

The need for more grace in the Christians pathway (Quality: Good)

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This apostle, or his letter, was not written to specific churches. Paul and Peter wrote to specific churches.

But James is writing, as it says in the beginning, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad. And it is left on record for the church of Christ to the end of the day.

To the end of time. And there are those teachings and words of the apostle here, and in the chapter we read, and others too, which shall be, if the Lord is pleased, to own and bless them, to our profit.

[1 : 18] But the text in itself speaks of the all-sufficient grace and mercy of God, and he giveth it.

It is freely given. It is sent and granted and blessed to the church of Christ.

A number of unworthy sinners. It's unmerited. Nothing here, my friends, in this text, could be ever more true that the grace of God, and that is found in the hearts of believers, in the church of Christ, all those whose names are recorded in God's book of life, are under divine grace.

It's an unmerited gift. It's given freely, and it flows into the heart. It is of God's giving.

It is of God's sanctifying grace to the soul that we shall need as we travel on and travel towards the end of the journey.

[2 : 28] But he speaks of giving more grace, as if the apostle is speaking of the grace that is already granted. And my friends, to those who are under grace, he will give more grace.

And only those that are under grace. There is the evidence in here, first and foremost, that he's not speaking of the grace in the first instance, as you and I need, if we're going to glory, to be under grace and to be taught by grace.

The work of grace is the work of the Holy Ghost. The need of the work of the Holy Ghost in our soul is to transform us from darkness to light, to breathe, living, to have a life in our souls which cometh from God.

That's grace. That's the work we want to see in our own hearts and in the hearts of others. And it is given. And it is given in this time state only.

And it is given to those whom God has eternally loved in eternity past. But I believe too that not only the work of grace, the evidence of spiritual life, the grace which flows from God in the first instance, in transforming us out of Satan's kingdom and putting us amongst his people, putting us into the way everlasting if we are possessors of this grace in the first instance, but you and I, if we are in this pathway, which shall lead to heaven, shall lead to heaven, my friends, this pathway, we shall need this more grace.

[4 : 22] It's not that his grace is in any way insufficient. Oh, his grace is all sufficient. Do you remember that word which is in the second of Corinthians in the second chapter and it's answered in the third chapter?

The apostles calls to say, who is sufficient for these things? Who is sufficient? Now there are in your pathways, I'm sure, those things which you've been brought to a stand sometimes and you've had to say in similar words, who is sufficient for these things.

But in the third chapter of the second epistle, Paul said, but our sufficiency is of God. And it's only, my friends, as grace is given, it's only as grace is given that you'll know that God's sufficiency will manage all.

But he giveth. It's God's free gift. Unmerited, unlooked for, undeserved also. Oh, if we was brought to that place of knowing that the grace of God is undeserved, what a tender spirit it would give us, wouldn't he?

What a lowly spirit it would give us. What humility we'd find in our heart. Because grace cannot be merited. The very word grace, I believe, means the free favour of God and who to?

[5 : 54] Poor sinners. That's all. To poor sinners down here below as they struggle through this waste-hound in wilderness. As they struggle against the various hindrances and the various enemies which raise their hand and voice against the grace which is in their heart.

Giveth more grace. Oh, if you're under grace, my friends, that is, if you have that life of God in the soul, it's described in various ways through the word of God as graces.

The Lord Jesus, speaking of it, said, I give unto my sheep eternal life and they shall never perish. The grace of God, the life of God in the soul.

You've got to look in the book of Nehemiah and he has a word of dispute with the elders of Israel and he could say to them with an honest heart, so did not I because of the fear of God.

That's the grace of God in his heart. The fear of God and the grace of God. The life of God in the soul is because grace is found there.

[7 : 09] You hath it quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins and grace will call out of nature's darkness such that are blessed by it.

But we need to look at this word first and foremost in the giving of it. And my friends, it is given when it's needed. Do you believe that?

It's given when it's needed. There's no stock of grace in your heart and mine. That is that we can lean back upon and rest upon.

There is a going to and a dependence upon the God of all grace for this grace. and as the pathway goes before us and as we come across those situations and circumstances and places in the pathway very much unlooked for very often often takes us by surprise all the need of grace.

Do you hasten to the throne of grace sometimes and seek for grace to walk this path or that path which the Lord has put before you or we will give more grace.

[8 : 28] He'll cause you to seek for it. He'll cause you to ask for it. He'll have from his people those spiritual exercises after his grace so that he shall bestow upon it.

You know of course and everyone knows that reads the Bible the words of the Apostle Paul in the second epistle to the Corinthian church and he speaks about the visitations of God upon his soul how he saw things which were beyond his description impossible to describe blessings to his soul lifted him up from time he was as if he was in another world he was under the influence of divine grace and faith but God balances these things if God's blessed your soul with life if he's blessed your soul with himself he'll balance these things with trials and troubles afflictions crosses and losses that will be the part and that will be the life and the walk and the pathway that you're walking and if God has blessed you with these spiritual blessings as he did the Apostle you'll find there will be something else that will keep your feet firm on the ground or you won't be taken and be brought to spiritual pride there will be those things which God will see fit to give you to hold you on the way and hold you up and hold you down if need be and that grace was seen in the

Apostle's life wasn't it there was given unto me he said a thorn in the flesh a messenger of Satan every child of God's got a messenger of Satan against him every one that has life of God in his soul has got adversity from Satan or Satan's agents it must be so my friends if your religion is a real religion it will be opposed by Satan it will be opposed by your own heart and your natural feelings and thoughts will oppose the work of grace in the soul but so the Apostle was but he knew why he knew why because by nature he was a Pharisee by nature he was steeped in pride oh the walk of a Pharisee would read it in the word of God they thought they were far better than others they went about and said give place to me for

I am more holy than thou they stood in the marketplaces and the corners of the streets praying long prayers such that were of course self-righteous characters word but the Lord knew what to hold Paul and to control those natural evils of his own heart the Lord knew what to give him to bring him to depend alone and entirely upon him and he gave him a thorn in the flesh he gave him a cross he gave him something my friends which caused him to pray you may wonder sometimes the blessings of the Lord are often followed by these things Solomon in his wisdom leaves on record this word that the day of adversity is set over against the day of prosperity he giveth more grace thrice did I pray Paul said that he would remove this this which was given to hold

Paul into a right frame of mind and to deliver him from the pride of his own heart but he said unto me my grace is sufficient that's something my friends which you'll never exhaust you'll never get beyond you'll never either I believe if you're a child of God never cease to thank the Lord for that when he giveth more grace he gives sufficient grace he doesn't leave things to you and I to work out the best way we can he doesn't leave us to lean upon the arm of flesh or upon the wisdom of man either but he giveth more grace now it wasn't on my mind to look at the chapter that we read other than to read it before you but in it we find something my friends which we need grace to control the third chapter in this epistle speaks of the unruly tongue the unruly tongue what does it do it causes divisions in the church of

[13 : 34] Christ it's evil it flows from an evil heart what dangers there are what damages can be done with this unruly member but the tongue can no man tame what is the answer my friend what is the remedy what is the grace that is needed well my friends if you know your own heart if you know the propensity of evil that dwells in your own heart you will say you will need more grace more grace in your speaking you know it's often said and you can see the work of grace in the walk and conversation of a sinner the evidence of grace the walk and conversation you can see the grace in it you can also see the evil in man by reason of that little unruly member that we have which with the same as the apostle said there we bless we

God even the father there we curse we men this unruly member but all what need there is of grace that we might seek that it shall be subdued I've often been reminded of the psalmist words it may be that you know them it may be that you had to pray them and if you have to do with the world my friends you do well to pray them and pray them every morning before you enter the world and the things of it set a watch over my mouth keep the door of my lips and my friends you won't be able to do it in one little moment if you're let to slip well all sorts of things can flow out of your lips but the Lord will give more grace if you want an example of that truth you look at the apostle Peter when he was a follower a disciple of

Jesus Christ the Lord warned him of the slip and fall that was in front of him he didn't walk unruly he didn't go into carnal things he didn't turn away from the gospel of Jesus Christ that he was privileged to listen to what did he do he sinned with his lips and he spoke with his tongue and would the Lord teach us by the falls and slips of others which are recorded in the word of God Christ said to him didn't he Satan hath designed to have you to sift you as we but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not Peter of course as impetuous as ever said to Jesus Christ though all men forsake thee yet will not I but it only needed someone like a young woman to accuse him of being a disciple of Christ and out of his lips came cursing and lies or you would say he wouldn't have anything to do with such a person who was such a disciple of

Jesus Christ he learnt his old nature then didn't he and he learned his need of this grace he giveth more grace all we can of Peter when he was ashamed of Jesus but then someone said to him your very speech betrayeth you you speak like Jesus Christ what better privilege could it be said of a poor sinner that you know that you speak like the Lord Jesus Christ and what did he do he changed his speech and he cursed and swore that he never even knew Jesus Christ well there is a need my friends to pray David's prayer set a watch over my mouth and keep the door of my lips this grace which is able to subdue this grace which is like an unctuous night to all that's right and a bar to all that's wrong he giveth it and he he will give it to them to ask that's a very simple statement but it is so the

Lord will give more grace but then at the close of this fourth chapter we speak of the it is written there rather of the of another exhortation that we should be mindful of that we should remember the uncertainty of our lives we make plans this time of the year those who preach make engagements for something like well over twelve months ahead but whether we engage or whether we go here or there or whatever we do well what does the apostle say for that she ought to say if the Lord will we shall do this or that do you find my friends grace to do his will when your mind and desire and exercise of mind is to do what you feel is the right thing to do what you want to do in your own heart but has not sometimes the

[19:02] Lord come into your pathway and put his hand upon it and stopped you has not been those times you had to say well it's come to nothing it's all come to nothing but that she ought to say if the Lord will we shall live and do this or that the Lord grants you and I the grace that not only desires to do his will but falls before his will that listens for his voice that traces his hand that watches his path and the way that he shall lead you know Israel when they came out of Egypt were guided to Canaan through that waste hell and wilderness they didn't need a compass they didn't need a compass my friends they had a cloud and a pillar of cloud by day and by night watch the pillar of cloud ever seek and that takes grace because

I'm assure you of this if you're one of God's children he'll lead you the way he wants you to go not what you feel is the best way not the pathway that would seem more satisfying to your own flesh or to your own wisdom I know my friends what I'm speaking about but the Lord grant us grace that when he leads that we may fall before his will and purposes for us oh it's easy to say if the Lord will we say it so constantly we speak it amongst ourselves well God willing we'll do this what if it wasn't his will what if it wasn't his will you know you sing that beautiful hymn 64 in our book about the sovereignty of God but you know the last verse says and that's the teaching that's found in the pathway plagues and deaths surround me fly till he bids I cannot die not a single shaft can hit till the

God of love sees fit but the God of love does see fit sometimes you know grace in the soul faith in the heart doesn't accept you and I from trials and troubles but all the need when God sees fit to bring these things into the pathway that we might seek for this more grace the evidence of it or the evidence of not having this grace is very clear isn't it all how we resist the will and purposes of God how we fly in the face of the word of God we do intend you know as the world as it's in our heart and we say we'll not have this man to reign over us when we resist his will but you know if you're a child of he'll subdue your rebellion and your opposition to his way and he'll give more grace he'll give more grace he'll stir you up he giveth more grace well the

Lord will bring you to need this more grace if you have grace if the Lord has called you by his grace and blessed you with his grace in this time state this blessing of God which is for time you'll find the pathway which he'll lead you and guide you and direct you you'll be under his leadings you'll say with the hymn writer sometimes and you'll be brought to mean what you're saying when he says rain rain rain or us as king accomplish thy will and powerfully bring us forth from all ill till falling before thee we lord thy blessed name ascribe in the glory to god and the lamb now when a person says that you know that's saying to the lord you show me the way and I'll walk it that's what it means but you know everywhere where the lord leads his people that it is opposite to what nature wants and this is where this grace is needed this more grace but he giveth more grace but then in the opposites of life the afflictions that come against us and on us and the unlooked for trials and the burdens that he lays upon us my friends the apostle

Paul writing to Timothy gives us some good teaching gives us some very good teaching you may have heard me say this before the apostle Timothy was a young man and Paul was an old man and he was about to be taken from time into eternity it comes to my mind the last time I was here I preached from the chapter 4 of the second epistle of Timothy but in the third chapter he speaks of the ways and evils of the times those things which shall come on the earth and has come on the earth he calls them perilous times but these things affect the people of God and those that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution now what is how are you to continue in these things and oppositions to your path and persecutions to your way whether it's from within or without this but continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ

[25 : 04] Jesus well how are you going to continue I don't know about you my friends but I'm sure of this there's been many a time in my path I would have given up give up that's what Satan would have you do that's what Satan would exhort you to do especially when it comes to the exercise of prayer and when the pathway becomes harder and harder and more difficult to our own natural mind and ways of looking at things well the apostle was saying to Timothy that he was to continue and you and I if we're in the way everlasting will only continue when the Lord grants us this grace this grace and he will grant it for he giveth more grace do you feel to need it now are there those here I wondered as the Lord dropped this word in during the night early hours of this morning

I did wonder whether there was those that were amongst us today who hope they have by the grace of God the life of God in their soul better find as they travel on that the opposition becomes greater and the crooked things become more often and there's more rough places there's more unexplainable things found in your path the way doesn't get easier does it it never will my friends it never has the pathway of Christ is the same it never will get easier as it goes on it doesn't get better ah but you'll say this is what we want this is what we need above everything else more grace more grace to fall as we've already said in submission to his mind and will in the pathway more grace to do as the apostle here speaks about he doesn't my friends in these exhortations they're not fleshly exhortations they're not something that you and I could put our mind to to desire to do it submit yourselves therefore to

God what does that mean well the psalmist the apostle Peter says cast in all your care upon him for he careth for you the psalmist says cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain you David said in the 37th psalm commit thy way unto the Lord trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass that submit yourselves therefore to God and that's the grace that's needed to do so there are incidents in the word of God and I'm sure there's been incidents in your life if you're under grace where there's not been a folding of the hands and saying as the world tells us what's the will be will be but there's a waiting on God and there's a waiting for him he giveth more grace you think of that incident in the second of chronicles in the 20th chapter respecting

Jehoshaphat and Judah and Jerusalem were under attack of three great enemies but what did they do they couldn't muster enough to fight they were insufficient in themselves you see that's what balances the pathway of God's people their insufficiency and God's all sufficiency that's the blessing which those in grace are brought to prove in times of trial and opposition and affliction and so on they prove their insufficiency and are proved by this God's all sufficiency and so did Jehoshaphat and we went to prayer he laid the matter before God they met in God's house and everyone came there not only the praying Jehoshaphat and the Levites and so on but the little ones and the children were brought there and they laid the burden before God and they had to fall down in submission to his will and they were brought by grace

Jehoshaphat was brought by grace to say neither know we what to do you've been there I've been there a lot of times and I expect I'll go there again time and time again neither know we what to do but there was not despair was there there was not despair there wasn't a giving up but our eyes are upon thee that's the place where you learn grace that's the place where God gives grace there's a falling before him and there's a waiting for him if you read that chapter they all stood you know I've often said we come to prayer meetings and we disappear out the door when the last word is spoken but that was a time of great need and there wasn't such a thing as going home and forgetting it the word of God is very simple and yet it's very teaching very great teaching in it and as they laid that matter before the Lord when you read it for your own instruction and it speaks of living faith and it speaks of this grace there was this argument put forward by Jehoshaphat reminding the

[30 : 41] Lord how he had led them thus far and brought them into the land and so and there was this casting upon the Lord this burden neither know we what to do but our eyes are upon thee and all Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones their wives and their children it was as if they were going to go home so great was the burden so great was the trial so great was the anxiety they could do nothing about it but cast it upon God submit yourselves therefore to God James says to the Christian church and they stood this is a mercy my friends when you are able to pray but it's a mercy when you're able to wait for the Lord to speak and he will speak to wait in souls and I couldn't move without them I couldn't move without his voice he giveth more grace wait on the Lord wait for him listen for his voice seek direction from

God and seek his way only listen for his voice through the word of God to your soul well they waited but they didn't wait in vain the Lord spoke and he spoke by someone else he could have spoke to Jehoshaphat but he didn't he spoke to another man a Levite called Jehaziel and Jehaziel told them what they were to do what were they to do they wanted to do anything really they were to watch and they saw the Lord's hand and their enemies were defeated but this is what is needed my friends you and I needed if we're in the way everlasting more grace more grace the grace that causes the grace that causes people out of nature's darkness will put them into the way will put them into the way which leads to life eternal you read the 107th psalm for your instruction very not far down the psalm we find these words he led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation but you read after that when you read the times of trial and affliction to times of sorrow and distress you read the times when the Lord is when the people of Israel people of God because it's the pathway of God's people are built to prayer then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he delivers them from their distresses he gives more grace those unexpected pathways you and I are brought to walk those ways in which the Lord needs you to walk in and brings you to walk in but if there's anything more that balances the clouds in the people of God's pathway it is this grace this grace he giveth more grace but then

I felt there was some teaching here too for the Lord Jesus Christ as example to the church of Christ he giveth more grace and there is a word which I looked at in the in Paul's epistle to the Corinthians and if I can just turn to it for a moment for our instruction the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians in the eighth verse the eighth chapter rather and the ninth verse for ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor that ye through his poverty might be rich the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ well you hear it said at the close of every service the benediction is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ do you ever feel to need the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ you've heard of

I'm sure you've heard this from the pulpit the need of the spirit of Christ in our hearts the need of the spirit of Christ in our pathway the need of the spirit of Christ in the church also ah this grace does it not speak and it does speak my friends to the church of Christ to know a little more rather than just speak as we close the services the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ but do you know it have you ever been brought to desire the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ he giveth more grace how God in Christ displayed that grace and Paul again comes to mind as he wrote to the church at Philippi and speaking of this grace he said let this mind be you which was also in Christ Jesus oh are there those that are saying well that's an impossibility no it's not my friends if you're a follower of Jesus Christ

I believe you'll want the same grace in a measure that flowed in the pathway and heart and words and will of Jesus Christ let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus what mind well the apostle said there he read it in the second chapter of Paul's epistle to the Philippians and he speaks of that grace and first of all he tells us there of what Christ is he is co-equal and he's co-eternal he thought it not robbery that's what the word says to be equal with God he was equal with God he is equal with God the Father and the Spirit and Christ are one glorious trinity they are co-equal co-eternal self-existent God but did he not display the grace when he walked here on earth and it begins like this he thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation no reputation could you say that honestly before God the grace you need to be of no reputation

[37 : 24] I don't know I've said this before here but I remember once going to a little chapel down in Wiltshire and I went to listen on one Sunday afternoon many years ago there was a man in the pulpit I'd never seen before in my life and when he preached he preached into my heart and I said to him at the end I'm sorry but I don't know your name and he said it doesn't matter what my name is it doesn't matter what my name is I thought that was grace you know of no reputation what was a name in comparison with the truths that man preached and preached into my heart but he did that day but the Lord grants us this grace as we are as we have the example in the Lord Jesus Christ the grace of being nothing Paul had it you know there is a place somewhere in the epistles when he speaks like this though I be nothing now that would be you'd say the understatement of anybody's could make that Paul was nothing but he was nothing in his own eyes he was by divine grace the most useful apostle to the church of Christ both Jew and Gentile but in his own eyes he was nothing and you know

I'll tell you something my friends the more you and I by divine grace could be nothing in our own eyes the greater the blessing that we shall know Christ was despised and rejected of men a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief he was of no reputation though he was co-equal with God though he was as eternal as God is eternal though he came in the fullness of time and born of a woman and born under the law and born to die at Calvary he made himself of no reputation he was king of kings no he wasn't he is king of kings not was he is king of kings and lord of all lords but when he came here dressed in a body like our own he was as nothing there'll be a day my friends when the whole world all that are born into the world will fall down before him and owe him as king but when he walked here in humanity he came as a servant he was he made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men he giveth more grace grant the lord grant us grace that we be more like Jesus Christ that's a strange expression isn't it to those who have the grace in their heart and consider that they are Christians have you ever prayed as a Christian to be more like Jesus Christ have you you believe as a Christian you have a lord and master for whom you love for whom you would follow willingly sometimes withersoever that you're led but this is the grace my friends you and I will find the need of as we travel on the grace to be more like Jesus Christ as we follow in the way follow afar all some do but followers heeded but we'll continue this word this night if the Lord will help us to see furthermore what grace is needed because you know you only find a need for this grace as the Lord is pleased to shine into your heart and shine upon your pathway and bring you and I to the truth that we shall need this grace grace to live and grace to die the apostle Paul had grace to die you know some people speak about as if the Lord will give grace in that day he will give grace in that day do you ever pray for grace in view of that day the apostle said to Timothy in that last chapter of his second epistle I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand that is grace you can sing and sometimes we do I could from all things parted be but never never Lord from thee but my friends when you come there you're dependent on his grace because that's not out of your old heart that's not out of your own nature nature clings to the world and all that's in it and all that's near and dear to it but he giveth more grace the Lord bless us with that grace amen amen and all that you you

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