

## NEWSLETTER 2022-4

To: My Fellow Saints

Date: August 16, 2022

**Re: Our Sufficiency is of God!**

*“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father” (1 Thess. 1:2-3, NKJV).*

Beloved, in today’s lesson, we continue discussing the challenges facing the believers and we will be placing emphasis on the fact that **“Our Sufficiency is of God!”** We will briefly highlight some pointers from **2 Cor. 12: 7-10** . . . you are encouraged to read Vv. 1-10.

Partial quote of **“Does Jesus Care”** by Gaither Vocal Band.

Does Jesus care when my heart is pained  
Too deeply for mirth and song?  
When the burdens press  
And the cares distress  
And the way grows weary and long?

### *Refrain*

Oh, yes, He cares, I know He cares  
His heart is touched with my grief  
When the days are weary  
The long night dreary  
I know my Savior cares

Does Jesus care when my way is dark  
With a nameless dread and fear? And as the daylight fades  
Into deep dark shades  
Does He care enough to be near?

*Repeat the Refrain.*

We are all acquainted with 2 Cor. 12:7-10, which refers to Paul’s account of the **“Thorn in the Flesh.”** Paul was mightily used of God; his experience was flourishing and God had given him deep and spiritual experiences. As a means of protecting Paul from pride and self-glory, God gave him **“a thorn in the flesh”** (2 Cor. 12:7).

Scholars vary as to what Paul's "*thorn in the flesh*" may have been, this we do know that the experience for Paul was a humbling one and he earnestly prayed "*that it might depart*" from him (12:8). The **Lord** (12:8), to whom Paul directed his prayer is Christ (12:9), indicating that Paul equated Christ with God (The Father) as a Recipient of prayer. **Like his Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:44), Paul brought his petition for release three times. Even the result is similar: "Not as I will, but as You will" (Matt. 26:29 NKJV).** Paul knew the experience of not having his prayers answered according to human desire.

**Note the following three pointers . . . presented without details:**

There are possibly three reasons why God did not remove the **thorn** from the flesh as requested by Paul:

1. Presumptuous attitude to be avoided.
2. Power of God to be experienced more fully.
3. Portraying Christ in his over-all lifestyle.

The **grace** (2 Cor. 12:8-9) that is sufficient (compare 2 Cor. 3:5) for the apostle is not only the favor of God manifested in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, but also the **power of Christ** (compare 1 Cor. 5:10). As a result, Paul is not merely resigned to his *infirmities*; he accepts God's will as his own. He joyfully boasts in his weakness in order "*that the power of Christ may rest upon me*" (12:9) . . . (that is spread its tent . . . compare Luke 9:34). The verb may contain an illusion to the Shekinah of divine glory which rested on the ancient Tabernacle in the wilderness (compare John 1:14).

Making reference to the "**Sufficiency of God,**" we are referring to the sufficiency of the all sufficient God which assures **the adequacy that can never be exhausted or run dry!** He is the God who is more than enough to adequately handle all the needs of all His creatures without running short of supply.

You may ask: "Are we by ourselves enough?" The answer is: "Absolutely **NO!**" We cannot rely on ourselves; rather we need to fully rely on God . . . "**On Christ the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.**" As Christians we should never forget: the verse where this reminder originates (**2 Cor. 12:9**) comes from a place of weakness and frailty. Unfortunately, some Christians sometimes think that they are personally enabled to stand on their own. **We should never forget the fact that we need God in everything that we do!!**

When we wake up in the morning, have breakfast, and do the task for the day, it should not be forgotten that we need God for the air we breathe, for the food that we eat, and for the wisdom of our daily tasks. We sing the song many years ago: "All good gifts around us; Are sent from Heaven above; so thank the Lord, oh thank the Lord for all His love." Beloved, we need to seek Him early in the morning (Psa. 5:2-3; 90:14; 119:147) to prepare us for the day and abide in Him; allowing Him to guide us through the day!

To rely on ourselves is never sufficient but to wholeheartedly rely on God who is sufficient and more than enough (2 Cor. 12:9). Beloved, other things that we try to rely on cannot fill the holes that God's grace can because **God is the ONLY ONE who can make our lives sufficient!** After all, He is the Creator and Sustainer of ALL things!! *A few examples of this proven factor:*

1. **Naaman** saw better rivers than Jordan but he was healed when he obeyed God's command through His servant Elisha (see 2 Kings 5, NB Vv. 13-14).
2. **Moses** along with his multitude were in a desperate situation, having the Egyptian army pursuing them, on their right and left were mountains and before them was the Red Sea but God has been our sufficiency and always will be . . . He made a way for the Israelites! (Ex. 14, NB Vv. 10-31). See also Moses song of praise in Ex, 15, verse 11, one of my favorite verses. What a Mighty God we serve!!).
3. **The Woman with the Hemorrhage situation** didn't get better despite all the doctors she consulted . . . her victory came when she had an encounter with Jesus Christ (Mark 5:25-34). Indeed, God is our sufficiency . . . He is the Way-maker (Psa. 23:1-4; Phil. 4:13; Isa. 4:10; 43:1-3, 16; etc.)

In the midst of our most trying situations God remains our sufficiency:

1. It may be a time when God seems far away (Psa. 22:1).
2. It may be a time when you cry out to Him night and day but He seems not to hear (Psa. 22:2).
3. It may be a time when you are encircled by adverse winds of opposition (Psa. 22:6-14).
4. It may be a time when the dark clouds gather, the boisterous winds toss you like a troubled vessel and the sails are torn and the ship battered (Matt. 14:22-33, NB Vv. 30-32; Acts 27, NB Vv. 30-32)

Note a quote from Matthew Henry . . . commenting on Psalm 22:1 . . . **a partial quote:**

*"When we are lamenting God's withdrawing, yet still we must call Him our God, and continue to call upon Him as ours. When we want the faith of assurance we must live by faith of adherence. However, it be, yet God is good, and He is mine; **though He slay me, yet I trust Him;** though He do not answer me immediately, I will continue praying and waiting; though He be silent, I will not be silent."*

Note also 2 Cor. 4:8-18

Although God did not remove Paul's affliction (2 Cor. 12:7-10), He promised to demonstrate His power in Paul. The fact that God's power is displayed in our weakness should give us courage and hope. As we recognize our limitations, we will depend more and more on God for our effectiveness rather than our energy, effort or talent. Our limitations not only help develop Christian character but also deepen our worship, because in admitting them, we affirm and seek God's strength.

Max Lucado . . . included some challenging thoughts in regards to God's grace on a desk calendar, I am quoting one:

*“Plunge a sponge into Lake Erie. Did you absorb every drop? Take a deep breath. Did you suck the oxygen out of the atmosphere? Pluck a pine needle from a tree in Yosemite. Did you deplete the forest of foliage? Watch an ocean wave crash against the beach. Will there never be another one? Of course there will. No sooner will one wave crash into the sand than another appears. Then another and another. This is a picture of God’s sufficient grace.”*

The remaining verses of “Does Jesus Care”:

When we live long enough we finally begin to understand.  
 What those songs are saying  
 Does Jesus care  
 When I’ve tried and failed  
 To resist some temptations strong?  
 When for my deep grief there’s no relief  
 Though the tears flow all the day long

Refrain

Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares  
 His heart is touched with my grief  
 When the days are weary  
 The long night dreary  
 I know my Savior cares

Does Jesus care when I’ve said “Good-bye”  
 To the dearest on earth to me  
 And my sad heart aches  
 Till it nearly breaks  
 Is it aught to Him? Does He see?

Repeat the Refrain

**A final thought from Max Lucado:**

*“According to Paul, God has sufficient sustaining grace to meet every challenge of our lives. Sufficient. We fear its antonym: insufficient. We’ve written checks only to see the words ‘insufficient funds.’ Will we offer prayers only to discover insufficient strength? Never.”*

**Matt. 11:28-30 Amplified Bible Classic Edition**

*“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and overburdened, and I will cause you to rest. [I will ease and relieve and refresh]. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle (meek) and humble (lowly) in heart, and you will find rest (relief and refreshment and recreation and blessed quiet) for your souls. [Jer. 6:16] For my yoke is wholesome (useful, good – not harsh, sharp or pressing, but comfortable, gracious and pleasant), and My burden is light and easy to be borne.”*

**Isa. 40:30-31 NKJV**

*“Even the young men shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall. But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall walk and not faint.”*

**Website Update:**

We have added Psalms 15 and 20 along with the answers for the review questions. As promised in our June newsletter, I would develop and present John 14:1-4 in a more detailed presentation; that lesson (John 14:1-4) is now in the final stage and will be added sometime in September.

Accessing the website is functioning effectively and as a reminder for phone use please use either Firefox or Internet Explorer for your browser. I continue to count it a privilege and an honor to be used of God and will never take His work for granted! Thank you for your continued prayers. **BE BLESSED!!**

It is a challenging time but despite it all the work of God must continue and His grace is sufficient! I must also express my heartfelt gratitude in response to all who have reached out to us in regards to the loss of one of my sisters. Thank you! Thank You!

You are loved and highly appreciated; God continue to richly bless you and your wonderful family!!

Yours-in-Christ  
Bishop K. Wright