

## 2 Corinthians

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Date: 27 August 2003

Preacher: Broome, John Robert (1931-2013)

- [ 0 : 00 ]     May the Lord help us to commence this evening service by singing hymn 941, tune 285.  
Jesus, my Lord, my life, my all, fast straight before thy throne I fall.  
  
Fain would my soul look up and see, my hope, my heaven, my all in thee. Hymn 941, tune 285.  
  
Jesus, my Lord, my Lord, my all, fast straight before thy throne I fall.  
  
I hope, my God, my all, fast straight before thy throne I fall.  
  
I hope, my God, my all, fast straight before thy throne I fall. I hope, my God, my all, fast straight before thy throne I fall. Here in this world of sin and woe I fell with joy, Seek to the land of God.
- [ 1 : 43 ]     Burdened west, and people of God. With nothing, people of sin and woe I fall.  
  
To give me rest. The home of forever ■■■' endless Tagekoe White.  
  
To gives me hope, my son and woe I fall. I pray, according to the Lord, with nothing, ever crucified for thy throne I fall. Thank you, Jesus. Thou rede sympathize. All of sin and woe I fall. To give mylli 70's love, though God shall come. ■namentesta and will tell thee.  
  
To heal my heart and counsel my grace. Forgiveness my love, make power with me.  
  
Love and my peace and presence. But all the world and health of God.
- [ 3 : 04 ]     Holding what I am, my soul, my love. But all my darkness is in to peace.  
  
Come to me, my burning voice. Most they can be, my soul, the great voice.  
  
Take these days to look up at me. My peace and presence are gone to me.  
  
And filled with grace, O my grace.  
  
My soul in grace, your soul above. And with them, O joy may come.
- [ 4 : 38 ]     The one best God is over. O joy may come.  
  
I shall read from the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. Commencing to read at chapter 11, verse 21. Reading as far as verse 4 of chapter 13.  
  
The second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. Chapter 11. And verse 21.  
  
I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. And where in so ever any is bold, I speak foolishly, I am bold also.  
  
Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I.
- [ 5 : 44 ]     Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a full arm more. The neighbours more abundant in stripes above measure. In prisons more frequent in deaths of.  
  
The Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Twice was I beaten with wrath, once was I stoned.  
  
Once I suffered shipwreck. A day and a night I have been in the deep. And journeying is often. In perils of waters. In perils of robbers.

In perils by mine own countrymen. In perils by the heathen. In perils in the city. In perils in the wilderness. In perils in the sea.

In perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness. In watchings often. In hunger and thirst.

[ 6 : 46 ] In fastings often. In cold and nakedness. In cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without.

Which cometh upon me daily. The care of all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak. Who is offended and I burn not.

I must need glory. I will glory of the things which. Concern mine infirmity. The God and. Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Which is. Blessed forevermore knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus. The governor under a ratus the king. Kept the. City of the Damascenes.

With a garrison. Desirest to apprehend me. Through a window and a basket. Was I let down by the wall. And escaped his hands. It is not.

[ 7 : 43 ] Expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to. Vision. And revelations of the Lord. A new man in Christ.

About fourteen years ago. Whether in the body I cannot tell. Or whether out of the body I cannot tell. God knoweth. Touching one caught up to the third heaven. I knew such a man.

Whether in the body or out of the body. I cannot tell. God knoweth. That he was caught up into paradise. And heard unspeakable words. Which it is not. Awful for a man to utter. Such and one will I glory. Yet of myself I will not glory. But in mine infirmities. Though I would desire to glory.

I shall not be a fool. For I shall not be a fool. For I shall say the truth. But now I forbear.

To answer the revelations. There was given to me a thorn in the flesh. The messenger of Satan above it. May lest I should be exhorted above measure. For this thing I have besought the Lord thrice.

[ 9 : 07 ] That it might depart from me. And he said unto me. My grace. Is sufficient for thee. For my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore. Will I rather glory. In my infirmities. For the power of Christ. May rest upon me. Therefore I take.

Pleasure in infirmities. In reproaches. In necessities. In persecutions. In distresses. For Christ's sake. For when I am weak.

Then am I strong. I become a fool in glory. And ye have compelled me. I ought to have been commended of you. For nothing am I behind the very.

Cheapest apostles though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle. Were wrought among you in all patience. In signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

[ 10 : 07 ] What is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches. Except it be that I myself. Was not burdensome to you. For give me this wrong.

For behold. A third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you. For I seek not yours but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents.

But the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you. For though the more abundantly I love you. The less I be loved.

For be it so I did not burden you. Nevertheless. Being crafty I caught you with gall. That I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you.

I desired Titus. With him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? Walk we not in the same spirit. Walk we not in the same steps.

[ 11 : 10 ] Again. Think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you. We speak before God in Christ. For we do all things dearly beloved for your edifying.

For I fear lest when I come. I shall not find you such as I would. That I shall be found unto you such as you would not.

Lest there be debates, envies, wraths, strifes, backbiting, whisperings, swellings, tumours. Lest when I come again.

My God will humble me among you. That I shall bewail many which have sinned already. Have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

It is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. I told you before and foretell you as if I were present the second time and being absent.

[ 12 : 15 ] Now I write to them which heretofore have sinned and to all others. And if I come again I will not spare since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me which to you Lord is not weak but is mighty in you.

For though he was crucified through weakness yet he liveth by the power of God. We also are weak in him. But we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

Dear Lord we come to thee strength.

We need thy knowledge. grace to be enabled to preach thy holy word. That all sufficient grace. May we prove it again and again.

Look down upon us as we are gathered in thy holy name this night. And come gracious God and teach us out of thy holy word of truth.

[ 13 : 34 ] Use the foolishness of preaching to thine own honour and glory. and to come and work. Grant us Lord a hearing ear.

To hear thy voice. May thy holy word drop us the rain and distill us the dew. We pray Lord for the work of thy spirit.

For the movements of thy spirit in the house of God. For thy one Zion. Lord she is in a lower place.

And thou seest her altogether. And yet thou hast a people. And thou hast sacredly said. They shall come.

From the north and the south and the east and the west. When I gather them. And thou hast a work. Thou did say when here on earth I have finished a work.

[ 14 : 38 ] Which thou gavest me to do. And all that work is in thy own hands. It is an accomplished work. And the government is upon thy shoulder.

And thou dost rule and reign in heaven. And art gathering thy church one by one to glory.

And hast gathered them Lord from this sanctuary of God. And art beneath this candlestick of truth. And thou hast worked over the years that have passed.

And there is a cloud of witnesses. Lord so many of whom we have known and loved over the years. To whom we have felt to union. Whom thou hast gathered to be with thee in glory.

Whose body, whose sacred dust lies about this building. Waiting that glorious morning of the resurrection. And we remember before thee this night their prayer.

[ 15 : 47 ] Their desires when here on earth. Those prayers that ascended up to thee and are yet unanswered. And Lord we pray for those showers of blessing.

To be known in the foolishness of preaching here in this pulpit. We pray that thou would bless and anoint thy sent servants. As they come from time to time in their weakness.

And in their need. And Lord that thou would use thy holy word. And that there may be a building. Of thy own right hand planting.

Thy workmanship. Here a little. There a little. Line upon line. Precept upon precept. For what thou doest.

Thou doest forever. Nothing can be added to it. Nothing taken from it. Thou doest it. And Lord we pray for that work.

[ 16 : 50 ] Spoken of in thy holy work. The fruit of the labours of thy sent servants. Other foundation thou hast said. Can no man lay than that that is laid. Which is Christ Jesus.

If any man that is any servant of Christ. Build upon this foundation. Gold. Silver. Precious stones. Wood.

Hayes. Stumble. Lord we pray. For the building and the workmanship. Of that gold. Silver. And precious stones.

All may it be. Wrought out here. Built upon that. Good foundation. That. Teaching. That.

Doctrine. Instilled into the heart. In the. Sweet pathway of experience. For it is there. And in that pathway Lord. That.

[ 17 : 49 ] All doctrine is learned. And we pray it may be so. That there may be the. Work of the spirit. That. Manifest in the heart. That work.

Which will stand in that. Great day. When the secrets. Of every heart are revealed. And Lord we pray.

That I would use. Thy servant. Read in thy holy word. Who is as blind as my servant. And deaf as my messenger. And deaf as my messenger. That I sent.

Lord thy servants. Are blind so often. To the fruits of their work. And they're deaf. To the many assaults of Satan. That would tell them that.

All is fruitless. They seek. One. A thing. And that is to. Follow their Lord. To obey his commandments. To go forth. Bearing precious seed weeping.

[ 18 : 49 ] To sow beside all waters. Not knowing which shall prosper. This or that. Yet. Leaving all in thy dear hands. And thou hast said of them. They shall doubtless. Come again rejoicing.

Bearing their sheaves with them. And Lord we pray for that fruit. To be manifest here. Beneath this. Candlestick. Without a brother who bears the responsibility here.

Lord go before him now. In his present pathway. And guide him in his footsteps. Relative to this church. And all his desires and his loved ones.

Thou knowest all things. They are not hidden from thee. And Lord we pray that. Thou give them grace. To be still.

To be still. And know that. Thou art God. May we each be brought into that. Blessed pathway. To stand still.

[ 19 : 50 ] And see. The salvation of the Lord. The Lord will fight for you. And ye shall hold your peace. And Lord we would find that place that.

Moses found when. He laid in the arms of God. And could say and experience. Underneath our.

The everlasting arm. The eternal God is our refuge. We would know. His strength. We would be enabled by faith. Put our hand into the hand of our God. To go out into that unknown. And to go out into that unknown.

And to be able to find that. Pathway. Wisely. Hidden from us. From us. From us. From us. To be able to find that. From us. To be able to find that.

Our refuge. In the light of our refuge. In the light of us. To be able to find that. To be able to find that. We would know. Our refuge. We would know. His strength. We would be enabled.

[ 20 : 49 ] By faith. To put our hand into the hand of our God. And to go out into that unknown. Pathway. pathway, wisely hidden from us, concealed from our sight. Yet Lord we would walk in that path thou hast have us walk in, to trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not to our own understanding to acknowledge him in all our ways and Lord to have our path directed to walk as thy dear servant Moses did when he said if thy presence go not with us carry us not up hence. And thou hadst previously said to him in promise my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest. Lord we would know thy presence going with us in the pathway. We would be found in thy everlasting arms of love and mercy and we would be still and know that thou art God.

We would know the peace of God which passes all understanding. We would enter into that blessed peace thou did speak of, my peace.

I leave with you my peace I give unto you. Thy dear servant Himwriters said in thy presence I am happy. In thy presence I am secure. In thy presence all afflictions I can easily endure.

Lord we would know thy gracious presence and thy strength. Look down then upon us and teach us and lead us in the way.

And go before us. Guide us. Lord we pray thee that we may know what it is to find and experience that rest which remains to the children of God.

[ 23 : 17 ] we would be conscious Lord of mercies, lengths and days we would have a sight of thy goodness passing before us in the wise we would find that rest and enter into it oh that I know that rest might know so the hymn writer believe and enter in look down then here Lord be with those unable to be here those on holiday and away we remember them Lord and pray that I would sanctify the pathway oh may there be given that sanctifying grace we cannot walk in obedience and submission to thy holy mind and will unless thou dost a grant it and as for entering into the remarkable nature of the Apostles experience most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmity

Lord how solemn are we we find them a nuisance we find them difficult and we see the grace so needed to lie passive in thy hand and know no will but thine Lord we pray that we bless this sanctity of God this church and people this congregation we pray we pray here for the movements of thy spirit according to thy sovereign will Lord we seek it in Zion that thou would yet come and build up the churches once again upon this village here Lord thou hast had a people here over the generations who have lived and died here and we pray thou would gather others in be thy sovereign will Lord move and work let the candles of truth shine in this village may there be a witness grant our friends grace and let their light shine before men

Lord how we prove again and again that others know much about us which we did not think they knew they watch they observe they see Lord grant that blessed work of thy spirit that strangers may yet be brought into the sanctity of God that we may be given grace not to hide our light under a bushel but to be enabled to give a reason for the hope that is in it Lord look down upon the many wandering prodigal gone from the sanctuary of God and wandered far you think of that generation that have gone Lord away from the truth and solemnly we read in thy holy word they went out from us because they were not of them Lord there is a people known to thee whom thou will gather back into the sanctity of God

Lord we pray it may be so oh put forth thy mighty arm gather back those who have wandered in the last days of their life put forth thy hand and manifest thy glory in the return of prodigals to Zion we thank thee for those we have witnessed brought back and safely gathered to glory just as thou didst gather the dying thief in the last hours of his life Lord we pray thou is move and work and gather others and grant there may be that joy known among the angels of God over one sinner the repentant known also in Zion over those brought back and Lord we pray the raising up of pillars in the church oh that there was move and work in this sacred and solemn matter we have known some of the pillars in this church who worship before thy throne now while here humble godly god-fearing gracious men and women who stood in their dying generation for an example of witness and Lord whom thou hast safely gather and we pray thou raise up pillars those with discernment judgment grace wisdom understanding teaching pour in their own sight humbled in their own hearts

Lord raise up pillars in pour zion she needs them so solemnly today and Lord grant there may be a separation in this world separation from its wickedness and its evil separation from the appearance of evil Lord come we remember a separated generation who walked in this world win it but not of it now Lord we see a carnal generation very much taken up with the things of this world lacking discernment lacking judgment not separated as their forebear mixing and mingling lacking Lord that separation we read of thine ancient

[ 30 : 05 ] Israel that they came out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea they never returned and they were utterly separated from Egypt Lord we pray that work of thy spirit that truly teaches and separates in heart from this world and brings down and humbles and then Lord we believe there will be union communion and fellowship in the things of God on thy servants Lord as they go forth in thy holy name from time to time grant them grace strength wisdom and all may there be Lord sweet fellowship and union and communion between pulpit and pure that they may be led and guided to enter into the footsteps of the flock that beautiful description of the path of all thy living family go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock it is

Lord thy footsteps for crucifying sorrows fellowship with him and we have read this night we are weak with him walking in the same paths that he walked in when here on earth and entering into fellowship with Christ Lord grant more faith to be enabled to rest in him then we pray thee once again upon the nation in his vast vast wickedness raise up God fearing men in high places come and move in Zion and be thy sovereign will and all grant Lord that there may yet be a turning of the vast tides of wickedness and the stemming know the evil that abounds on every hand that thy people have had a very small remnant in the land and Lord we pray that thou would come and were and come and appear in Zion and appear in the land turn us again as in former days to thy holy word to thy holy law to thyself

Lord Jesus Christ this once favoured nation in which there has been the mighty outpouring of thy spirit in many centuries now having fallen away through solemn heathen darkness liberalism denial of thy truth thy word its authority divine inspiration Lord how men have turned from the truth Lord we pray for the great outpourings of thy spirit as was manifested at Pentecost we know that nothing less can stem the vast tides of wickedness that have swept over the land all grant godly sorrow and repentance turn us again Lord and we shall return pardon upon the queen and her family Lord pardon pardon upon our prime minister and his cabinet and parliament thou seest all things at this time the solemn evils and wickedness in high places the solemn lack of trust the deception

Lord thou seest it all together we pray that thou yet appear look down Lord we pray thee upon our parliament raise up god fearing men there preserve to us our national independence keep us from a solemn amalgamation of the catholic powers of Europe oh Lord have mercy upon us we are heathen godless rebellious people turn from thee but Lord we pray that in wrath thou will remember mercy help us now this night we would come apart and rest a while and find strength and grace and wisdom teaching and understanding the anointing of thy spirit we pray for it lead us Lord into thy holy word of truth and teach us out of it and come and touch our lips with the live cold from thy heavenly altar and fill an earthen vessel oh grant fresh matter fresh teaching an entrance into that deep in thy holy word which catches beneath fill our earthen vessel as we would lay all at thy dear feet and seek every blessing and favour for Jesus

Christ's sake Amen hymn 1029 tune to 5 come saviour quickly come let me but feel thee near I'm again come let me but feel leave eu

[ 37 : 01 ] I I love For I am the Lord, I will be healed and healed.

The troubles which I fear, The troubles which I fear, The suffering I am, That's my heart, The eternal land of my womb.

I am the Lord, May God, For I am the Lord, I am the Lord, And in this world, I am the Lord, And in this world, I am the Lord, I am the Lord, I am the Lord, Oh, should be safe with me then at the storm of sun nor fear and love and love and love to love and love and love

Seeking the Lord's help, I direct your attention this evening to the second epistle of Paul to Corinthians chapter 12 reading verse 9 Second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians chapter 12 reading verse 9 unto me my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness most gladly therefore will i rather glory in my infirmities that the power of christ may rest upon me he said unto me my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness most gladly therefore will i rather glory in my infirmities the power of christ may rest upon me it is striking here in this account of the apostle paul and his thorn in the flesh and the way the lord dealt with it it is striking that it came at the end of a life of so many sorrows and sufferings and i was struck in reading some of these sorrows and sufferings which he went through especially in verse 27 where he speaks of his sufferings in this way in weariness and painfulness in watchings often in hunger and thirst in fasting often in cold and nakedness he speaks generally there of the pathway he'd walked and the sufferings he had been through and the sorrows that have been his he lists here in this 11th chapter specific cases of suffering and sorrow and he speaks of the pain um he says in stripes above measure in prisons frequent in death oft and then lists some of them five times of the jews received i forty stripes save one thrice was i beaten with rods once was i stoned and he goes on to list some of the day and he says in the deep and he speaks then generally churning often perils of waters perils of robbers perils of mine own countrymen and so on and comes down to finally that solemn peril peril peril peril peril peril amongst amongst amongst false brethren what he hadn't been through and he concludes with this word who is weak and i am not weak then we come at the end of all that sorrow and suffering we come to this that the lord sees fit to give him a thorn in the flare another type of sorrow and suffering one this time given to him by his god and he describes it as the messenger of satan to buffet him one thing is very clear and that is this all was ordered of his god all was in the hands of his god all was meted out by his god and what was true of the thorn in the flesh whatever that was he doesn't see fit to mention that having detailed the rods the stripes the shipwreck the day and the night in the deep when it came to the

thorn in the flesh he doesn't say what it was he describes the origin of it and the effect of it but he doesn't say what the thorn actually was and uh compared with the rods and the beating it would appear little a thorn in the flesh yet it was there consistently persistently never to leave him all the days of his life and he says of it there was given me he understood the not initially i believe for initially he asked the lord thrice to take it away from him but when the lord spoke this word into his heart he was resigned to it but he tells us why it was given he tells us twice why this thorn in the flesh was given and why he passed through this way there was something peculiar about this trial is different different to the beating with rods and the beating with stripes and the imprisonments and the shipwrecks they came and went they passed like the storms in life's pathway they blow over but this didn't this persisted through all his days he never speaks of ever losing it it was always with him and it was given to him in relation to the revelation of christ to his soul he could see the connection and it's something deeper than the outward sorrow this is something inward he reveals here lest i should be exalted above measure some solemn carnal exhortation over the blessings of christ revealed in his heart as the hope of glory that he as he says in another place here lest they should think of him above that which they ought to think oh the solemn realization the apostle had of his fallen nature wanting this dear apostle who said he was less than the least of all saints yet he knew in his heart there was that evil of his fallen nature which would be exalted above measure and he would see himself as having a deeper experience a greater glorious revelation than his brethren and he would glory in it carnally glory in it we read from the language of the hymn writer making grace a snare oh nature that it is fallen nature the solemn ruins of the fall that lies within the pride the conceived the conceived the self that the apostle saw and felt he when he asked the lord thrice to take him away from him he didn't understand then but then when the lord spoke these words my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness then the dear man was brought to glory in his infirmities he could see the need of them lest i should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations there was given to me a thorn in the flesh the messenger of satan to buffet me and he saw the need of this constant perpetual thorn in the flesh to keep him down to humble him to keep him in a place where his god would have him to be to keep him from glorying in a deep



[ 47 : 04 ] experience to see himself above others you see the lord would have his dear servant in the place where he had john the baptist we're told by christ there was none greater than john the baptist and yet he who had come to christ and baptized him and said in sacred revelation behold the lamb of god that taketh away the sin of the world god of god eventually came to the place where he sent to christ and said art thou he that should come or look me for another you see elijah on mount carmel standing alone in face before the prophets of baal in the hundreds and witnessing in answer to his prayers the fire descending and then in answer to his prayers witnessing the rain descending and then in the strength of his god running before the chariot of ahab comes to his knees in the face of jezebel and learns the solemn lesson what it is to be brought down so that he would not be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations that were given him the lord permitted his servant to fall and humbled him after all the blessed revelation and cherished and zarephath carmel then brought down and asked the lord to take his life he wasn't fit the lord will keep his dear servants and his dear people in the place where he sees it is right for them to be he deals and he works and he moves in the path of his dear church and he humbles his dear people and he gives them solemn thorns in the flesh and he teaches them why else did he say to satan has thou considered my servant joe only because he loved him only because he saw the needs be of the trial of his faith only because he saw the woodhound stubble that had to be burnt up only because he would bring his servant joe to that place where he speaks of in that book of joe he brought his dear servant to the place where he could truly say in of his god that he was silent before him he says this once have i spoken i'll not answer yea twice proceed no further and he says this behold i'm far what shall i answer the eye will lay my hand upon my man that is where the lord brought him no more words silence before his god and brought down humble behold i'm far now the lord said of john the baptist there's none greater than john the baptist then he added this but he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he and the lord would bring his dear servants into that place where they are poor they're least the apostle says we read as far as that fourth verse we're weak with him all the path of weakness the path of temptation the path of affliction that the lord jesus christ walked when

here on earth we may read about it but there is a sacred path in the footsteps of the flock in which we read as the apostle paul himself prayed that i might have fellowship with him in his suffering and that is a sacred solemn path not to be lightly coveted and glibly asked for because it is deep waters crucifying sorrows and suffering the footsteps of the flock if we're to be weak with him and have fellowship with him in his suffering then the lord does bring his dear people there this is where he brought job and this is where he was bringing his dear apostle at this time bringing him to be weak we are weak with him and he says here again and again if i must need glory oh glory in my infirmity they were god given this was a glory and infirmity which is god gave him he didn't want it he besought the lord's choice to take it away but the lord in glorious wisdom knew that his dear servant could never know the strength of christ and what it was to have fellowship with his sufferings and walk in that weakness and understand in his measure the weakness of christ and the sufferings of christ unless he brought him into this solemn place and here he saw fit to bring him there was given to him now in his carnality he was like joseph he longed to get out of his prison and he put his hand to getting out what a solemn thing that is to put our hand to attempt to do the lord's work solemn awful thing which is in the heart of the lord's children they would hasten the lord's work they would delay his work they would add to his work joseph tried to hasten the lord's work the apostle paul here tried to stop the lord's work job when the lord dealt with him hadn't any idea what the lord was doing and argued and talked about it but all to no profit until the lord caused him to put his hand on his man and come to that solemn place behold i'm far that's where the lord intended to bring him and this is where the lord intended to bring his dear servant to know his weakness thorn in the flesh he couldn't continue without divine help he couldn't go forward without the lord's strength and when he besought the lord thrice to take this thorn in the flesh away the lord answered him completely contrary to what he wanted the lord answered him and spoke to him and spoke these beautiful words to him my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness you know this word of the lord is a word of blessed promise my grace is sufficient for thee he could then with that divine promise stand as it were with his feet upon a rock

he could take his cross and follow his law he could be still and know his lord was his god he could see the hand of his god in the matter those few words brought him to be as that lamb still in the arms of his god they brought him to the footstool of mercy and they were his they were spoken into his soul and indelibly written there they could be repeated again and again he could say to his lord regarding these words my grace is sufficient for thee he could say lord thou said the lord had spoken those words into his soul they were never to be erased and we see here they were the arms of love and mercy surrounding him they were everlasting loving kindness they were that eternal covenant ordered in all things and sure we see here where the lord speaks and it's god's grace it's what he spoke to jeremiah yea he said to him i have loved thee with an everlasting love and therefore with loving kindness have i drawn thee he spoke that into the apostle's heart and he spoke of this grace as everlasting never to leave him all the days of his journey he was to go to his god again and again with this blessed promise we see this in the pathway of so many of his dear children i always feel like this when jacob came to receive that title of israel as a prince thou hast power with god and has prevailed what was the strength of that power that prevailed i believe it was this you know it was the blessing of bethel in his youth the promise that was given him there i'll be with thee in all places with us whoever there goes i will not leave thee until i have brought thee again to this place his god had promised him it was something he could go to his god with and say lord thou say he had spoken a promise into his heart and he could plead it with his god he had power the power was divine it was the promise the lord had spoken into his soul written there forever never to be forgotten and when the lord speaks into the hearts of his dear children what a blessed bond there lies between their souls and their god it is a three-fold cord which cannot be quickly broken it is the oath and promise as the apostle speaks of it the oath and promise that he refers to there in scripture was the promise he gave to abraham on mount moriah when he led him to that place and proved it to him it was jehovah jarrah the lord will provide and he said to him in blessing i will bless thee he confirmed it with an oath blessed promise of god and blessedly sealed in his soul

and when we look at it here the lord blessed his dear servant with a sacred promise and a beautiful promise my grace is sufficient for thee he spoke of the glory of his own grace that bond eternal bond that would unite his church to him forever that love revealed in all that he did on calvary's cross greater love has no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friend and we see this love here to the apostle the apostle loved of his god that mercy known in his heart we see the ingredients of this grace in the very fact that the lord drew near at this time and lest he should be exhorted above measure and left to pride and conceit and solemn sins the lord humbled him and revealed his mercy in giving this thorn in the flesh and he gave his dear servant the grace and the wisdom to accept it and we see here the effect of this word spoken by his god into his soul the thorn he could not cope with alone it would crush him he couldn't stand alone he couldn't continue his work alone without this grace as the sacred counterbalance of this thorn the lord gave him a weakness and at the same time in divine sovereignty he gave him strength he promised him in his weakness that he would give him grace sufficient my grace is sufficient for thee he would know and feel again and again those everlasting arms underneath he would know his god with him he would make him poor and yet he would make him rich he would make him empty and yet he would fill him he would bring him to know his weakness but in the midst of it all he would know his strength he would know divine strength and we see what happened as soon as that word had soaked into his soul entered his spirit then we see the wisdom of that blessed truth that entered his heart he would know his heart most gladly therefore for thy glory and my infirmity he became and it strikes me the wonder of this he didn't just accept the thorn in the flesh he didn't just lie down beneath it he didn't accept it with murmuring he didn't find it a nuisance he didn't find it a trial which he needed grace to put up with he as it were embraced it and so much more than embraced it most gladly therefore will i glory in my infirmity we can see what happened here that the apostle had a sight of the value of this infirmity and you know it tells us something about carnal nature for it ever remains with us the end of life's journey

carnal nature so ruined and fallen it dislikes the path of prayer it dislikes reading God's holy word loves to be taken up with the things of this world the Lord works in such a way that he makes his people pray and he worked in the heart of his dear apostle here to bring him into a path of suffering and difficulty and weakness and trial and temptation that it may make as it were prayer to be squeezed out of his soul most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmity why that the power of Christ may rest upon me the power of Christ will never rest upon any who walk in their own strength their own self-sufficiency their own ability all who come to look at the servants of God as they go forth to labor in his holy name they go forth in weakness in weariness in temptation in trial here is this apostle if I must need glory he says our glory in my infirmity the Lord had dealt with him he had a sight of the ruins of fallen nature of the pride and conceit and self-sufficiency that lay within the solemn dangers left to themselves rear their ugly head and bring a disgrace upon the ministry no there was to be something which was to be as it were passed through the fiery furnace of affliction that the dross would be burnt up and only the gold would survive and here was the fiery trial that the Lord would bring his dear servant into that there wouldn't be any dross be burnt up that solemn wood hay and stubble which we read of of the ministry every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is and the apostle was in the fiery furnace and he could see why and he could see the value of it and he wanted the sacred reality of the power of Christ resting upon it when the power of Christ in his own day rested upon his dear people in his own pathway here on this earth how it was that he came to those who had a real need those who had a real case those who had a real burden those who had deep sorrow or how he came where they were it's like the man who fell among the sea in the parable

[ 66 : 41 ] Jesus came just where he was poured in oil and wine and he came just where his dear apostle was and poured in oil and wine he spoke a blessed promise to him when Jacob came to the end of his days Israel as he was blessing Ephraim and Manasseh before Joseph at the end of life's pathway we read of him leaning upon his star that is very sacred that star was the promises that the Lord had given him that star was the revelation of Christ to his soul that star was the sweet spiritual experience of Christ revealed in his heart in the journey the promises the Lord had given him he rested upon the Lord brings his dear people to have a staff to lean upon but it's acquired in the solemn fiery paths of experience in the trial of their faith these promises are given by God when he sees fit all his wisdom bringing his apostle into this place that he might give him this promise and bringing him to this fellowship with Christ in his suffering weak with him bringing him to this place that he might be brought into this wisdom most gladly therefore when I glory all how we need to be brought on the way not just to receive the blessed word my grace is sufficient for thee but the path of sanctification that follows to come where the apostle came most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities that the power of

Christ might rest upon me here we see how he understood as a result of what the Lord said to him that this is the way walk in it here are the footsteps of the flock in the song of Solomon in the opening chapter there is that lovely word tell me O thou whom my soul lovest where thou feedest where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companion that is turns aside into a carnal path of religious profession and ease and not the footsteps of the flock turns aside and the instruction tell me O thou whom my soul lovest where thou feedest and the words of the bride that is

Christ hear his words if thou knowest not O thou fairest among women go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside the shepherd's tent a very beautiful description of the path of God's dear family the footsteps of the flock ever the same in every generation beautifully spoken of by him writer in that hymn they marked the footsteps that he trothed his zeal inspired their breath and following their incarnate God possessed the promised rest but what are the footsteps of the flock they are the their divine dealings their ordered footsteps they're the path the Lord would bring his people into of weakness and need and suffering and sorrow and bereavement death darkness temptation these are the footsteps of the flock and the scriptures speak of it so beautifully think it not strange we do always inevitably but the word of

God says think it not strange concerning the fiery trial it is to try you as though some strange thing had happened unto you but rejoice inasmuch as ye are made partakers have fellowship partakers remarkable word of the sufferings of Christ that is partakers in an understanding of what he passed through and the Lord brings his dear people to have fellowship with him in his sufferings and here he brought his dear apostle I would speak very carefully the apostle had one thorn in the flesh Christ was crowned with thorn all to come to see the suffering lamb of God and the path he walked if we speak of the footsteps of the flock it is so simply given in scripture but there is a great day follow thou me it is to follow him buried with

Christ in baptism raised with him the newness of life to walk out the footsteps of the flock and there to have in our limited measure and yet it is a divinely ordered measure to be brought to have fellowship with him we are says the apostle here in this 13th chapter though he was crucified through weakness yet he liveth by the power of God for we also are weak in him or as the margin reads weak with him and here the apostle with his thorn in the flesh was weak with him brought into a sacred experience of the weakness of Christ and to have sweet fellowship with him you see there is a glory in there if I must need glory says the apostle

[ 73 : 54 ] I will glory in my infirmities the infirmities that Christ has given to me the path he has led me in I think of the words relating to Joseph until the time that his word came that's the promise of God to his soul the promise that his brethren would bow down until the time that his word came the word of the Lord trained him they hurt his feet with iron why he suffered and he suffered in that watching those solemn watching twenty years of waiting in his youth one would say the best years of his life from the age of seventeen to thirty seven were in imprisonment waiting until the time that his word came the word of the

Lord tried him but you see he proved what the apostle proved he in my grace is sufficient for thee and when the time came and it was fulfilled the Lord promised to him and they did bow down to him what worship he turned aside and went in worship the power of Christ rested upon him and we see it in the spirit of Christ when the brethren thought he would kill them he could see what the apostle Paul could see here he could see here most gladly therefore I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me Joseph could see it wasn't you he could see and he felt the hatred of his brethren he mourned they hated him without a cause why he walked in the footsteps of

Christ no reason to hate him why what he said was true it was a revelation of Christ and that had brought him into trouble very revelation was the means of his hatred by his brethren but you see when the time came how they all saw it the brethren saw it Joseph saw it it wasn't you it was the Lord he had been sent in that mysterious way to preserve that promised people that people to the promised land they would come out of Egypt and they would be gathered to the promised land the Lord had a glorious purpose in the mystery of it and we see and we see it and we see it here the mystery and lest I should be exalted above measure and then my grace is sufficient for thee and it enabled him to go in the strength as Elijah did of that food which the

Lord fed him with when he fell before Jezebel arise and eat journeys too great for thee and he went in the strength of it forty days and forty nights to Horel and he did business with his God in that cave he knew the still small voice of his God what doest thou hear Elijah and all how the Lord commissioned him again to go forth in his holy name and how solemnly Jezebel and Ahab were destroyed but his dear servant stood and stood with his Lord on the Mount of the Transfiguration with Moses and Peter James and John in the Promised Land all complete and fulfilled and here we see it in the case of the Lord's dear servant the Apostle Paul my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness or how we could speak of this perfect strength its divine perfection why when the

Lord came into this world he came to the humble manger at Bethlehem and when he died he died upon the cross spent his childhood in the humble home at Nazareth and he calls his dear people to walk in the paths of humility he does indeed not the grandeur of the great says the dear hymn writer can the bliss I see create no he calls his dear church most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmity says the Apostle that the power of Christ might rest upon me and then he goes on to speak and say this therefore I take pleasure in infirmities in reproaches in necessities in persecutions in distresses for Christ's sake take pleasure glory remarkable words for when I'm weak then am I strong here here here is divine teaching burnt into his dear soul here he is brought to have his feet upon that rock

[ 79 : 42 ] Christ Jesus and prove what is his strength it is his God Amen close by singing hymn 328 tune 409 afflicted saint to Christ drawn heir the saviour's gracious promise here his faithful word declares to thee that as thy days thy strength shall be bless him 328 tune 409 credited hum ■■■■ know their

And as Thy days I send to be Let not Thy bark be strong and say Where shall I stand on the trembling end?

Use and grace, my firm decree, Let us my days, my strength shall be.

My faith is free, my foes are strong, And in the conflict should be loved, But I will be my tenderly, For as my days, my strength shall be, Without persecution, rage and blame, Still trust in our ready person,

In our truth, As thou shalt see, That as thy days, my strength shall be, And called to bear the way to cross, For harm and mixed Papa Bible, So deep, by bones of ■■■rails, And■■■ p reverdy, Still as thy days, thy strength shall be.

[ 84 : 13 ] And God's leadeth, our fears in you. My presence shall, thy fears of you.

He comes to see thy spirit, my heart. Still as thy days, thy strength shall be.

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the communion of the Holy Spirit, abide with you each. Amen.

Amen.