

God's Sovereign Grace

Text: 2 Corinthians 12:6-12-- ⁶For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. ⁷And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the 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. ⁸For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. ⁹And 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. ¹⁰Therefore 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. ¹¹I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.¹² Truly the **signs of an apostle** were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:33-39 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.³⁴ Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: ³⁶ And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; ³⁸ (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. ³⁹ And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Introduction – Paul was confronting Church “**Superstar**” **Want-to Be (s)— II Corinthians 11: 13-15**
¹³For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.
CHRIST IS OUR ONLY SUPERSTAR

Paul's Spiritual Resume:

II Corinthians 11:5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

II Corinthians 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

1. **Visions and Revelations--II Corinthians 12:1-4** It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. ²I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.³ And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) ⁴How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

2. **Suffering—I Corinthians 11:** ²⁴ Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. ²⁵ Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶ In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;²⁷ In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

I. God's Sovereign Grace-As Seen in the Life of Paul

- A. *Paul-An Apostle Who Walked with God and had Signs of God's Presence in his Life-GRACE*
- B. *Paul-An Apostle Who Faced Real Struggles-Not Phony or Elevated Above Common Christians NOT A SUPERSTAR WHO RECEIVED SPECIAL FAVORS FROM GOD! -GRACE*
- C. *Paul-An Apostle Whose Prayer was Answered according to GOD'S SOVEREIGN GRACE! Not according to his command or wish!*
- D. *Paul-An Apostle Who understood that God is glorified in his suffering- GRACE*
- E. *Paul-An Apostle Who Experienced the Fellowship of His Presence and Grace in his weakness*

II. God's Sovereign Grace As Seen in the Life of Jesus

Hebrews 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;
Gethsemane--Matt 26:37-39,42,44 ³⁷ And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.³⁸ Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.³⁹ And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
⁴² He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.
⁴⁴ And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

III. God's Empowering Grace

- 1. *Our Earthy Comfort is Not God's Greatest Concern!*
- 2. *The Promise of Christ: His Continuing Presence Through it all--I will never leave you or Forsake You?*
- 3. *The Comforter Abides with us and makes the Journey Sweeter! OUR OASIS IN THE DESERT!*
- 4. *God's Care for us never ceases-- If we Yield to God, we will be Victorious Regardless of Which Path He Leads us Down*
- 5. *God is Far Wiser than Us and He Knows the Way! TRUST HIM!*
- 6. *God's Plan was greater than what Paul wanted or Even what Jesus wanted --- and is greater than any of us!*
- 7. *Be Careful to Not Kick Against the Prick! God doesn't Allow His Children to become Spoiled!*
- 8. *Heaven will quickly erase all of earth's sorrows!*