

The Sufficiency of Grace versus Self-Sufficiency

Amazed by God's Grace

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

The Gathering

Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, Pastor

Ray of Hope Christian Church | Decatur, GA

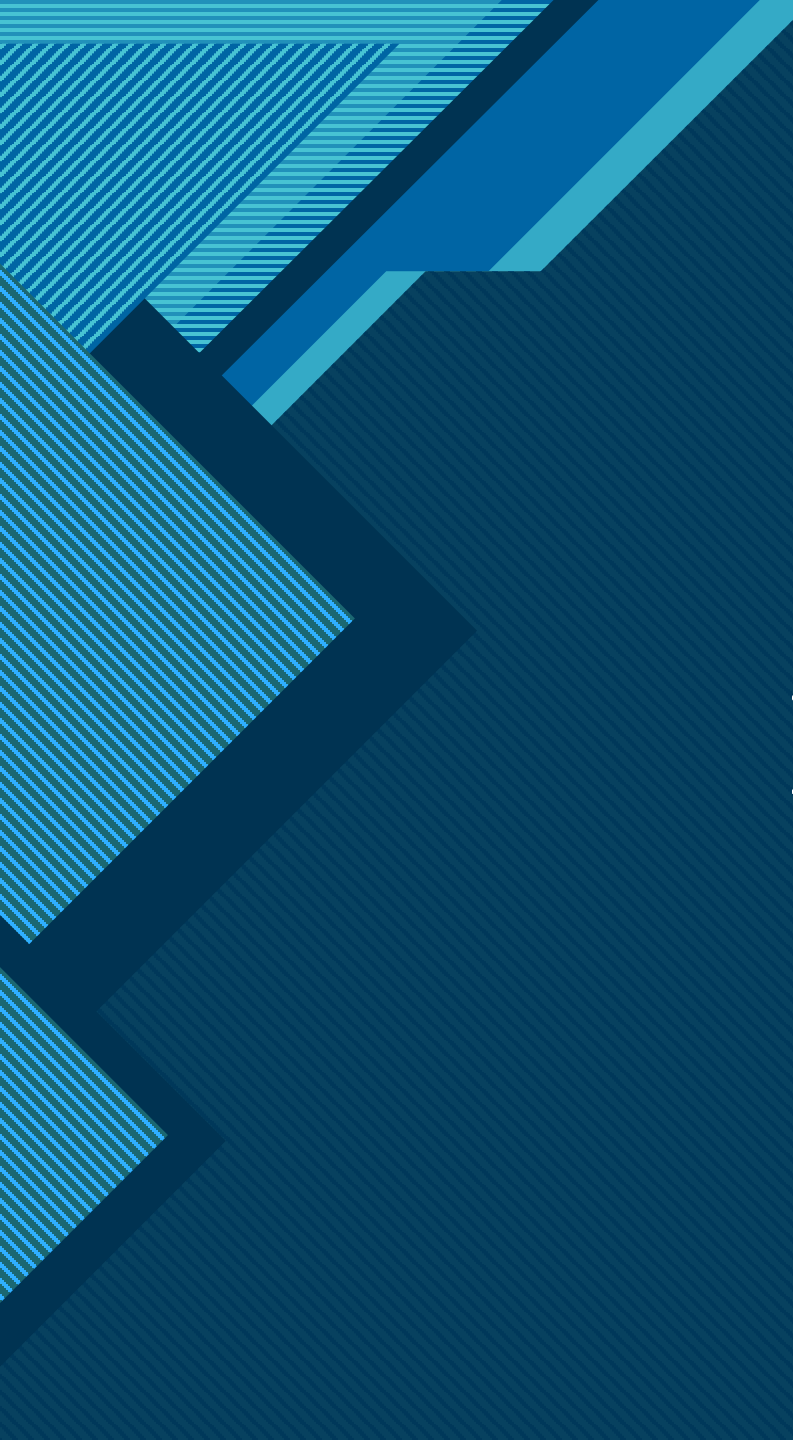
In order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in the flesh a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That’s why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

II Corinthians 12:7b-10



**In this world you will have
trouble. But take heart!
I have overcome the world.**

John 16:33b



**You don't have to say,
I got this!
Because Jesus is saying,
I got you!**



II Corinthians 6:4-5



I am the less than the least
of all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 3:8



**Christ came into the world
to save sinners – of whom I
am the worst.**

I Timothy 1:15



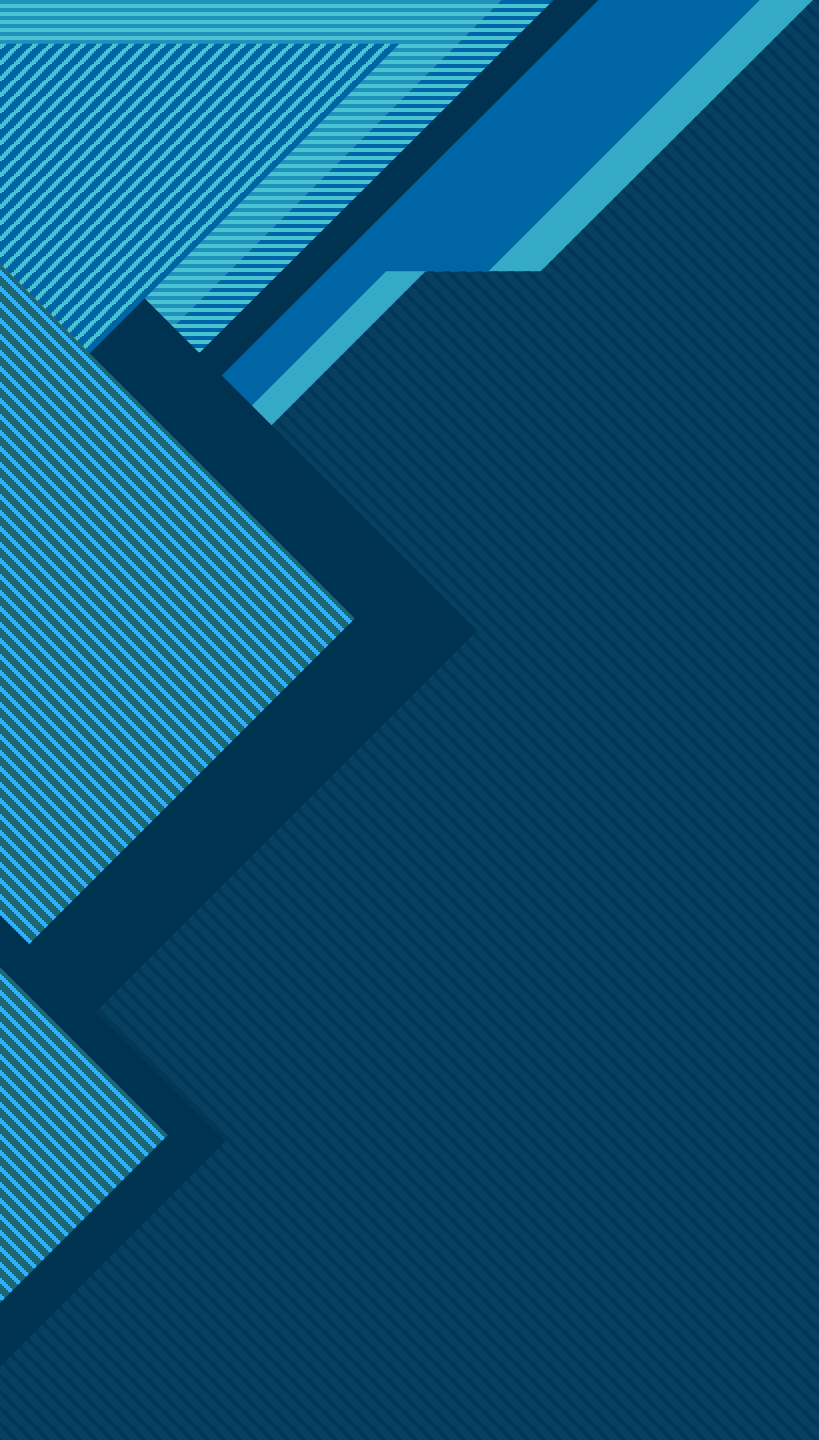
God opposes the proud but
gives grace to the humble.

James 4:6




**Do not judge,
and you will not be judged.**

Luke 6:37



God made clear to
Paul his purpose
in giving him the
thorn in the flesh.




God never allows pain without a purpose in our lives. He never allows Satan, nor circumstances, nor any ill-intending person to afflict us, unless he uses the affliction for our good. God never wastes pain.

Philip Yancy



Romans 8:28-29



What God is up to in our lives is conforming us to the image of Jesus. It is a process from justification to glorification. He uses everything that happens in our lives, the good, the bad and the ugly to accomplish it.


Discussion

Has God ever allowed you to go through something without understanding why?
How did that make you feel?

Be honest!



The word for grace used in
this passage is “charis.”




God's unmerited favor to
us through Christ,
providing us with salvation
and other blessings.



**God's divine assistance to
us through the Holy Spirit.**



**God's grace covers our
sinfulness, guilt, and shame
but it also covers our
weaknesses and inabilities.**



Self-sufficiency is another sin that we struggle with that actually goes all the way back to the Fall.



**In him we live and move
and have our being.**

Acts 17:28



Apart from me you
can do nothing.

John 15:5



**Our extremity is God's
opportunity to show
himself strong in our lives.**

**Our extremity is also God's
opportunity to solidify our
dependence on him.**

Discussion


Have you ever allowed fear and a lack of trust keep you from claiming God's promises?

Did you later regret it?



Deuteronomy 8:2-4

- He humbled them.
- He caused them to hunger.
- He fed them with food they had never seen before.



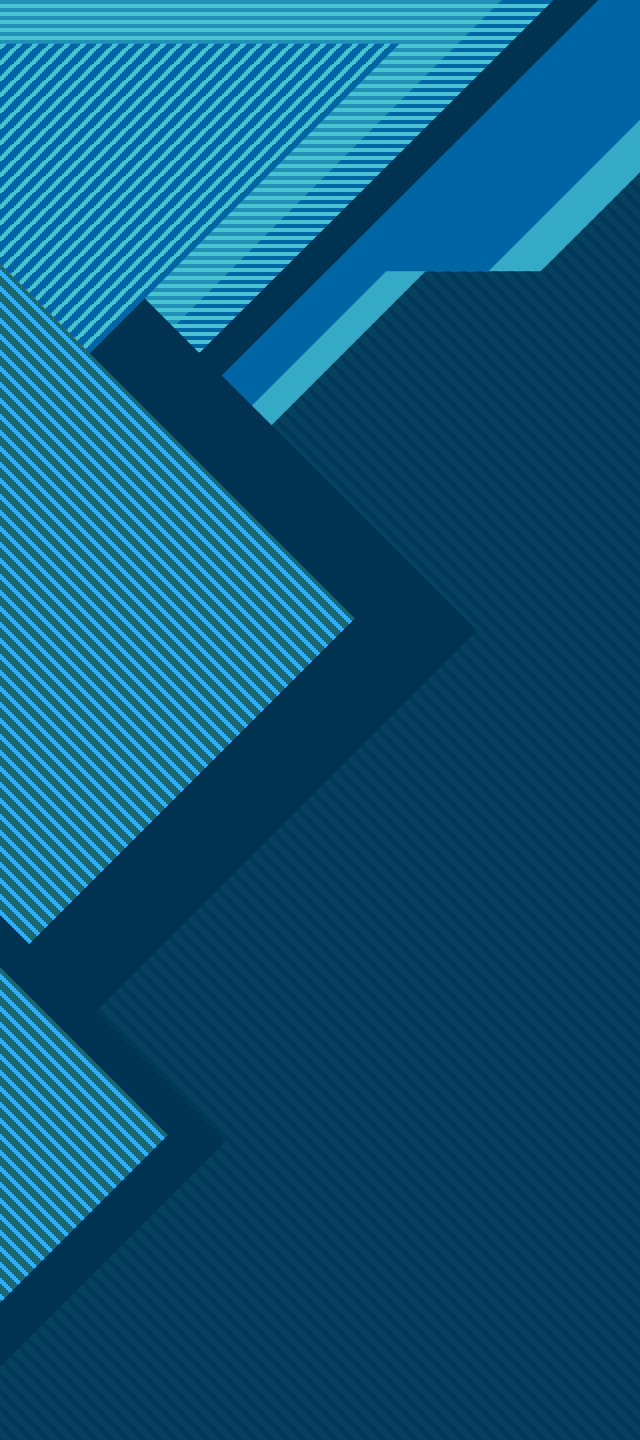
He taught them that humans do not live on bread alone but every word that comes from the mouth of God.



Psalm 33:6, 9




Deuteronomy 8:10-18



**We must not only learn
that we are dependent
on God physically, but
spiritually as well.**

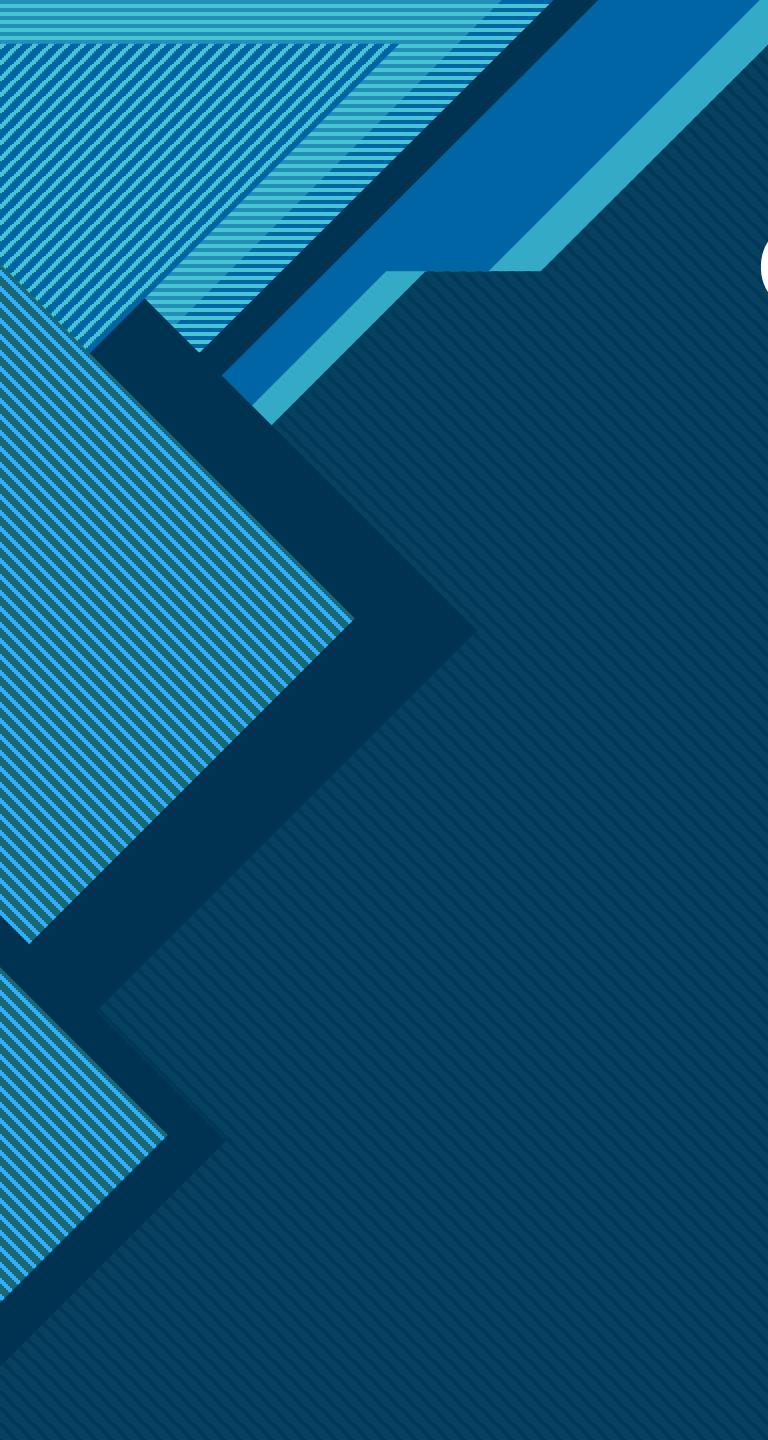


Apart from me,
you can do nothing.



**“My grace is sufficient for you,
for my power is made perfect in
weakness.”**

**Therefore, I will boast all the
more gladly about my
weaknesses, so that Christ’s
power may rest on me.**

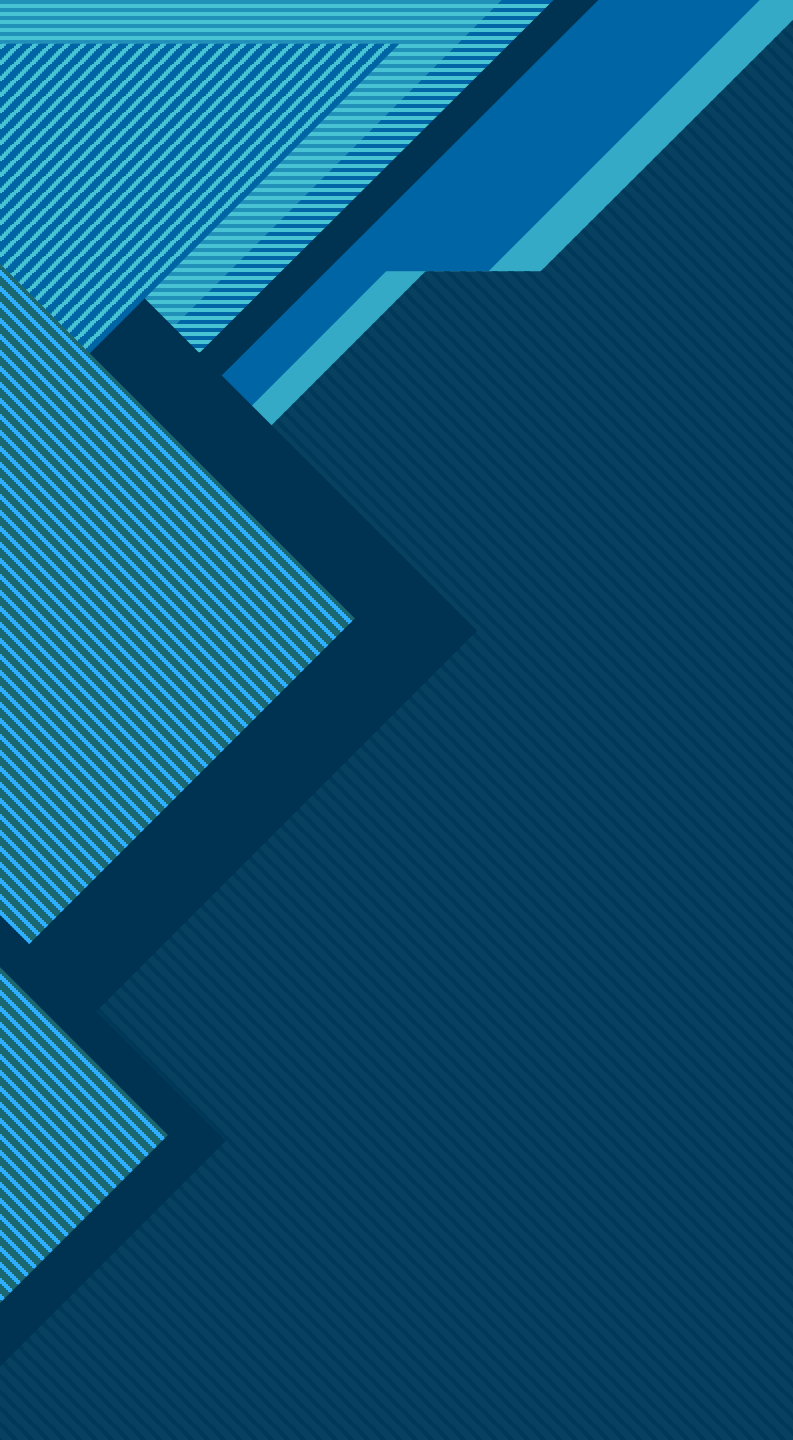


God equates his grace with his power as specifically displayed in our weakness. His power infusing our weakness is a concrete expression of his grace.

Philip Yancy

**I will ask the Father to send
you another Advocate, in
some translations it says,
comforter, to help you and be
with you forever –
the Spirit of truth.**

John 14:16 – 17a



The word “comforter”
means one who will
come alongside of you
to fortify and
strengthen you.

And you shall receive
power when the Holy
Spirit is come upon you,
and you shall be my
witnesses.

Acts 1:8

God's grace is sufficient!
The Greek verb translated "is sufficient" is the same one translated "will be content" in I Timothy 6:8, where it reads, "If we have food and clothing, we will be content with that."



Exodus 16:16-21

Discussion

Share a time when you experienced the full measure of God's grace strengthening you in weakness, giving you the power to stand or be strong in the face of difficult circumstances?

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