

Dangerously Depending On God

"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong."

1 Corinthians 16:13

I. Depending Completely On God's Grace Will Make You Dangerous

A. In the last several years God has been restoring a truth that has lost some of its power back to the Church.

1. He has moved on several national leaders to write on the subject.

- a. Chuck Swindoll wrote "The Great Grace Awakening
- b. Philip Yancy wrote "What Is So Amazing About Grace."**
- c. Max Lucado wrote "In The Grip Of His Grace."

2. Grace and Mercy are two sides of the same coin, two halves of the same truth.

- a. Mercy simply stated is not getting something you deserve.
- b. Grace simply stated is getting something you don't deserve.**
- c. Mercy will cause God not to treat you as your sins deserve
- d. Grace will cause God to treat you as His Son deserves.**

3. Max Lucado states:

- a. Mercy is what restrains God's anger towards your sin.**
- b. Grace is what releases God's love towards the sinner.
- c. Because of His mercy and grace our evil can never diminish His love for us neither can our goodness ever increase it.**

B. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

1. In trying to describe grace Paul found the economy of language sadly lacking.

- a. He uses words like unfathomable, inscrutable, surpassing knowledge, exceedingly, abundantly, beyond all that you could ask or imagine.
- b. Ephesians 2:7 - "In order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace."**

2. God gives us "Thorns that help."

- a. Paul identifies a problem that all of us face after God begins to do something significant in our lives.**
- b. We start leaning on what God does instead of on the One doing it.

3. God places this thorn that helps in the hand of someone from the enemies camp.

- a. Satan has to get permission to do anything to you.

b. God has the power to work all things together for good. (Baking a Cake)

4. Thorns make you aware of your need for God
 - a. **We try and remove the thorn instead of finding the Grace**
 - b. It's our place of weakness that God gains access to our lives
 - c. **Helplessness, weakness, need, and emptiness are good places to be in.**

"Because of the extravagance of those revelations, and so I wouldn't get a big head, I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan's angel did his best to get me down; what he in fact did was push me to my knees. No danger then of walking around high and mighty! At first I didn't think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then He told me, 'My grace is enough; it's all you need, My strength comes into its own in your weakness.' Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen, I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size, abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks, I just let Christ take over. And so the weaker I am the stronger I become."

II. Dangerous Men Are Men Who Are Poor Enough To Receive

A. Matthew 5:3 - "*Blessed are those who sense spiritual poverty for the kingdom of God Is theirs.*" (Berean). This first beatitude is the key that unlocks the riches of grace.

1. **Recently I went through a season where I began to evaluate my Christian**
The blessing of my natural life contributed to the undoing of my spiritual life.
 - a. **When I first got saved I was poverty stricken in every area of my life**
 - b. But now I'm 29 years down the road and God has enriched me in every way.
 - **I don't seek Him as much because I don't need Him as much.**
 - Instead of pressing into his knowledge, I press into mine.
 - c. **As God allows us to progress, He is relegated to a smaller and smaller place**
2. It's so easy to do the stuff God has taught you how to do and leave Him it out of
 - a. **The mountain dew commercial - "Know that, been there, done that."**
 - b. 2 Chronicles 26:1-5 & 15-16 - Jessica & Amber
 - c. **Maintaining a sense of Spiritual poverty in the midst of an abundant blessing.**

B. Grace is defined by our weakness never by our strength.

1. An example of this can be found in 2 Chronicles 20:12.
 - a. **This statement isn't entirely true, if you read in Chapter 17.**
 - b. In the past God had used this army to defeat many of the King's enemies.
 - c. **Now, in chapter 20 a new enemy had appeared, but Jehoshaphat knew better to depend on the successes of yesterday.**

- 1) He didn't presume that just because God had helped him yesterday that He would do the same today.
 - 2) **He knew that the battle was not his but the Lord's.**
 - 3) That it didn't matter how big his army was, if God wasn't involved they were doomed to fail.
 - 4) **That the power for victory didn't come from his military but it came from his Messiah.**
- d. Because of not depending on the old, God did something new.
- 1) **Instead of defeating this enemy with a sword, the Lord used a song.**
 - 2) This King was able to maintain a sense of Spiritual poverty in the midst of an abundant blessing.
2. **Isaiah 33:21-24 - A river where no boats with oars are allowed.**
- a. In this place no human effort is allowed.
 - b. What God did yesterday, becomes an oar when we try to use it today.**
 - c. Yesterday's success was a result of God's power moving us from defeat to victory, from hurt to healing, and from bondage to liberty.
 - d. God won't allow us to use what He did yesterday as an oar to get somewhere today.**
 - d. This place where the majestic One:**
 - 1) Is a place where you forget about what you can do, and give yourself to the river of what He can do.
 - 2) **It's a place where you forget about what you have, and give yourself to the river of what He has.**
 - 3) It's a place where you forget about the old, and give yourself to the river of the new.
 - 4) **It's place where you forget about what happen yesterday, and give yourself to the river of what He wants to do today.**
 - 5) It's a place where you have to dangerously depend on God.