

## 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.