

When we are Weak

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Date: 02 July 2017

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[0 : 0 0] I guess to think a little while this morning about these three verses, 8 to 10 in 2 Corinthians chapter 12. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice 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 that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities and reproaches and necessities and persecutions and distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong.

Now, when we read these verses, we would have to understand, first of all, that the thing that Paul is seeking deliverance from, this thorn in his flesh that's mentioned in verse 7, it cannot be simply the ordinary persecutions, if I can use that term, ordinary, which he has endured.

Because if we turn back to what we read in chapter 11 and the first part of chapter 12 there, we see that he's almost boasting in the number of times he's been scourged, the number of times he's been stoned, how much hardship, how much shipwreck, how much attacks that he's endured.

[1 : 1 7] So when he says, therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities and reproaches and necessities and persecutions, he's not simply saying, so instead of the Lord taking them away from me, I'll just have to get on with it.

Because these things in themselves clearly are not the thorn in the flesh. These things in themselves, whilst he endures them in comparative health and strength and endurance, and he must have a hugely strong constitution to endure all these things.

And the number of times that he was beaten with rods, I mean, that's not so much rods as we think of them in terms of it, probably softer sticks in the sense of not a scourge, not a whip in that sense.

It would still inflict a huge amount of damage and pain and being stoned in the journeys and the betrayals and the number of times that he's received the 40 stripes, save one, and so on.

All these things he is almost accepting as normal. But this additional thing, lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

[2 : 3 3] For this thing I besought the Lord Christ that it might be part of me. We never read of Paul saying, Lord, take away the persecutions. Lord, take away the scourgings.

Lord, take away the attacks of the Jews and the Gentiles and all the people who are against me. Just give me a calm, smooth life so that I can live it out and maybe get on with the gospel here.

But no, this is obviously something additional. This is something extra. We've talked in the past and previous occasions about what it might be. We can only speculate as to what it might be.

Perhaps some weakness or pain of the eyes or something else that would appear to hinder his effectiveness as a missionary of the gospel. For that he prays the Lord to take it away from that, that he be not hindered in his work of the gospel, but this for which he prays on top of everything else, almost as though it may be the last straw.

Not because he's complaining against something against himself, but rather pleading with the Lord to take away something that appears to hinder his work for the Lord. He can't understand why this should come.

[3 : 47] And he can only say it in case he should be exalted above measure with all the revelations that he has received, which would indicate that the man in Christ of whom he is speaking in the opening chapters, the verses of chapter 12, is in fact himself, just by another term that he's using.

But given that we are all at times in situations where we are afflicted with some problem, difficulty or burden, which appears to be just too much, which appears to be almost the straw that breaks the camel's back, here I would suggest we take to ourselves these three verses.

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might be part from me. Now some commentators have suggested that that means the first two times he didn't get any reply.

Now of course he doesn't say that, we can't definitely say the Lord didn't answer him the first time, or the second time, and he just didn't like the answer. It may be that the Lord said to him, no I'm not going to take it away.

He said, oh Lord please, please take it away. No I'm not going to take it away. Lord please do take it away. And then the third time he says, my grace is sufficient for thee. The implication we might say, it's not unreasonable to suggest that the first couple of times there was no answer.

[5 : 09] And we might think, well why would the Lord not answer? The Lord might not answer because he wants to try to test Paul's faith in this sense.

Prayer being answered. The Lord always answering if we continue, if we continue to plead, and if we persist in prayer. Remember the example of the unjust judge that the Lord gives in Luke chapter 18, where he says the importunate widow that keeps on asking him, and on and on asking him for justice.

And eventually he says, I don't really care about this woman, and I don't really care about right and wrong or anything else, but I just wanted to go away. I just wanted to stop pestering me, so I'll do what she asks. And he says, now listen to the unjust judge.

And that is a man who is unjust and worthy, and doesn't care about right and wrong. Think about the Lord and his perfect goodness, who loves his children. Will he not answer their prayers? Will he not deliver them?

We think of the instance of the side of a Phoenician woman, Matthew 15, where we read, Behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coast, and cried unto them, saying, Lord, have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David.

[6 : 18] My daughter is grievously vexed for the devil, but he answered her not a word. And his disciples came unto him, saying, send her away, for she cried after her. Jesus doesn't reply the first time.

And even the second time, when his disciples speak to him, he answered and said, and now it's to them, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

But he answered and said, it is not me to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs. So first of all, no answer. And then two negative answers. And she said, truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. She persisted in asking.

Just as it is not unreasonable to suppose that Paul persisted in asking for this, I besought the Lord thanks that it might depart from me. Does the Lord fail to answer prayer?

[7 : 21] We'd have to say, no, God always answers. Say, oh yeah, but what about when God doesn't answer? What about when Saul pleads with the Lord and he doesn't answer him a word? Well, that is because the Lord at that point has withdrawn himself from Saul.

But we read in the Psalms 91, for example, verse 15, He shall call upon me and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honour him.

Again, in Psalm 86, we read it at verse 7. In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me.

The Lord answers prayer. But as with Paul here, as with our Lord in Gethsemane, we will not always get the answer that we think we want. The Lord may answer no.

Or the Lord may cause us to wait that we might persist in prayer. Or the Lord may explain why he is requiring us to continue with the thing for which we have prayed for deliverance.

[8 : 25] For this thing I besought the Lord thanks that it might depart from me. Perhaps he didn't answer the first two times. But he certainly answers in the end.

The Lord desires us to go to him with our problems. That is the first thing we must recognise. If we have an affliction, a burden, a difficulty, something which appears to be overwhelming us, then the worst thing we can do is like the children of Israel did in the wilderness and just grumble and complain and murmur.

And say, oh, this is hopeless. Look, he's brought us out of Egypt. But now there's no water. And now there's no food. Oh, isn't this terrible? What kind of God is this? Instead of saying, Lord, thank you for delivering us out of Egypt, but we are going to starve to death here if we don't have any food.

It's great that we have been delivered, but we need food. Lord, we need water, otherwise we're going to die. The Lord, as Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, your heavenly Father know that you have need of these things.

Go to him and ask him. He is not unreasonable. He's not unkind. If there is an affliction, if there is a problem, ask him for help. Go to him with the difficulty.

[9 : 37] For this thing I besought the Lord Christ, that it might depart from me. Ask and keep on asking. And you will have an answer. And the answer may perhaps explain why that affliction is there.

Or why it is not going to be removed. Or the answer may be yes. And the affliction is lifted. At any rate, what Paul does is what every believer should do.

Every person of faith, everyone who seeks truly to serve the Lord. If there's a problem, go to the problem solver. If there's a difficulty, go to the one who is able to make the way easier.

If there is a lack of supply, go to the one with abundance. If there is something for which we are too weak, go to the one who is strong. Go to the Lord. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

And he said unto me, or the original is literally, he hath said unto me. In other words, he said it once and for all. And that was the answer. He said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee.

[10 : 48] For my strength is made perfect in weakness. My grace is sufficient for thee. This is all that you need.

I have the supply of all that you require. What I have given you is enough. Now, let's say you were able to look at the internet or something.

You were able to save it. The day is going to be really hot. It's going to be roasting. And let's say your child is going off to school and they want to take their jacket. You say, no, no, don't take your jacket. Don't take your jacket because although it's overcast and it's a bit drizzly now, it's going to get really roasting.

You've got a lot of the day to get through. You're going to be outside, whatever. You're going to swelter. Leave your jacket behind. And he said, oh, no, I want to take my jacket. No, leave it behind. Honestly, you'll have less to carry.

It'll do better. And sure enough, the day turns out an absolute roaster, absolute swelterer. And afterwards, they probably think, oh, thank goodness I didn't take my jacket. Weren't they right after all to see ahead, to think, to know?

[11 : 53] And in some ways, it's a bit like that. We are anxious about the future. We are anxious and fearful. We think, Lord, I've got to have this. I've got to have that. I've got to have the next thing. I've got to have my jacket with me.

I've got to have all this junk. I've got to have all this worldly riches and strength and all the things that I think I need for the days ahead. And the Lord says, no, you don't actually need all these things.

That's one reason why I'm not letting you take them. That's one reason why I'm not letting you have them. Because you don't need them. And they'll slow you down. And whatever you do need, my grace is sufficient for thee.

Nothing has overtaken us but what is common to man. And the Lord always makes a way of escape from temptation. And for the things that we do need, he himself intends to be glorified in the midst of his people.

Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. This is basically what is meant. We turn back a couple of chapters. In chapter 4, we see, verses 7 to 10, where he talks about this treasure in earthen vessels, clay jars, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

[13 : 11] We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken. Cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

That whatever comes against us, God is actually glorified in demonstrating to the world, look, these are all the things that have happened to my children. They've been battered.

They've been crushed. They've been thrown down. They've been brutally treated. And still, they keep coming back up. Still, the gospel keeps increasing. Still, they have a strength that the world cannot understand.

My strength is made perfect in weakness. The greatest testimony to the Lord is not, hey, this was a great Christian. They had a nice walk in the sunshine.

They had an easy life. And yes, they worshiped the Lord. And yes, they went on with him. But, you know, nothing troubled them. The Lord left them in perfect peace. And they ended their days in tranquility.

[14 : 18] Okay? Great as far as it goes. But whose is the greater testimony? Who has more to lay down at the Lord's feet? That sunshine saved. Not saying they weren't faithful.

But they had it pretty smooth. Compared to the one who, everywhere they went and they witnessed and it was battered down. They were thrown into prison. Or they were ill-treated.

Or this happened to them. That happened to them. And still they stayed faithful. And still the Lord blessed and brought fruitfulness out of all that they did. Despite all the hassles. Despite all the grief.

Despite all the suffering. What can they lay down at the Lord's feet at the end of the day? They can lay down their persecutions, their sufferings. Like jewels at his feet.

Like that which they have endured for Christ's sake. That which has come upon them because they belong to Christ. My grace is sufficient for thee. This is the Lord's answer when Paul pleads for this additional thorn to be taken away.

[15 : 17] This thing that he thinks is just too much. In addition to all his persecutions and all that he's endured. There is this one thorn in the flesh. Which he pleads for removal in the way that he doesn't plead for removal of all the other things.

This is the thing he thinks he cannot bear. This is the thing which he fears more than anything else. And the Lord says, My grace is sufficient for thee. In other words, this too you will be able to bear.

And when we think we cannot do it. When we think it is too much. And that this will be the straw that breaks the camel's back.

You go to the Lord with it. As Paul does here. And when you ask, he will answer. And you may have to beseech the Lord three times. Or more. But he will answer.

And he may lift it. Or he may remove it. Or he may explain why it must continue. But always he will give grace to be able to continue.

[16 : 20] My grace is sufficient for thee. It is enough. Because my strength is made perfect in weakness. That doesn't mean, oh well I'm God.

And sometimes I'm weak. And sometimes I'm strong. But rather it means, My strength is most visibly seen. When it is not obscured by your strength.

Or supposedly your ability. Or your display for the world. But rather when you have nothing. When you have no strength. When you have no power of your own. Then the fact that you are enabled.

To overcome all these problems. Difficulties and suffering. Is clearly seen to be. My strength alone. My strength is made perfect in your weakness.

The Lord says. And when it is. When we are most decreased. He is most increased. The treasure is in earthen vessels.

[17 : 20] We do not ooh and ah the packaging. We think clay jar. That's not going to be. Have much worth in it. But inside is the greatest treasure of all.

The man who finds treasure. Hidden in his field. He digs for it. He doesn't expect to find it. But he discovers it. He doesn't think there's anything under that earth. Except soil.

And suddenly there is treasure. And for joy he goes and sells all that he has. And buys that field. So the treasure is his. Now the Lord doesn't require us to buy anything.

The Lord freely gives us this treasure. And it is in the earthen vessel of our life. Of our witness. So Paul says. If my strength, said the Lord, is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore. Will I rather glory in my infirmities. That the power of Christ may rest upon me. Because can't wait to see what God will do now.

[18 : 14] With every attack. With every difficulty. With every problem. How will the Lord bring us through this one. And if we are honest. We stand where we are today. And we look back over our lives.

And we would have to say. Well. Has the Lord suffered us to go through difficulties. Have there been problems? Well yes Lord. They're happy. Have there been times of real difficulties. And tears. And heartbreak.

Well yes Lord. They're happy. Have there been times when you thought you couldn't go on? Yes Lord. They're happy. There are times when you thought. That I the Lord was actually letting you down. Well.

If we're honest. Then probably yes. There have been times. We just did not understand. Why the Lord did what he did. And if we're honest. Maybe we thought.

He was letting us down. And yet. Here we are. Preserved by his grace. Upheld. Sustained. Given what we have needed. Day by day.

[19 : 09] And through all the heartbreak. And difficulties. And problems. Seared. In one sense. By sufferings. Some of it may be for Christ. Most of it probably not.

Most of it probably just symptoms. Of our own fallen lives. But through it all. He has brought us. My grace. Is sufficient for thee. Most gladly therefore.

Will I rather glory in my infirmities. That the power of Christ. May rest upon thee. Glorifying in infirmities. It's almost like. As we say. Delighting.

In what. What comes our way. Because. We want to see. How God's going to overcome this one. Many years ago. I served on the education committee. Of the corner.

And that could be at times. Quite a volatile committee. There was a director of education. At the time there. Who will remain nameless for now. But very capable. Gentleman.

[20 : 04] And he wasn't a popular gentleman always. And sometimes people delighted. To do have a go. Or to try and catch him out. Or wind him up. And they'd come up with these. Sometimes pompous arguments.

And other times convoluted ones. And such was his grasp of the facts. And such was the razor sharp tongue. That we might say. That he could exercise.

That after a long spiel had been made. Of how he'd fail at this. Or this was a problem. Or this was his fault. Or whatever. It would be like two slices. Of a razor sharp sword.

A couple of sharp sentences. And all the arguments. Would just fall down to nothing. And this happened. With such regularity. That it got to the stage. Where. I'm afraid. I'm ashamed to say.

That when you had a long. Tedious meeting. And maybe things were boring. And then somebody started. To have a go. And this guy. Oh he pumped up a little bit. And thought. Oh I can't wait to see. What's going to happen now. This was a little bit of entertainment.

[21 : 00] It was going. Just to see how. All these windbag arguments. Would suddenly. Chopped down. With a couple of. Sharp. Incisive sentences. And all reduced to nothing.

It was things like entertainment. Just to see. How this guy would cope. And he always did. And it's almost like. All that comes against the Lord. Let's see what the Lord.

Wait till you see. What the Lord is going to make of this. Now. Look and see how. The devil is going to throw everything. At us. And the Lord is. It's just. He's going to overcome it. He's going to always.

Somehow. Win. He's always. Somehow. Going to bring good. Out of it. Even if it's not. Directly with the subject itself.

He will have brought good. Out of it. Somehow. He will triumph. Somehow. He will always. End up. Winning. And when we think of what the Lord.

[21 : 55] Does. With his people. Israel. We think of what he does. With his church. Down the ages. Even the. The heathen. Prophet. Balaam. Was compelled.

In Numbers 23. They say. Surely. There is no enchantment. Against Jacob. Neither is there any. Divination. Against Israel. According to this time. It shall be said.

Of Jacob. And of Israel. Not. What a great nation they are. Not how wonderful. Are these people. But it shall be said. Of Jacob. And of Israel. What hath God wrought.

And that is the testimony. That the Lord's people. Are called upon to have. Not. Oh. How they shine with ability. Look at their talents. Look at their gifts. Look at what a great guy.

And a great woman. This. This person is. Look how talented. They are. Oh. They're up on a pedestal. But rather. What hath God wrought.

[22 : 49] See how the Lord. Brings triumph. Out of disaster. Think of Gideon. Judges chapter 7. The Lord said unto Gideon. The people that are with thee.

Are too many. For me to give the Midianites. Into their hands. Lest Israel bont themselves. Against me. Saying my own hand. That saved me. Now therefore. Go to proclaim.

In the ears of the people. Saying. Whoso that is fearful. And afraid. Let him return. And depart early. From Mount Gilead. And they returned. Of the people. Twenty and two thousand. And there remained.

Ten thousand. So thirty two thousand. To begin with. Thirty two thousand. And yet. That was as nothing. Compared to all the hordes. Of the Midianites. And yet. The Lord sent. Twenty two thousand.

Of them away. And the Lord says. There's still too many. So I'm going to separate them out. By how they drink water. Down at the. Down at the well. And so. There were left. Three hundred.

[23 : 46] And he said. By the three hundred. Men. By the three hundred. Men that lap. Will I save you. Notice how he puts it. Not. These are the three hundred. Men that are going to deliver you.

Good evening. And Israel. But rather. By the three hundred. Men that lap. Will I save you. And deliver the Midianites. Into thine hand. And let the other people.

Go every man. Into his place. By the three hundred. By the few. By those who have. No strength. No power. Of their own. Most gladly. Therefore.

Will I rather. Glow ye my infirmities. That the power of Christ. May rest upon me. Therefore. I take pleasure. In infirmities. And reproaches. And necessities. And persecutions. In distresses.

For Christ's sake. But when I am weak. Then. Am I strong. Think of David. Who came out. Against Goliath. And because we know. This story so well.

[24 : 39] We probably don't really. Take into consideration. Just how hopeless. That situation. May have looked. Here was this. Champion of the position. Nine feet tall.

And. And. You know. This young boy. Comes out against him. Which the king of Israel. And all his armies. Are afraid to do. And Saul thinks. Well this is a suicide mission. But still.

I will give him the best he can. Saul. Armed David. With his army. He put in a helmet of brass. Upon his head. He armed him. With a coat of mail. And David. Girded his sword. Upon his armor.

And he has saved to go. For he had not proved it. David said to Saul. I cannot go with these. I have not proved them. And David put them off him. And before that. He had said.

To Saul. The Lord. That delivered me. Out of the paw. Of the lion. Out of the paw. Of the bear. He will deliver me. Out of the hand. Of this Philistine. And Saul said. Go. And the Lord. Be with thee.

[25 : 34] And then. And Goliath. Sees. David. Come. The Philistine said to thee. Come to. I will give thy flesh. Out of the fowls. Of the air. And to the beasts. Of the field. And David said to the Philistine. Thou comest to me.

With a sword. And with a spear. And with a shield. But I come to thee. In the name of the Lord of hosts. The God of the armies of Israel. Whom thou hast defied. This day. Will the Lord.

Not me. David. The Lord. Beliver thee. Into my hand. And I will smite thee. And take thine head from thee. And I will give the carcasses. Of the host. Of the Philistines. This day. And to the fowls of the air.

And to the wild beasts of the earth. That all the earth may know. That there is a God. In Israel. And all this assembly. Shall know. That the Lord. Saveth not with sword and spear. For the battle.

Is the Lord's. And he will give you. Into our hands. Now. Our temptation. Is to think. Oh yes. Well. That was old fashioned days. Everybody was religious then. Everybody believed.

[26 : 28] In the Lord then. Of course they did. No. Of course they didn't. That's why there was so much idolatry. That's why the prophets. Were constantly having to call. Israel and Judah. Back to the faithful service.

Of the Lord. That's why. Saul. And all his armies. And Eliab. And all David's elder brothers. They're not going against Goliath. They're not going to take their life in their hand.

Because at the end of the day. It may nominally. Bob the head. To the Lord Jehovah. But they don't have it in their heart. Here's a man after God's own heart. Who knows that the battle is the Lord's.

Who goes in the Lord's strength. Even against Goliath. The champion of the Philistines. And the Lord works a wondrous victory. And all through David's long way.

He is the man after God's own heart. Saving the matter of Bathsheba. So what have we got? One major failure. With yes. Major lasting consequences. But one.

[27 : 25] Significant failure. In a 40 year reign. It's not bad going. Because the man. Loved the Lord. Now. When the apostle here says.

That God says to him. My grace is sufficient for me. My strength is made perfect in weakness. That he almost. It's almost. If we're putting it in colloquial terms. It's like he's saying. Bring it on.

Bring on the infirmities. Bring on the attacks. The necessities. The problems. Because I know. God will overcome them all. I know that he is greater. And stronger than all these things. And when Jesus prays for his disciples.

In John 17. We read it. Verse 15. That he says to his father. I pray not that thou shouldst take them. Out of the world. But that thou shouldst keep them. From the evil.

I don't want him to have. A nice easy ride. And floating in the clouds of glory. I'm not asking you to take them out of the world. Yet. They'll all be taken out of the world eventually.

[28 : 22] We all will be taken out of the world eventually. But for now. Whilst we are to endure. For the years the Lord has given us. He's not going to ask. We be taken out of the world. But that we be kept from evil.

That doesn't mean nothing bad will happen to us. Lots of bad things will happen to us. Lots of bad things do happen to us. But they happen to everybody. They happen to everybody.

Whether they are in Christ. Or whether they're not. But if we are in Christ. Then God says. My grace is sufficient for thee.

I have more strength than you could ever imagine. I have more grace than you could ever require. Come to me and ask for the help that you need. And I will enable you to overcome.

Yes there are hassles. Yes there are necessities. And problems. And attacks. And persecutions. And sufferings. And we all know. About some of these things.

[29 : 19] We all know about the difficulties. The pains. The problems. That life is full of. But Paul is talking about something more here. He's talking about all these things. He's enduring for Christ's sake.

Because of the gospel. Because not only is he a believer. But he's a missionary. And an apostle. And all these things are coming against him. And then. There is that one more thing.

That he thinks is going to be the straw. That breaks the camel's back. And for this he pleads. God will take it away from him. Lord. This is just too much. This is not. But it's just too much. And the Lord says.

No it's not too much. I've given you enough grace to cope with this too. Your very sufferings. Your very endurance.

In the midst of hardship. It is itself a testimony. Not to how great Paul is. But to how great is the strength and grace of the God. Whom he says.

[30 : 14] In the midst of all. Paul himself acknowledges in his letters. His letters say they are weighty and powerful. But his bodily presence is weak. And his speech contemptible.

In and of himself. He was nothing. But God was everything. And in us. We look at ourselves. And we know that in and of ourselves. We are nothing.

We are not superstars. We are not wonderfully equipped men and women. We don't have stacks of gifts. We feel very inadequate. Even for the tasks to which the Lord calls us.

Perhaps we suffer physical ill health. Perhaps we are bound down by a weight of anxiety or fear. Or perhaps there is a past that we regret.

And perhaps there are things we haven't yet cleared with the Lord. We haven't yet confessed. Perhaps there is a future of which we are afraid. Perhaps there's problems with our employment. Or money. Or relationship.

[31 : 09] Or whatever it may be. It feels like it's crushing us. Where do we go? You go to the Lord. You go to him with the problems. He knows your needs. He knows your sufferings.

He knows that you cannot get by. In your own strength. He said unto me. My grace is sufficient for thee. He is not saying.

No. Get on with it Paul. Tough. Just man up. And get on with it. Because you've got to do this in your strength. You're going to prove what a faithful apostle you are. He doesn't ask that of it.

He says. My grace is sufficient for thee. I will give you enough. It's like the loving parent saying to the little child. You don't need your jacket today. You won't need this.

You won't need to lug these extra things around. I'm not going to give you more than you need. I'm going to give you exactly what you need. I'm not going to give you less than you need. I'm going to give you exactly what you need.

[32 : 05] And then I'm going to give you just a little bit more. Because I can. Just to bless you with. Just to show you that I love you. God is no man's debtor. And it may be that there is something burdening your life just now.

It may be something that's grinding you down or piercing your heart. For this thing I besought the Lord Christ that it might depart from me. And he said unto me.

My grace is sufficient for thee. For Jesus prayed in Gethsemane that the cup should be taken from him. Did his father take it away? No. He gave him the strength to go through with it.

And to triumph in the end. My grace is sufficient for thee. For my strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities.

Almost as if he said bring it on. Whatever the world can do. God can do more. Whatever the devil has. God has more. Whatever grinds me down. God is stronger.

[33 : 04] 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.

Let us pray.