



Today's Message

Date: September 8, 2019
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Sufficient Grace*

Text: 2 Corinthians 12:1–10 (ESV)

¹ I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. ³ And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— ⁴ and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. ⁵ On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses— ⁶ though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. ⁷ So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Introduction: In this sermon text, Paul concludes what some call his “fool’s speech.” Since 11:1, he has “boasted” about his credentials as an apostle. However, unlike his opponents in Corinth, his boasting focuses on his own weakness. At the climax of this speech, he explains why weakness is his supreme credential.

Today’s take-home truth: The work of the Lord does not depend on sensational experiences, but on humble servants who “rejoice in the Lord, always.”

I. The work of the Lord does not depend on sensational experiences, 1-6

- A. The topic: Paul turns to the subject of miraculous revelation. 1
- B. The story: Paul reveals his own sensational experience—glorious and *useless*. 2-4
- C. The application: Paul rejects the sensational in favor of the ordinary. 5-6

II. but on humble servants . . . 7-9a

- A. God humbled Paul with the gift of suffering. 7
- B. God rejected Paul’s pleas for relief. 8
- C. God gave Paul sufficient grace. 9a

III. who “rejoice in the Lord, always.” 9b-10

- A. Paul boasted in weakness to know Christ’s power. 9b
- B. Paul learned contentment in every circumstance for the sake of Christ. 10