

Sufficient Grace

#0166

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—February 2, 1974

My text is found in 2 Corinthians 12:9. The last words we shall hear with mortal ears, but this won't be the first time we hear them. Paul wrote them down nearly 2,000 years ago, and they've been the strength and the stay of Christian hearts all these decades and centuries. They're for us tonight. We shall need to become well acquainted with them in order to hear them from the white cloud as the Savior speaks to His waiting saints, just before bestowing upon them the final touch of immortality. And what are those words? "My grace is sufficient for thee." Who said these words to Paul? Jesus. Who says them to you and me tonight? Jesus.

"My grace is sufficient for thee." Is it? Is His grace sufficient? What does sufficient mean? Enough, plenty, ample, all we need. What is it that is sufficient? His grace, His wonderful grace. We may use other words. We may think of His mercy; it's true, His mercy is sufficient. We may use the expression "His love"; it's true, His love is sufficient—His favor, His forgiveness—think of all these things. They're all wrapped up and included in this one word "grace." "My grace is sufficient for thee."

This morning, Brother Fields and I had the privilege of ministering to a man in Erlanger Hospital. We visited him from time to time over the years. But now, unless the Lord works for him, he's soon to go to rest. As we were talking to him about being sure of salvation, he was sure that Jesus loved him—that was certain. He was sure that Jesus died for him—that was clear. He was sure that he wanted to give himself to Jesus. Then I asked him the question—was he sure that he was *accepted*? He wanted to be. Then I asked him this question which I know the Lord gave me: I said, "Look here. If you'd gone downtown and paid \$1,000 in some store for a certain article, and it was delivered out at your house, would you take it?"

What about you? If you had paid \$1,000 for something, and here comes the delivery truck now and is ready to unload it, will you take delivery? Will you take it? You spent \$1,000 for it, what about it? Why, there's no question about it. The fact that you spent \$1,000 for it is proof positive that you're going to accept delivery on it the first minute you get a chance to. Am I right?

Has Jesus paid anything you, my friend? This is what I asked my friend in the hospital today. Thank the Lord, Jesus has paid a great price for us. The question is now, "If I give myself to Him, will He take me?" What was the price He paid? Himself, His own life. Is that correct? Did He pay that for you? Listen, if Jesus gave Himself for you—and the text on that, many of you know it, is where? Galatians 2:20. That's right; He gave Himself for *me*. For me—first person singular number. Listen, if Jesus has paid that much for you and you give yourself to Him, what will He do? He'll take you, He'll accept you. He'll take delivery on what He paid for. There's no question about it. So He tells us in John 6:37

"...him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out"
John 6:37.

That is, there is no possibility of My casting Him out.

Now watch. You say, "Yes, but Brother Frazee, I've committed so many sins."

Indeed, did you know that's what He paid for? That's why He died.
Look at Galatians—what was the price paid for? What does it say?

"[He] gave Himself for our sins..." Galatians 1:4.

Is it true? Then what did He pay for? Your *sins*.

Well, suppose you've only committed one sin. Was the price necessary to ransom you? Oh, yes. Suppose you committed a thousand sins; is His blood sufficient to pay the price, to pay the debt, to ransom you, to redeem you. Is it? Thank God, yes. So never let the thought of your *sins* keep you from coming to Christ. This is why you *need* Him. And the heavier your burden of guilt, the more you need the Burden-bearer. The greater the number of your sins, the more you need the Savior. He's in the business of taking away the sin of the world—John 1:29.

Can He do it for you? Certainly He can. "My grace," He says, is what? "Sufficient." "My grace is sufficient."

"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 of fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed!"

That's it, friends. Believe what? Believe in God's grace. Believe He loves me. Believe He has mercy for the chief of sinners. Believe that He died for me. Believe that as I come to Him, He accepts me. Thank God for grace.

Now I want you to turn over to the book of Titus. Titus 2:11, another wonderful text on grace:

"For the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us

from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" Titus 2:11–14.

I want you to notice that last expression—"zealous of good works." Who is it that's zealous of good works? His people. They're called here a what? A peculiar people. The idea is a special treasure, gems in His casket, valuable, of great worth, a peculiar people. They are zealous of what? Good works. Oh, you mean works are in this picture? Indeed. Who put them there? The Scripture. But notice, works are not the root; they're the fruit. Let us distinguish carefully between these two. Not the root, but the fruit.

Back to the 11th verse, what is it that brings salvation? The grace of God brings salvation. But the grace of God is in the teaching business. The grace of God has a chair of teaching in God's University. Have you enrolled in this class? Grace not only brings us salvation, but it also brings us teaching.

The 12th verse: What is it that brings salvation? The grace of God. The grace of God brings salvation. But friends, the grace of God is in the teaching business. The grace of God has a chair of teaching in God's university. Have you enrolled in His class? Grace not only brings us salvation, it brings us teaching.

The 12th verse: What does grace teach us? It teaches us negative and positive truths. Notice the negative teaching in that 12th verse. Teaching us that what? Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. Tell me, what do you say when you deny something? "No." Can you say it? What is it that teaches us to deny ungodliness? The grace of God. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance," Paul says.

I hope we'll all listen to grace as it talks to our hearts from day to day. It's teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. What's another word for lust? Desire. All of us have desires. Some of them are good and some not so good. Something is teaching us to say no to worldly lusts, worldly desires. What is it that's teaching us that? The grace of God, His loving favor, His deep interest in us, manifested in giving His Son to die for us upon the cross.

That grace is the root; the works are the fruit. You cannot have the fruit without the root. And if you have the root, if you receive the grace, the fruits will appear. The fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. It's good fruit, isn't it? This is like the tree of life—it has different kinds of fruit on it. But the root for all these fruits is the grace of God.

I look to Jesus on the cross. I see Him giving His life for me. I see that He loves me. And the more I love Him, the more I say "No" to the thing that murdered Him. What about it? Why yes, what did murder Him? Sin, the transgression of God's law. So as these temptations come to me, whether awakened by the godless world outside, or by my own natural, human cravings inside, in either case, the grace of God teaches me to do what? To deny them, to say no. Thank God

Suppose I've been a cigarette slave, but I've given myself to Jesus. He died for me, and I've given Him what He died for. He's paid for my salvation, and I've turned this property, this body over to Him. But tomorrow morning I wake up, and I've got a craving for that cigarette. What shall I do? If I look to Jesus, if I'll behold His grace, if I'll say, "Dear Lord, You died for me, I cannot crucify You afresh. You've given Your life for me; I've given my life to You. Help me, dear Jesus." Will He help me? Yes.

The power is in Jesus—*He's* the Root. Isaiah calls Him that in Chapter 53, that Root out of a dry ground. But bless the Lord, the fruit that grows from that Root is holy, it's beautiful, it's the fruit of righteousness.

Back to that 12th verse: Look at it carefully:

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts..." Titus 2:12.

That's saying no to all these cravings and temptations.

"we should live..." Titus 2:12.

Let's stop on that. Aren't you glad God has called us to *live*? And this is real living, friend. Nobody has ever yet truly lived unless he has accepted the grace of Christ. It is the grace of Christ that enables us to live. Now let us see how we are to live. The grace of Christ is teaching us how to live. Three words are used here: soberly, righteously, and godly. Where? *In* this present world.

"Oh, I could never do that. Down here in this world? Live a godly life?"

What does godly mean? Like God. What does righteous mean? Like the law, for all His commandments are righteous. Righteous is doing right. Soberly, what does that mean? It means not drunk. It means thinking straight. It means being sensible, not doing a lot of foolish things. Would you like that kind of life, to always do the sensible thing, always do the right thing, always do what God would do if He were in your place?

Somebody says, "It can't be done." Well, that all depends on whether we have faith or not.

Somebody says, "I don't see very many people doing it." Well, if you saw a lot of people doing it, you wouldn't need faith. This is righteousness by *faith*; this is salvation by *faith*.

May I point this out to you? There is something more to this than merely saying, "I believe that Jesus died for me, and now I know I'm saved, and what I do doesn't make that much difference. It's what *He* did that counts, and what I do has nothing to do with it." This is one of those half-truths which may be more dangerous than a whole lie. But don't get mixed up in thinking that our salvation is part grace and part works. The root is grace; the fruit is works. If we have the root, if we have the grace of Jesus, it will be manifest in our lives.

I am so thankful that the grace of Christ is able and has all that we need to enable us to live just as Jesus lived in this world.

Now I bring you to something very important: How long does a fruit tree that's bearing fruit need the root? Here's a man that's been in orchard work. He and his father have a big fruit ranch out in British Columbia. But I don't need to ask an expert like that, any of you could tell me. How long does a fruit tree need the root? Is that how it gets started? But does it still have to have the root to keep bearing fruit? Listen: you and I never get past the place where we need the root in order to bear the fruit. We never come to the point where we say, "Well, thank God, His grace forgave me and cleansed me and saved me, and now I've come to the place whereas I look at my life, it looks all right." No. The apostle Paul, who is writing most of what we're reading tonight, says near the end of his life:

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after..." Philippians 3:12.

He was always approaching, but he never reached all that he was aiming for.

You say, "That looks frustrating."

It all depends on which way you take it. If you are seeking and hoping and expecting to find evidence in your life, in your actions that you are like Jesus, you will be bitterly disappointed over and over and over again. It is in vain to look within; in our hearts, thoughts, or outwardly in our lives, actions. It is in vain to look in either or both of those areas to find the evidence of our salvation. What is the root, what is the base, what is the ground of our salvation? It is what Jesus has done for us.

This was true before we were born. Grace wrote our names in Heaven's plan before we came along in this world of sin. This has been true every moment of our lives from our birth. Grace has been following us, pleading with us, knocking at the door, exhibiting the matchless charms of the Savior's life. This is true the moment we accept the Savior. By His grace He pardons all our past, and treats us as if we had never sinned. This is true from day to day as we walk the Christian way. Grace teaches us to say "No" to sin. Grace teaches us how to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

This is not the work of a moment. The sanctification here presented is the work of a lifetime, and however great and glorious is the work that God accomplishes in our lives today, He is still leading on from grace to grace, from glory to glory. And never in this world do we reach the end of that road. Always, there is something more beyond.

Now I turn again to that wonderful picture with which we began our study this evening—the coming of Jesus himself. Think of Him there seated on the cloud. Let me read again that marvelous description:

"As the living cloud comes nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head; but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow.

He countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun... Before His presence, 'all faces are turned into paleness;' upon the rejecters of God's mercy falls the terror of eternal despair... The righteous cry with trembling: 'Who shall be able to stand?' The angels' song is hushed, and there is a period of awful silence" *Great Controversy*, page 641.

Who are these people? These are the people who are about to be translated. These are the people who have already been glorified at the voice of God. These are the people who have succeeded before that passed through the agony of Jacob's trouble and have maintained their integrity. These are the people who have stood through the falling of the plagues without a mediator and have vindicated the character of God before the onlooking universe. These are the people who before that have participated in the thrilling, glorious scenes of the Loud Cry; who have in order to accomplish that have been baptized with that unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Latter Rain. These are the ones of whom it was written that they have obtained the victory over every besetment. But watch, notice as they stand there gazing at that face of the King of kings they cry with trembling, "Who shall be able to stand?" They have no inherent righteousness apart from grace. As they stand there in those moments of suspense, they know that their only hope now is what it has always been all the way through—the grace of Christ. That conviction in their hearts is met by the words from the lips of Jesus, "My grace is sufficient for you."

If that grace is to be sufficient for us then, thank God it is sufficient for us *now*. And if we are to know the saving, keeping, sustaining, assuring power of that grace then, we need to become well acquainted with its sustaining, victory giving assurance-giving power right now. What do you say?

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name."

Thank God, friends. This is a door that the worse sinner in this world can get in. That's how I got in—through the grace of Jesus Christ. That's how I've seen hundreds and thousands enter in. Praise His holy name. And that's where you can get in tonight.

Is there a sinner here who has never found Jesus? His grace is sufficient for you. Is there a child of God who has been going trembling along the road, trying and failing, sinning and repenting, starting over again with each evening, each Sabbath day looking back over your life and hoping, wishing, that somehow you could see in your life the evidence that *you* are all that God expects?

My dear friend, it's proper to seek to please the Savior. Gratitude and love, as well as a sense of obligation, lead us to seek to please Him and to keep His law. But listen, if you and I seek to find our assurance in our records, we're looking at the wrong place. If we seek to find our security in the fact that we are *more* like Jesus this week than we were last week, that there are some things that we were doing a

month ago that we quit now; if that's where we find our satisfaction, we are headed either for Phariseeism or utter discouragement—one or the other, those are the only two alternatives. We shall either come to the place where we pretentiously flaunt our own righteousness and achievements, or else we shall abandon the struggle because we are so overcome with the sense of failure. Those are the only two possible results of a way of life in which we look to ourselves, and at ourselves, and our achievements in order to find satisfaction.

Where are you looking tonight? Where is your security? Where is your assurance for right now, and for your hope of Heaven at last?

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” Titus 2:11–13.

Is it a blessed hope? What makes me think of it as a happy moment? Ah, because I know that past, present, and future, my hope rests in His grace, and that's changeless—Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

May I put it very simply, friends? I'll tell you what it means to me. I'm persuaded that Jesus loves me so much that He's going to find *some* way to get me through. I know He's going to find some way to get me in.

You say, “Isn't that presumptuous?”

No, friends. Not a bit of it. He told me to do that. He knew that's the only way I could have assurance; it's in Him. And so again I say:

My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name
On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

As I look to that blessed hope, I know that the last words I'm going to hear from those holy lips before mortality is put off and immortality is put on, the last words I shall ever hear with these mortal ears is: “My grace is sufficient for thee.” Will you repeat those words with me? “My grace is sufficient for thee.”

Is it? Is it enough tonight? Yes.

Somebody says, “Well, what about the person that keeps on doing what they know is wrong.”

Why friends, they're not taking hold of the grace. We read in Galatians 1:4 that Christ gave Himself for our sins. When I give myself to Him, I give Him my sins.

Somebody says, "I did that a year ago, but I still find myself falling."

Well, friend, give yourself over to Him again and again, and again and again.

You say, "Well, I think He'd get tired of that."

Oh, no, He's a very patient teacher. He's been patient with me for over two-thirds of a century, and I can assure you that He has had a dull, slow pupil. But He hasn't gotten angry with me, and he hasn't kicked me out of the classroom. He's right there helping me, pointing out my mistakes, and helping me to trust in His grace for victory. Has He done anything for you?

[Testimony service]

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