

SUSTAINING GRACE

I Peter 5:12

January 20, 2008 Sunday a.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. We have been studying the marvelous subject of "Grace".
 - 1. What is grace"
 - a. "God's love in action".
 - b. "God giving us what we need, not what we deserve."
 - 2. Two weeks ago we looked at "Saving Grace".
 - 3. Last week we looked at "Guilt and Grace".
 - 4. This week let's look at "Sustaining Grace."
- B. What is "Sustaining Grace?"
 - 1. It's the power to keep on going when you feel like quitting or giving up.
 - 2. It's the power to do the right thing when you don't want to do the wrong thing.
 - 3. Someone defined sustaining grace in a short poem:

Not grace to bar what is not bliss,
Not flight from all distress, but this:
The grace that orders our trouble and pain,
And then, in the darkness, is there to sustain.

- C. What does sustaining grace do for us?
 - 1. It helps us stand and keep our feet.
 - 2. This is what Peter says in our text.
 - 1PE 5:12** With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.
 - 3. Notice today that sustaining grace helps us stand during three critical times when life tries to knock us off our feet.

I. SUSTAINING GRACE HELPS US KEEP STANDING WHEN WE'RE TEMPTED.

- A. Temptation can knock us off our feet in a hurry.
 - 1. The Bible reminds us that everyone is tempted by something.
 - 2. Even Jesus was tempted.
 - 3. Temptation isn't a sin, but giving in to it is.
- B. How can God's grace help us stand up when we're tempted?
 - 1. One time Billy Graham was interviewed by Larry King. King asked Dr. Graham how is it that he has had such a long and successful ministry without even one suspicion of doing anything unethical or sinful. Billy Graham responded to his question by simply quoting I Corinthians 10:13.
 - 1CO 10:13** No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.
 - 2. How does this verse help us?
 - a. First, it tells us everyone is tempted, so expect it.
 - b. Second, it tells us our temptations aren't unique or somehow harder than it was for past generations.
 - c. Third, it tells us we can count on the faithfulness of God to help us withstand temptation.
 - d. Fourth, it tells us God gives a way out of every temptation.
 - e. Of course, the key is to want a way out of temptation rather than just giving in without a fight.
 - f. In other words, sustaining grace can help us stay on our feet when we're tempted.

II. SECOND, SUSTAINING GRACE HELPS US KEEP STANDING WHEN WE'RE TIRED.

- A. Do you ever get tired of being good?--2 Thessalonians 3:13.
 - 1. Of being expected to do the right thing.
 - 2. To say the right thing.
 - 3. To turn the other cheek.
- B. Wouldn't it be nice if just once we could....
 - 1. Say what we felt like saying instead of what we should say.
 - 2. Do what we want to do instead of what we should do.
 - 3. Be ugly back to the person who was just ugly to us.
 - 4. Be grouchy once in a awhile and not feel guilty about it.
 - 5. Be rude to the person who is rude to us.
- C. It takes a lot of grace doesn't, to be good or at least try to be good? Where does this grace come from?
 - 1. Paul says it come from God-Philippians 2:13.
 - 2. Remember what else he says-Galatians 6:9.

III. THIRD, SUSTAINING GRACE HELPS US KEEP STANDING WHEN WE'RE TROUBLED.

- A. We shouldn't be surprised when trouble visits us—John 16:33.
- B. Where does trouble come from?
 - 1. Sometimes we bring it on ourselves and there is no one else to blame.
 - 2. Sometimes life brings us some problems that are just unfair.
 - a. We didn't cause them.
 - b. We aren't the guilty party.
 - c. We didn't ask for them.
 - 3. Some of these problems never let up.
 - a. They are unrelenting.
 - b. They are unsolvable or incurable.
 - c. Nothings going to change them.
- C. How can we stand up under these kinds of problems.
 - 1. Paul is an example for us—2 Corinthians 12:9-10.
 - 2. It is only God's sustaining grace that keeps us on our feet when the world would like nothing better than to knock us down.

CONCLUSION

- A. Sustaining grace helps us stay on our feet when we're....
 - 1. Tempted.
 - 2. Tired.
 - 3. Troubled.
- B. Would you like to have this kind of grace?
- C. Its available only though Jesus.