

GOOD NEWS

about

GRACE

Part # 3: Sustaining Grace

Have you known individuals who were starters but not finishers? You might have looked in an individual's garage seeing shelves filled with projects that were started but never finished. Scriptures declare that if you looked in God's workshop where He builds believers they are finished projects or He is busy working on them. **Philippians 1:6** ⁶ *There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears.*

Before you begin:

- 1. Have you experienced a situation in life where you gave up?
- 2. What evidence do you see that God is working on you?
- 3. What do you think drives God to finish what He starts?

(Refer to Romans 8:28-39 for insights)

Sustaining Grace . . .

The word "sustain" means: to keep in existence; to continue; to support; to supply or to bear up under. God makes you this kind of promise. Through His "Grace", He wants not to remove difficult circumstances, but to "sustain" you through all circumstances.

1 Peter 5:12 ¹² . . . *My purpose in writing is to encourage you and assure you that the grace of God is with you no matter what happens.*

Peter knew that there would be stumbling blocks in life where you would need God's Grace to carry you through.

Consider three of these stumbling blocks.

Monday:

Grace sustains when you are tempted.

1 Corinthians 10:13 ¹³ *But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.*

1. Who experiences temptations?

2. What does God promise to do for you when you are tempted?

3. What does God promise to do for you so temptation does not drag you into sin?

Tuesday

Grace sustains when you are tired.

Galatians 6:9

⁹ *So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time.*

1. What is the challenge of this passage to you about "doing what is good"?

2. The writer assumes that "doing what is good" will be hard work. Compare it to a football game: you are at the beginning of the fourth quarter and you're very tired - so you quit. What does that do to your chances of winning?

3. How are you encouraged to persevere even when you are tired, when you consider the value of hard work done for Christ?

1 Corinthians 15:58 ⁵⁸ *So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady, always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.*

Wednesday:

Grace sustains when you are troubled

John 16:33

³³ *I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."*

1. Believers exist in two worlds both the physical (here on earth) and the spiritual (have Christ in us). As long as we live what does this earthly life offer us?

2. What does Jesus offer you concerning the troubles the earthly life causes you?

3. Is this "overwhelming victory" conditional if you love Jesus enough or is it based on His love for us? **Romans 8:37**

³⁷ *No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.*

Thursday:

Receiving God's Sustaining Grace . . .

How do I get it?

1. Ask God for help.

James 4:7-10 ⁷ So humble yourselves before God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, you hypocrites. ⁹ Let there be tears for the wrong things you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. ¹⁰ When you bow down before the Lord and admit your dependence on him, he will lift you up and give you honor.

- a. **What is the number one attitude you must have if you are going to ask God for help?**

- b. **When with humility you welcome God's presence what can you expect?**

- c. **When you submit to God what will that do to Satan's influence on your life?**

- d. **When you bow down before God, what will He do?**

2. Fill your mind with God's Word.

Psalm 119:25-32

²⁵ I lie in the dust, completely discouraged; revive me by your word. ²⁶ I told you my plans, and you answered. Now teach me your principles. ²⁷ Help me understand the meaning of your commandments, and I will meditate on your wonderful miracles. ²⁸ I weep with grief; encourage me by your word. ²⁹ Keep me from lying to myself; give me the privilege of knowing your law. ³⁰ I have chosen to be faithful; I have determined to live by your laws. ³¹ I cling to your decrees. LORD, don't let me be put to shame! ³² If you will help me, I will run to follow your commands.

- a. **Where was the author when he was discouraged?**

- b. **Which way is your spiritual life pulled by TV, billboards, newspapers, co-workers and many of the books that are available for you to read?**

- c. **What was the Psalmist reaching out for to lift him out of the dust?**

- d. **If you spend time reading God's Word, what will fill your mind and what does this passage promise can happen to you?**

Friday

3. Accept support from God's People

Galatians 6:1-3

¹ Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. ² Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. ³ If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody.

- a. **What are believers to do for one another?**

- b. **Believers are to help the one who has stumbled find the road back. If you have stumbled, what resource of help should be available to you from the church?**

- c. **What do we all need from one another?**

- d. **Do you know someone who could use your help either to carry a burden or by spiritual encouragement?** _____

4. Hold on to God's promises

Isaiah 40:29-31

²⁹ He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. ³⁰ Even youths will become exhausted, and young men will give up. ³¹ But those who wait on the LORD will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

- a. **If you serve in God's work, there is a cost and it is work. What is God's promise to the faithful who invest in ministry?**

- b. **In what area of your life are you trying to function alone but need to ask God to be your partner and strengthen you?**

- c. **The next time you feel like life has done you in and is crushing you, to whom will you turn for comfort, strength?**

Turning Point ...

I felt the Spirit of Jesus,
As I stood in despair,
It flowed through my being,
To give me hope anew!

I am never alone,
Unless by my own choice,
For He is always there
To help carry all my pain!

I could feel His presence,
As I saw my life in ruin,
His love flowed toward me,
As I knew it surely would!
I felt a lifting of my spirit

He takes all my troubles
Turns them into uncommon
gain
As he guides and molds my
life,
To praise His Holy name!

As His love flowed through
me,
I knew that in all my trials,
That He would see me
through!

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