

December 2, 2015

The Sufficiency Of God's Grace

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NASB), “seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

This past September my wife and I decided to do something that we had never attempted to do together which was go on a short backpacking trip. Now keep in mind, we were only going on an overnight trip, but it had been over 20 years since I had done this and my wife had never done it. Trying to think of what you might possibly need was a bit of a daunting task but one that we tackled nonetheless. The key is that you want to be well supplied but you do not want to be weighed down. In other words you want to travel as light as possible but you also don't want to get to your campsite and realize you have nothing to eat.

This is one thing as a Christ-follower that we do not have to concern ourselves with because we learn from God's Word that we are well-supplied for this life with the Lord. In 2 Corinthians 9:8 the apostle Paul wrote about the overwhelming sufficiency of God's salvation: **“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.”** The word **“sufficiency”** is from the Greek word *autarkeia* and it refers to self-sufficiency, which means having all that is necessary. It also means to be independent of eternal circumstances and from what outside sources may provide. The believer has spiritual resources which are provided to them lavishly by divine grace, and they are sufficient to meet life's demands.

The problem is that despite this revelation of God's tremendous generosity, Christians far too often think that God is somehow a miser in dispensing what we need. Some feel that God has given us enough grace for justification, but *not* enough for the process of sanctification. Or some believers have been taught that they have received enough grace for justification and sanctification, but *not* enough for glorification, and therefore they fear losing their salvation. Even if they believe there is enough grace for final glorification, many Christians still feel there is not enough for them to handle life's problems and trials. But there is no reason for any believer to doubt the sufficiency of God's grace or to look elsewhere for spiritual resources.

Paul admonished the Colossians in Colossians 2:8-10, **“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority.”**

Jesus compared salvation to a wedding feast in Matthew 22:2, 4: **“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son... ‘Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast.’”** Jesus used that analogy because in first-century Jewish culture the wedding feast epitomized lavish celebration. In the same way, when He redeemed His own, God lavishly dispensed through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit all the grace and spiritual resources they would ever need. Four essential components reminded Peter’s audience of the reality of their sufficient salvation: divine power, divine provision, divine procurement, and divine promises.

First of all let’s look at the essential component of divine power. In verse 3 it says **“seeing that His divine power has granted to us...”** Whatever spiritual sufficiency that we have as believers is not because of any power they possess in ourselves but rather it is derived from **“His divine”** power. In Ephesians 3:20 Paul put it this way, **“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.”** The **“power”** that operates in believers is of the same divine nature as that which resurrected Christ. That power then enables saints to do works that please and glorify God and accomplish spiritual things they cannot even imagine.

“His” refers back to the Lord Jesus. If the personal pronoun modified God, Peter probably would not have used the descriptive word **“divine”** since deity is inherent in God’s name. His use of **“divine”** in reference to the Son underscores that Jesus is truly God and it also refutes any lingering doubt that some readers may have had concerning that reality. Peter himself had been an eyewitness to Christ’s divine power.

God’s supply of spiritual power for believers never fails. We may distance ourselves from this divine source through sin, or fail to minister and use what is available, but from the moment we experience faith in Jesus Christ, God **“has granted”** to us His power. **“Has granted”** is an interesting expression because it is a perfect, passive participle meaning that in the past, with continuing results in the here and now, God permanently bestowed his power on believers.

This is why the Christian life ultimately, if salvation is genuine, is a victorious life. When God saves us He gives us His **“divine power”** and that power enables us to live lives that honor and glorify Him each and every day.