

Speaker: Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam
Title: Grace for the Present

INTRODUCTION

John Newton, Olney Hymns, 1779

“Amazing Grace”

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
We have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

“THROUGH MANY DANGERS TOILS AND SNARES”

Paul encountered troubles

(2 Corinthians 11:23-28)

“23 Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.”

Every believer will find himself

- Heading into trouble, OR
- In trouble, OR
- Coming out of trouble

REQUIREMENT OF GRACE – WHY WE NEED GRACE

- Because we are earthen vessels

(2 Corinthians 4:7)

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”

- “we have” - not “may have” or “will have” but “have”
- “earthen vessel” – clay pots, which are perishable and cheap
- In those days people kept their treasures in earthen vessels.
- The container is cheap but the contents are everything
- Because we are clay pots, we need grace.

- Because of God’s miracles, blessings and favour on our lives, we are candidates for Satan to afflict and hinder us

(2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

“7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

- God allowed Satan to buffet Paul.
- Paul prayed for deliverance (V.8)
- God has more than one answer besides “yes”, “no” or “wait”
 - God’s answer was grace (V.9)

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”

- God has sufficient grace

RESULTS OF GRACE- IT PRODUCES POWER IN US

- In our weakness, we are made strong

(2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

“9 And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

“when I am weak, then I am strong”

- You only know God’s power when you know your weaknesses.
 - It is human nature not to acknowledge weaknesses.
- A biblical assessment of our struggles and afflictions

(2 Corinthians 4:17-18)

“17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal”

- Our affliction is momentary
- Seen with unseen
- Temporary to eternal
- What is now cannot be compared with what is to come

- The real situation
(2 Corinthians 4:16)
“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.”
 - “the earthly vessel” is decaying
 - You can’t get better outwardly
 - But the inner man is getting better
 - Don’t let the outward discourage you.

THE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES PERSEVERANCE

- Paul’s testimony

(2 Corinthians 4:8-9)
“8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed”
- 4 contrasts:
 - Pressed – but not crushed
 - Perplexed – but not in despair
 - Persecuted – but not forsaken
 - Punched (knocked down) – but able to get up

GRACE PROMOTES PRAISE

3 purpose clauses follow “that”

(2 Corinthians 4:7)

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that **the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.**

(2 Corinthians 4:10)

“always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, **that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body**”

(2 Corinthians 12:9)

“And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”
Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, **that the power of Christ may rest upon me**”

- How many want to experience grace that promotes praise?
 - that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.
 - that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
 - that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
- Illustration: Gideon – clay pot broken that light may be seen