



Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries
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THE SUFFICIENT GRACE

The whole of our redemption is already achieved and sealed in Christ: "For those whom [God] foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son; and those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified" (Romans 8: 29-30).

That the grace of God in Christ Jesus is efficacious, that it achieves now and for evermore the redemption it was designed to achieve, should be a source of the utmost confidence, strength, and security to the Christian. The fact that "God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His'" (2 Timothy 2:19) should fill him with unshakable assurance.

Since the grace of redemption is the grace of God, he may be absolutely certain "that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). God's special grace is never in vain (I Corinthians 15:10).

Saul of Tarsus fought against the goads of his conscience (Acts 26:14); subsequently, however, he understood that God had not only called him through his grace but had set him apart before he was born (Galatians 1:15), indeed that those who are Christ's were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4) because God saw that he will make decision to believe Christ.

As creation was irresistibly effected through the all-powerful word and will of God, so also the new creation in Christ is irresistibly effected through that same all-powerful word and will.

This in effect is what Paul is affirming when he writes: "It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness' [that is, at creation; Genesis 1:3-5], who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ [that is, in the new creation]" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

The regenerating works of God in the believing heart, precisely again because it is God's work, can no more be resisted than it can come to nothing.

Sufficient grace is grace that is adequate for the saving of the believer here and now and hereafter to all eternity. As with the other aspects of special grace, its sufficiency flows from the infinite power and goodness of God. Those who draw near to Him through Christ He saves "fully and completely" (Heb. 7:25). The cross is the only place of forgiveness and reconciliation, and it is fully so; for the spiritual death of Christ for us that cleanses all our sins and unrighteousness (I John 1:7, 9), and He is the propitiation not for our sins only but also "for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:2).

Moreover, as we face the trials and afflictions of this present life the Lord's grace continues to be unfailingly sufficient for us (2 Corinthian 12:9). He has promised, "I will never fail you nor forsake you." "Hence," as the author of the Letter to the Hebrews points out, "we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid; what can man do to me?'" (Hebrews 13:5-6; Psalm 118:6).

The fact that many who hear the call of the Gospel fail to respond to it with faith, and continue in their unbelief, does not imply that there is any insufficiency in Christ's atoning sacrifice of Himself on the cross. The fault rests entirely with them, and they are condemned because of their own unbelief (John 3:18). It is inappropriate to speak of divine grace in terms of quantity, as though it were sufficient only for those whom God justifies, or as though for its sufficiency to exceed these limits would mean wastage of grace and to that extent an invalidation of Christ's self-offering.

God's grace is boundless. How could it be anything else, seeing it is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, God Himself incarnate? That is why it is fully sufficient and no matter how much we draw from it, the river of divine grace is always full of water (Psalm 65:9).

It is important always to remember that the operation of God's grace is a deep mystery that is far beyond our limited human comprehension. God does not treat men as though they were puppets with no mind or will of their own. Our human dignity as responsible persons under God is never violated or despised. How could it be, since this dignity is itself given by God? By Christ's command the gospel of divine grace is freely proclaimed throughout the whole world (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19).

Those who turn away from it do so of their own choice and stand self-condemned as lovers of darkness rather than light (John 3:19, 36). Those who thankfully receive it do so in full personal responsibility (John 1:12; 3:16), but then they give all the praise to God because their whole redemption is, in some wonderful way, due entirely to the grace of God and not at all to themselves. Confronted with this marvelous but mysterious reality, we can do no more than exclaim, with Paul:

"O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How *υνσεαρχηαβλε* are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things- to him being the glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:33).

We are now responsible to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.