acts 9

3. His unique ministry – 12:7

**2 Corinthians 12:7** - …*“because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations…”*

**2 Peter 3:15-16** - …*and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

B. This is consistent with Peter’s message

**1 Peter 5:6** - *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time…*

**II. Don’t Waste Time Focusing on the Wrong Things**

**1 Peter 1:13** - *Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

A. The identity of the thorn

1. What we know

a. It was serious

b. It was given by God

c. A messenger of Satan

d. It tormented him

2. What we do not know

a. the specific identity of the thorn

b. the specific place of Satan in the process

**III. Don’t Try to Respond Like a Stoic or a Super-Christian**

A. He implored the Lord

**1 Peter 5:7** - …*casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.*

**Hebrews 4:15-16** - *For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

B. He implored the Lord repeatedly

C. He implored the Lord repeatedly that it might leave him

**IV. Let Suffering Teach You**

A. About the sufficiency of God’s grace

**2 Corinthians 12:9** - *And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you...”*

**2 Corinthians 9:8** - *And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed…*

B. About the supremacy of Christ’s power

**2 Corinthians 12:9** - *“...for power is perfected in weakness.”*

**Romans 5:6** - *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

**Ephesians 3:16** - …*that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man…*

**Ephesians 3:20-21** - *Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.*

**V. Act on the Lessons You Learned**

A. He delighted in his weaknesses

**2 Corinthians 12:9** -*...so that the power of Christ may dwell on me...*

dwell – episkenosei – to pitch a tent

B. He cultivated contentment

**2 Corinthians 12:10** - …*for Christ’s sake, for when I am weak, then I am strong.*