***Triumph out of Trouble, No. 5 - PH18-01

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:12-14***

We are looking at the fact that it is possible to experience triumph out of trouble. We have been considering the full implications of Philippians 1:12-14. In these verses, we have found that the apostle Paul has been confronted with a certain situation of troubles and trials resulting from his Roman imprisonment. In this, he has been explaining to us how he has risen above this trial; how he has conquered this kind of suffering; and, how in fact it has redounded to the advancement of the Lord's work. The apostle Paul is experiencing this suffering, but he's taking it in stride because he has a divine viewpoint understanding of a provision which God has made to enable us to meet suffering; to meet pressures; to meet failures; to meet those moments of crises in our lives; and, to meet the times when your very life may be in doubt and on the line. Sooner or later, you come to a situation like that, and God has said, "I know you're going to come to it, and I have a way to enable you to meet it." This perhaps is one of the most significant areas of Scripture that we have ever studied. If a person could learn this, it would resolve many many problems in life. It would make life smoother from here right on into heaven itself.

We have been studying this passage in Philippians via 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. We have come now to verse 8 where we will pick up the passage. We have found that Satan has been permitted to assign a demon to the apostle Paul to act as a thorn (a splinter, or a goad) in his flesh to cause some physical suffering in order to remind Paul that he is never to reveal what he heard and saw in heaven on the occasion when he was stoned to death at Lystra, and he went to heaven and experienced firsthand (directly) heaven. As we review the Scriptures, we find that Satan can affect the human body of both Christians and unbelievers, and that Satan can cause the death of a Christian and of an unbeliever. However, Satan is always restricted by the permission of God in these matters. Satan can cure a human body of a disease. Therefore, he can make the healers (in the charismatic movement, for example) look like they are actually operating under the power of God.

**Sources of Miraculous Healing**

There were 4 sources of miraculous healing in our day. We will just briefly look at them once more:

1. A person who experiences miraculous healing of the body experiences that because God has caused it. This is the direct result of prayer by Christians who are in fellowship with the Lord. I stress to you that this is a very proper and a right thing to do. When you are sick, you should pray for healing. When you are sick, or someone in your family is sick, it is legitimate for you to go to other believers and ask for prayer on the part of those believers that this person would be healed and that this person would be made well. That's a proper thing to do. There is no illness which is too great for the grace, the plan, and the peace of God.

However, there is no such thing as a special gift of praying for the healing of other people. There is no such thing as a faith healer. A faith healer is a faker; he is conning people; or else, he is an instrument of Satan using the devil's powers and abilities. I stress to you again that there is no such thing as anybody having a special gift of being able to pray for the healing of people to which God responds in a special way that He will not respond to your prayers for healing. That has to be made very clear. You must understand that. If you understand that, Oral Roberts and the rest of the boys will not be a problem to you. You'll have him spotted, and you'll understand what kind of games they are playing on a gullible, uninformed, and ignorant public.

No one today has the gift of instantaneous healing; that is, to be able to heal by a word or by a touch. This again is sought to be imitated, but it does not exist. This was a temporary gift. Acts 19:11-12 indicate to us that the apostle Paul could heal. However, Philippians 2:27-2 and Timothy 4:20 indicate to us that the apostle Paul could no longer heal. So even within the lifetime of the apostle Paul, it was evident that this was a temporary gift. No one has the gift of instantaneous healing today, but God responds tremendously to the prayers of believers who are in fellowship, and people are healed.

No one is able to raise the dead, which was part of the gift of healing. People who are healed today are healed on the basis of the character of God and His plan. They are not healed because of what you and I are who may be praying for those people, or because of what somebody else is who claims to be a healer.

1. Miraculous healings are caused by the application of medical knowledge by a doctor. If this doctor really knows his business, he too will credit the fact that what he may accomplish through the use of medicine is God working through him. God's judgment is being exercised through him.
2. Miraculous healings are caused by Satan. These are sometimes a reversal of demon possession of an unbeliever or of demon influence on a believer. For example, when Satan was permitted to assail the body of Job and to inflict pain and illness upon Job, Satan could have healed Job. Satan could have taken the disease away that he imposed upon Job. So, Satan today, who imposes diseases, can also remove them. Again, I cannot stress to you enough that you become deeply conscious and aware of the reality of Satan and the demonic world. I tried to go over this in the last session with you with some actual experiences of people who have been in the spiritualist movement, thinking they were dealing with good spirits from beyond the grave, but they were actually dealing with demonic spirits. It is information which you should not seek by experience yourself.

However, from those who have been in it, we can learn a great deal. The healings of the charismatic movement today fall into this class. This is a professional healer who is claiming something that he cannot really do. This is also evidenced by the fact that the charismatic movement healers today are not walking up and down the corridors of a hospital. This is really fantastic--the unmitigated gall that these people have--the arrogance. You have to have an arrogance to be able to stand up before people and parade yourself like that, especially on national television.

In putting myself in a place of a charismatic healer, I keep coming back to the thing that would be so humiliating to me--that I did not storm into the hospitals of Dallas and empty them. I guarantee that if I had the gift of healing, that's exactly what I'd be doing with it, especially if I was purportedly presenting myself as someone who is interested in human welfare, and seeking to assist people in their needs. That's the first thing I would do if I had the gift of healing. However, they're not doing that. You will find in the New Testament times that when the Lord Jesus Christ (or even a man like the apostle Paul) walked down the streets of a city, people reached out and all they had to do was touch Him, and they were healed. He left a trail of healed humanity behind Him where He walked into a mass of illness on one side, and left a mass of wondrous health on the other side. That's the gift of healing, and it does not exist today.

1. Healing is caused miraculously by a change in a person's mental attitude. That's psychosomatic. The person is not really sick. He just thinks that he is.

**2 Corinthians 12:8**

With that background, we come to 2 Corinthians 12:8 where the apostle Paul finds that this demon working upon his body is causing great physical pain. It's like a splinter that is festering, and he's conscious of it. So, on three occasions, verse 8 says that he goes to the Lord and he says, "Lord, would you please, Father, take this illness away from me? I understand what it is for. I've got the picture straight. I will not tell what I've seen in heaven. But, Lord, this is a burden for me to carry. With everything else I have, would you take it away?" God says, "No." He asks again, "Would you take it away?" God says, "No." The third time he says, "Lord, would you take it away?" The Lord says, "No." On every occasion, the Lord says, "No." Then God explains why His answer is "No," and why it is possible for Paul to live with it.

"For this thing, I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me." "For this thing" is the Greek word "huper," and it means "on behalf of." Paul says, "On behalf of this demon thorn in my body, this splinter of physical pain and irritant, I besought the Lord." The word "besought" is "parakaleo," and it means "to beg." This was an earnest pleading. The apostle Paul was probably down on his knees before the Lord and saying, "Lord God, I beg of you to take this thing away from me--this burden that I constantly live with physically. I am always aware of it. I never forget it." And God says, "That's exactly the reason that you have it. I want no slip of the tongue from you concerning what you've seen in heaven." So, he was intensively praying. The aorist tense here means that he did it at every point that he was praying. He actively engaged in that prayer. Indicative is a statement of the fact of his pleading. In the grammar, this is what is called an ingressive aorist which means "at the start of an action." It means that from the very first point that he discovered he had this illness, he went right to the Lord and said, "Lord, this is tough. Please take it away." And the Lord said, "No."

"For this thing, on behalf of this demon with a physical affliction, I begged God that "hina," which indicates purpose. Here's why he was begging God: "Might depart" is "aphistemi." "Aphistemi" means "to stand off." He was asking God to tell the demon to stand off or to lay off. "Three times I asked God to force the demon to stand off me and to stop afflicting me. Aorist means at the point of a climax of suffering, when he thought he couldn't stand it any longer, he begged God to have this thing depart. He did it actively, so his will was in it. However, it is subjunctive in the mood which means potential. It was up to God. Maybe yes, or maybe no. He was asking the Lord, "What do you think, Father? What do you decide?" Three times he asked, and three times the answer was "No." What Paul received in the third heaven in wondrous information is offset in the first heaven where he lives by a demon from the second heaven.

Satan is used to discipline and put pressures on Christians. It's important to understand that. You cannot be indwelt by a demon. That's true. However, you can be greatly oppressed as a believer by a demon. In Luke 22:31-32, we have discipline of pressure being put upon Peter: "And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desire to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But, I have prayed for you, that your faith does not fail: when you are converted, strengthen your brethren." Peter was in a status out of fellowship here. Satan was moving in on him, trying to secure him and trying to take hold of him to use him to his ends. The Lord said, "I saw it, Peter. I knew what the devil was doing to you, and I was praying for you. When you've changed your mind and you've come back into fellowship, then you can strengthen the other believers as a result of what you have learned." However, Satan was putting pressure upon Peter because Peter was out of fellowship. Anytime you and I are out of fellowship, you can expect the devil to put pressure on you.

We also have the case of a believer in a local church, in Corinth, who was guilty of a sin that was declared a sin unto death. It was the sin of incest. 1 Corinthians 5:5 tells us what the decision was relative to this man. The apostle Paul says, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." What this verse is declaring is that this church member was committed by the believers to Satan for the destruction of the flesh; that is, it was committed under the direction of the Lord. This person was committed to the sin unto death, and Satan was given the job of executing the death upon the believer.

So there comes a time when you may put yourself in the position where Satan will be permitted to take your life, or a demon will be permitted to be dispatched by Satan to take your life. That world is very real, and it is a world which can act upon you and me. In this particular case, the situation was reversed, for we find later in 2 Corinthians that this believer confessed; he came back into fellowship; and, at that point, discipline always becomes blessing. In this case, the Lord decided to reverse the sin unto death decision, and the person was permitted to leave and then was brought back into the fellowship of the church. Sometimes the Lord may permit the sin unto death to continue and run its course, and the Christian will be taken home to heaven.

There is also the case in 1 Timothy 1 where we are told that Christians who are emotionally dominated; critical; bitter; gossiping; or, unforgiving are open to satanic discipline. 1 Timothy 1:19-20: "Holding faith in good conscience, which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck, of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." Here are a couple of believers who have countered and who have gone negative to the Word of God. They have thereby violated conscience. They were the kind of believers such that this thing had been explained to them, and they had been warned, "Listen, watch your emotions. Your emotions can dominate your soul and bring destruction upon you." They were the kind of believers that said, "Oh, I feel my emotions are squelched now." It's not your emotions that are being squelched. It's your negative volition that's being squelched, and that's what you don't like. Here the apostle Paul said, "That's exactly what these two believers were doing. What did I do to them? I took them to the Lord, and I said, 'Lord, dispose of them in Satan's hands.'"

It is a terrible thing when you commit believers into the hands of God for discipline. I have been shocked by the results when you do that. It's a scary thing. It's a thing that is very awesome for you to finally recognize that a believer has gone negative; he is bucking; he is fighting; he has gone spiritually insane; and, he is making all the moves that are taking that person away from spiritual enlightenment, and going off into the darkness. Finally, you have no alternative but to say, "Lord, I take so-and-so (and you name them before God), and I now deliver him into your hands for your dealings with in his life, and for what his needs may be." I have seen more people suffer grief, tragedy, and problems with kids--everything in the world collapses around their ears because God is bringing the pressures of discipline upon them. Satan is there waiting for God to give him the nod, "OK, you may proceed with that Christian." Anytime you go to the Lord and say, "Lord, I deliver so-and-so into your hands for dealing with in this matter," you are in effect waiting for God to decide how He's going to do it. One of the ways He may do it is to set a demon loose, and that Christian is in a lot of trouble.

Therefore, we don't play loose in God's family. Just because we don't see the demons around us, and just because we do not live in a primitive society where we can see demon possession, this doesn't matter. All of this is very real to Christian missionaries who come home because they move among people that they see demon-possessed. They see the fantastic supernatural powers that demons have, and what they can do through human beings--the grotesque and the vileness, or the sophistication and the culture. A demon can go both ways. He can be a filthy thing, or he can be just as cultured and refined as can be. But it is real. This is what we are opening up our lives to when we resist the Word of God.

Believers with an unforgiving spirit are therefore delivered to Satan's discipline and punishment. 2 Corinthians 2:10-11: "But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes." If you are not willing to forgive people, you are opening yourself up to satanic influence. I don't mean when somebody comes up to you and says, "Oh, I'm sorry for what I said to you. Will you forgive me?" That's stupid and idiotic, and no doctrinally oriented Christian thinks that he is going to secure a fellowship with God on that basis. You may feel, as a matter of good human relations and of Christian courtesy, to go up and say, "I'm sorry for what I did or for what I said," but it has nothing to do with your securing fellowship from the Lord. Therefore, if people do not tell you they're sorry or ask your forgiveness, that is not ground for you not to forgive them. If you do not forgive them immediately, you are inviting satanic control on your life. So watch your grudges. It's a dangerous game.

Here in 2 Corinthians 12, we have the case of Paul illustrating satanic influence permitted by God upon a believer. Therefore, Paul asks the Lord three times, "Will you take it away." Here's the answer in verse 9: "And He said unto me, 'My grace is sufficient for you: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." What's the answer? Here's the Lord's purpose. "The Lord said," and the Greek word used is "hreo." It is perfect tense which means that sometime in the past God had made this declaration of Paul, and now at the time of his writing the book of Philippians, it was still true--that God's grace is sufficient."

I realize that I'm making a statement here. God's grace is sufficient. Everybody says, "That's nice. God's grace is sufficient. Praise the Lord. Yes." However, you don't know what God's grace is. I hope before this session is over you will have a hard core crystal clear idea of what grace is, of which Paul is referring to here. He's not just referring to some nice thought in the sky idea--a wonderful inspirational concept in which, when you're in trouble, you can say, "Oh, God, Your grace is so sufficient for me." You're going to hypnotize yourself into the idea that it is. No, this is real. At some point in the past, God said to Paul, "I've got a grace for you that will carry you through this." It may also have been that the Lord is saying, "I told you this in the past, Paul, that My grace is sufficient for you, and it stands that way, so you don't need to pray about this matter. All you need to do is act upon what I've already told you in the past. My grace will carry you through, so now you resort to my grace."

It is not unusual for a Christian who is mature in the Lord to receive a thorn in the flesh--physical pressures. Until you are spiritually mature, Satan is not really interested in you. But what he says here is that, "My grace is sufficient." The Greek is, "The grace of mine," or the grace which belongs to God. This is a favor that God has toward us which is alien to us. By nature we do not understand it, and by nature we are not able to enter into it. It is something that everyone has to gradually learn to function under. A lot of Christians talk about grace, but most of them don't really know how to receive it; how to benefit by it; and, how to live by it.

**Grace**

For a moment I want to look at James 4:6. It makes a fantastic statement about the grace of God. Eventually we are coming back to the book of Philippians, so stay with us. We've wandered over to James 4:6: "But He gives us more grace. Wherefore He said, 'God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble.'" Here the Holy Spirit says that God gives certain Christians more grace. The Greek word here is the word "meizon." "Meizon" really means "great." This is what is called the comparative degree. In other words, you have great, greater (comparative), and greatest, which is called superlative. That's the most. So we have these words in our language. You might say, "You're great." To somebody else that you like a little more, you might say, "You're greater." Then to someone else, you might say, "You're the greatest." We have these three degrees.

Well, this one falls right in between. This is comparative. Some Christians receive grace. That's the simple basic statement. However, some Christians receive greater grace. That's an amazing idea. Some Christians are capable of receiving overflowing abundant grace from God more than just the ordinary grace that most Christians receive. Some Christians have something about them that God is able to do something for them in the way of grace that He cannot do for others. In other words, some Christians get grace; and, other Christians get super grace. It is an overflowing abundant level of grace. That's what James is saying. "But he gives greater grace" is the way it should be translated--that which is beyond the normal portion of all.

James 4:5 says that's the Holy Spirit desires to control the Christian's life: "Do we think that the Scripture says in vain that the Spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy?" In other words, the Holy Spirit is jealous of anyone who comes in to take over control of your life. The Holy Spirit wants to see himself in charge of your life for blessing, not your old sin nature. Putting it in human terms, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit is jealous when you hand over your life to the old sin nature control. However, if you put it under His control, something begins developing within your soul that builds a container. It builds the capacity so that you are able to receive an outpouring of the grace of God that the ordinary Christian cannot receive. That's the point of overflowing grace. He says that the humble believer is the one who receives super grace. The humble believer is simply a term to describe the Christian who has arrived at spiritual maturity in the form of a spiritual maturity structure in his soul. It is to such a Christian that God gives super grace.

This concept in Scripture may be referred to by simply one facet of that concept, or an idea may be described by a summary word. For example, "the filling of the Holy Spirit" is referred to by the word "love" in 1 Corinthians 13. That is a chapter about the superiority of being filled with the Spirit over against being dominated by the old sin nature. However, it doesn't use the word "filling of the Spirit" in 1 Corinthians 13. It uses a result of the filling, which is love, which you find in Galatians 5:22. "Confession of sin" is another example in Colossians 3:9. It says, "Put off the old man." That's just a descriptive way of saying. "Confess your sins." "The spiritual maturity structure" which we speak about is not found in the Bible in those terms. The Bible talks about going on to perfection and to maturity, but "the spiritual maturity structure" is an idea which is clearly taught in the Bible. Here it is described by the word "humble," because a Christian who is mature is not an arrogant beast. He is a humble personality. He is a composed possessed oriented believer. He doesn't have to be pushy. He doesn't have to be competitive. He doesn't have to be anything. He's just relaxed. He's a humble person because he is spiritually mature. Therefore, this word "humble" is standing for that spiritual maturity structure. The word "proud" in James 4:6 refers to the other side--the person who lacks spiritual maturity.

So it says, "God gives more grace (greater grace) to the believer who has a spiritual maturity structure developed in his soul, than he gives to the one who does not. That is what these words "humble" and "proud" mean in this context. Therefore, there is a grace that is beyond normal measure, but it comes only to the person with capacity to receive it--somebody with a container in his soul. Therefore, here is the picture that we're talking about. Within your soul there comes upon you a showering of a certain amount of the grace of God. It comes upon everybody. However, within certain believers, there is a container which is built--a nice old-fashioned Texas iron pot. When you develop this, which is spiritual maturity structure of the soul, then comes flowing from God such a fantastic river of grace as you have never experienced before.

God is sitting up there in heaven; looking down; waiting; waiting; and, waiting to put into your life the most marvelous things that you have ever experienced, but He cannot put these into your soul until you have built something in which to receive this grace. You have to build a container, and that container is spiritual maturity. You build it block-by-block; taking in doctrine; learning the Word of God; learning the principles; adjusting your life, and adjusting your life; you're positive; and, you're building up and building up.

Then you get to a point where a demon is firing splinters at you like he did the apostle Paul. Paul had the container, and it took three times before Paul said, "Oh, now I know what you mean, Lord. Of course. What a fool I am. I have a spiritual maturity structure. You are pouring out your grace." Then Paul begins to think of the five facets of spiritual maturity. He says, "Why, of course. Every one of these is amply met for me." Then he goes on and he says, "Oh, Lord, I'm glad you make me weak. I'm glad you give me troubles. Then he goes on and he lists five things (that we'll get to in a moment) that he rejoices that God does to him. This is because those five things constitute his spiritual maturity, and God's grace is pouring into him, and it's filling up, and it's filling up, and it's filling up. When it gets to the top, what do you think God does? No, he doesn't turn it off. It just flows over and flows over and flows over, and pretty soon everybody around you is bathed in the grace of God.

You're not going around and proving to people that you're a wonderful gracious person by saying, "How are you this morning? Praise the Lord. I'm so happy you're well. Oh wonderful. Hallelujah. It is so nice. Oh, the Lord is so good. Did you find Jesus sweet this week?" There are several appropriate things you could say, but all that is fake. People put on a front, and we are plagued with that in Bible churches--cursed with it up to our necks. When people go negative toward the Word of God and they go spiritually insane, that's what they do. They move off to someplace where they can live a fake life and they think their emotions are free.

No, here is where your emotions are free: When God is pouring grace that's flowing out of the container and just overflowing and overflowing, and super grace is on a rampage through your life, boy, you know happiness. You have happiness that is real happiness. The people around you are happy. They're blessed. You're an inspiration to them. You're an orientation to them in their lives, and everything begins to click. Therefore, a spiritual maturity structure in the soul from doctrine builds the container in which we receive the greater grace of God. Once this is created, God keeps pouring and He keeps pouring. That's why Psalm 23:5 says, "My cup runs over." What do you think He's talking about? "My cup runs over." What do you think he's doing? Is he out in the field there boozing it up or something? Is he having a party? He's talking about, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want." Why not? Because he has built a spiritual maturity structure in his soul. He has a container, and God, who is sitting up in heaven just waiting, turns the faucet on, and out pours the grace of God until it flows over and he says, "My cup runs over."

That's the position that God intends for you to live on. He never intended for you to live on a grubby little level where you're scraping out some kind of spiritual existence with no container and no grace to carry you through. We must weep that most of the churches are not doing the job to give Christians even the knowledge that they have a container to build, or any word (any doctrine) with which to build it. All this is God's ultimate provision for meeting suffering. In other words, in this way you are reaping what God has sown. Most Christians are trying to live on what they have sown--their cleverness; their capacities; and, their investments of their lives. However, God says, "Here is what I have sown in you. It is My grace which is sufficient for you."

What are these capacities? What is the super grace that comes to the spiritually mature believer with the container in his soul? These are capacities such as enjoying life. Some people never can enjoy life. When you are a super grace Christian, you'll enjoy life. You'll have fantastic discernment. You'll be able to spot people; you'll be able to spot situations; and, you'll be able to see things as they really are. You'll have a worthy sense of values. Nobody will be conning you to do church work which is glamorous secondary junk--an impression-making success over against that which is really accomplishing things. You'll have good taste. The super grace Christian has good taste. It'll help you to know how to dress and how not to dress. You'll be a genuine person. You'll be very very real. You'll be a person who knows how to engage in Christian service--service that is really changing the records in heaven. You'll have the capacity for sharing. You'll be a kind person. You'll be one who knows how to trust God. Therefore, you won't be pushy. If you think somebody needs changing, you'll turn him over to the Lord to do the changing. You won't turn out to be a deserter, but you will have the integrity to trust God. You'll have personal integrity. You'll have freedom. You'll have capacity to understand, and to know to enter into freedom.

The people of Chile are writing letters back to men in our Congress and the people in positions of authority. The summary of those letters is, "We have gone through a nightmare under the socialist communist oriented government of Allende. We have come to the very brink of socialism, and have by the grace of God, been drawn back from it." They have a contrast which is so stark. Do you know what they're writing? They're saying that the leadership of the United States is deceiving the public on the conditions in Chile; the feelings of the people; and, the sense of relief over the release that has been ours from slavery and the freedom that we now have. We know what freedom is. We came to the brink. When you stop and think about it, and you listen to what we're hearing on our news, it's by and large discrediting Chile. It is by and large seeking to dignify the socialists and the communists as being champions of the people.

When you're a super grace Christian, you'll know what freedom is, and you'll know its value. When you're a super grace Christian, you'll have the capacity for wealth. That's when God will be able to pour money into you. You'll have an understanding of economics. You'll know the difference between socialism and the free enterprise of capitalism, and you won't go around mouthing like a tenfold fool about the virtues of socialism and communism. You'll know the difference. A super grace Christian is so oriented to the Word of God that he can have divine viewpoint. You'll know how to meet suffering. That's what Paul needed here. You'll be able to love. You'll be able to have a capacity to have a family that you can do something significant with. You'll be able to meet the crises of life. You'll have a real devotion to the Lord.

It also means blessings when you're a super grace Christian. It means reaching goals. A lot of failures in life that we have would be resolved right here if we had the overflowing container of super grace. We would enjoy the success that we would like to have which eludes us. God will bless you with money when you're a super grace Christian. He may not make you wealthy, but as a super grace believer, He will give you all the funds you need to meet every need in life, and He will probably give you a lot more for a lot of luxuries in the process. One of the things a super abundance of greater grace gives us is money.

It gives you a satisfying sex life--an expression which is ennobling and not degrading. Only a super grace Christian can enter into the maximum in that realm. It will give you social relationships that are satisfying. You will learn that some people should not be your friends. You will learn that some people are traitors to the Lord, and so you smile; you be civil; you watch yourself; and, you don't go any further. You will have the capacity to rear your children so that they will not prove to be a nightmare and a heartache to you. It is too bad to come to super grace capacity after your children are grown. So start it off when they're young enough for the super grace influences to bear their fruits in their lives.

You will have a marriage blessing; that is, a right particular man to his right particular woman. It is a dangerous game to pick a marriage partner until this container is full and overflowing--a very dangerous game. There are any number of people that you could marry in life, and you'll make out, but super grace gives you that number one person. It will give you the blessing of stability. It will give you promotion in the various realms of life that you're engaged in.

It will give you health. Super grace will give you health. It will so orient your soul to God that it will have a beneficial effect upon your body. It will enable you physically to cope with disease. I cannot help but feel that some Christians who are now dead could be alive if they'd only been in the right church where they understood how to build a super grace life. The very problems that arose in them physically would have been resolved by their spiritual well-being. Don't sell that short. You'll have the blessing of fulfillment--the blessing of maximum divine good production. You will have capacities and blessings in every direction.

What is the final goal of all of this? Why do we have this container? Why do we have this effort on your part to study the Word; to learn the Word; to attend the services; to listen to audio recordings; and, to build up your reservoir of spiritual truth in your human soul? 1 John 1:4 gives us the reason. The point of all of this super grace container development is, "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." What is it that God is out to do with us? He's out to make us happy.

If you invite somebody over to your house for an evening, what do you do to those people? If you're going to invite them over for dinner, what are you going to do? You make a big issue of it. You're going to have dinner, and you work on it all day. Everything is in order. You have the dinner music playing. You have everything else that you can cook up? Why? Because you want to be happy. If people have enjoyed themselves, to whose credit is it? To you as the guest? No, to the hostess and to the host. This is what the super grace life is all about.

God is our host. He has prepared us with all the food of the Word of God. The point of all this preparation is to enable you and me to build a contender in our souls so that we can get coordinated with His thinking. Once we have the container built as the result of learning doctrine, He can pour His abundance of grace into us. Then the container gets full. In other words, when I say a full container, I mean the pentagon of the spiritual maturity structure is built. It's complete. All five sides are fully developed. Then it's overflowing; overflowing; and, overflowing, and we are happy.*That is happiness*. God is pleased, and God is blessed.

How is God honored and glorified? By you and I walking around and eating worms for Jesus sake to get his blessing? No, not to see how unhappy you are. The more unhappy you are, the more of an insult it is to God. When is our host glorified? When you're just as happy as you can be to the ends of your brain cells. When will that be? When "my cup runs over." That's when you're going to be happy, and that's when you're going to be honored. The greater grace position follows a fully developed spiritual maturity structure, and this is the realm in which God has designed for you to operate as a believer. It is a place of perfect happiness and a place of perfect response. In other words, when you get to this, you're in the prime of your spiritual life. This is where God intended a believer priest to live--in the prime of his spiritual life. He doesn't intend for you to live in some place groveling around down below.

A Christian may be totally helpless--disoriented to genuine values--but the super grace life of a spiritual maturity structure enables Jesus Christ to start functioning through him. A major evidence of having reached this super grace level is knowing that you're helpless--that you're a fading flower, and a disappearing dissipating cloud (1 Peter 1:24, James 4:14). When you know this, then the Lord Jesus Christ is free to take charge of your life. Christians who lack super grace, by the way, are mostly generally unhappy. They're grim. They're vicious. They're ugly. They're unfair. They're arbitrary. They're nosy. They're greedy. They're mean. They're arrogant, and a whole lot of other things too. It's not so hard to spot where you are. It's not so hard to spot whether you're in super grace; whether your cup is overflowing; or, whether you're a poor shriveled dried out little thing that doesn't even have a cup that God can put anything in.

Our time is gone and I didn't get to the big punch line. I'm going to invite you to the next session. I'm doing this deliberately so you'll keep coming back. No, I'm not. However, the best really is yet to come. We haven't come to the best yet. The best is ahead in this passage, but this is all build-up so that you'll be able to enter in with an explosive joy into what God has made possible for you. Therefore, esteem the Word of the Lord.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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