

Bethel Pulpit

Sermon 357

More Grace!

**Sermon preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton,
by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,
on Lord's day evening, 19th April, 2015**

Text: *"But He giveth more grace" (James 4. 6).*

This is what each one of us needs: more grace. And have you noticed when Paul begins his epistles, he normally begins by wishing the churches the grace of God to be with them? "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." He can wish them nothing better. And so often as he ends his epistles, it is a word like this: "Grace be with you," or, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit," or in the well-known words of the benediction with which we close our services, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." We cannot close our services in any better way, we cannot close the Lord's day in any better way than seeking the Lord's grace to be with us as we go home, His grace resting on the service, blessing it, His grace over us in our families, in our homes, as we mingle with the world throughout the week that follows. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost."

Well then, beloved friends, here is a very simple word, but a very gracious promise, a faithful promise of what you and I so much need: more grace. And we are told where we are going to get it from. It is only as the Lord gives it; and when He gives it, He gives it freely. We do not deserve it; we cannot merit it; we cannot buy it. There was that old saying that grace is "unbought, unthought, unsought." The grace of God, that matchless, free favour shown in Christ to sinners, and the Lord gives it, and He can give us nothing better. He gives us grace in His dear Son. He is the God of all grace. And if this word is fulfilled with you and me, however unworthy, if He gives us His grace, then we shall get to heaven. But if we are strangers to the grace of God, beloved friends, with all our religion and everything else, we must perish eternally; to heaven we can never come. It would be a good thing if all of you went home this evening praying for *more grace*.

I have often told you about the preacher who in the 1700s did some favour to the British government. They wanted to reward him and said he could have anything. He said, "There is only one thing I want: more

grace.” I wonder if there are any of you who would say this! But do not forget, we tell this story very quickly, but that was a poor man in Shropshire and there were multiple things he needed, but he felt he would forego them all if he could have more of the grace of God.

“He giveth more grace.” Well, if the Lord is to give us *more* grace, if words mean anything at all, this means that He *has* given us grace already. We know nothing personally or savingly unless the Lord gives us grace, and He gives us that in the new birth. Well, we speak of a true conversion, Holy Ghost conversion, as a *work of grace*, and we speak of the beginning of a work of grace in a sinner’s heart, and that is vital, and if the Lord begins with us, then it is all of His grace. We sing sometimes,

“Our seeking Thy face was all of Thy grace;
Thy Spirit must have, and shall have all the praise.”

Apart from grace, we go on unconcerned. Apart from grace, we can hear the truth unaffected. Apart from grace, we are satisfied with earthly things. Now the beginning of it all is when the Lord searches out His chosen, His redeemed, and in the new birth He puts grace in their hearts. It is grace, because it is the beginning of what will end in heaven. There is salvation in it. It is grace because they are completely, entirely unworthy. Grace means that they do not deserve it at all. So the beginning of all our religion, if we have any real religion, was in grace. And of course, the Lord is sovereign. With some it is so gently; with some it is so sudden. Some can go to the spot and place. Some do not know how they began, but they know they are different. Some could not speak of the day, but they know they need a Saviour. O this grace which finds the sinner out, this grace which quickens him into life, this grace which leads him to Christ, this grace which makes salvation known!

So this word here, “He giveth more grace” – well it means that He must have already given grace, and it is a solemn thing if the Lord has never in any way blessed us with His grace. It is a wonderful thing if He has blessed us with His providence, but living souls cannot be satisfied with that. It is the grace of God in salvation which they need.

Well then, here is the beginning, a sinner quickened into life, a sinner saved by grace, but he has a life to live; he has a pilgrimage to walk out; he has a fight to fight; he has a race to run. There is a heavenly

voyage. There are dangers, difficulties, problems. He is still a sinner. He has Satan and the world alluring him, tempting him. That is why he not only needs grace at the beginning, but he needs *more grace*. That is, a blessed continuation of it. He needs grace all the way through; he needs grace to his journey's end. That is a wonderful word:

“His grace shall to the end,
Stronger and brighter shine.”

Apart from that, we must turn back and perish and sink.

It is a wonderful promise: “He giveth more grace.” And pondering over this, beloved friends, you can really consider it in two ways, what it means for the Lord to give more grace. To use a simple illustration, you might have a kind friend and he might help you in various ways, and he might promise that he will give you *more* help. Now you can understand that in two ways. It could mean that he would keep on helping you, go on helping you, continue helping you – he would give you more help – or it could mean something rather different, that when you had that special difficulty that lies before you, he would give you a lot more help at that time than he has been giving you before, but just on that one occasion.

Now which of those two things are true of the Lord and this promise here? Of course it is both. It means He will still keep on helping you, still keep on giving you grace – daily grace for daily needs. But it does mean this, beloved friends: when you come into those real times of need, those real times of sorrow, those times that some of you have come into this year, it means not only that He will not fail to help you, that He will keep on helping you, but it means when you come there, there will be abundant supplies of grace. He will give you more grace then. Why? Because your need is more, your sorrow is more, and so the Lord in love and mercy will give you more.

It is a beautiful promise: “He giveth more grace.” So you can think of many things. That grace that saved you in the beginning. You need grace to keep you, because we cannot keep ourselves, and we cannot keep alive our own soul, and we cannot keep ourselves from falling. So we need this constant supply of grace. We need this *more grace* day by day to keep us. And we need grace to help us, and that is what the special promise is concerning prayer, and the well-known promise of the throne of

grace, that the Lord has appointed it “that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” And that grace to help – not just a little aid – it is the Lord doing everything for you.

“He giveth more grace.” Grace to uphold you. “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” Grace to forgive you as at the first. Grace when you stumble and fall.

“Here when thy feet shall fall,
Believer, thou shalt see
Grace to restore thy soul,
And pardon, full and free;
Thee with delight shall God behold,
A chosen sheep in Zion’s fold.”

“He giveth more grace.” Grace to bring you safely through, to “stand every storm, and stand at last.” And when you come to that special time, and then you do feel your need of more grace, and if you do not receive that *more grace*, how can you stand the trying day? Well, what about that beautiful word: “My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness”? That is the grace that He will give you then, and it is described as “all-sufficient grace.”

“When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace *all-sufficient* shall be thy supply.”

There are many descriptions of grace in the Word of God. Reigning grace – it is going to reign to subdue your sins; it is going to reign over the power of sin; it is going to reign over Satan’s temptations, because grace is stronger than sin, stronger than Satan. It is reigning grace. “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” That is the emphasis all the way through: “By Jesus Christ our Lord.” That is the source of grace; that is the fountain of grace. But there are very many beautiful descriptions of it: triumphant grace, abounding grace. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” And this grace always flows through one channel, and that is through the blood of Christ.

“He giveth more grace.” And He giveth more grace not because we deserve it, but for Jesus’ sake, through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. So there are so many descriptions of it, but when

you come to that special, sad, solemn, difficult time, it is *all-sufficient grace*. It is grace to live and grace to die. It is not dying grace before you come there, but it is dying grace in a dying hour. So often with the people of God, it is not grace given before the trying day comes, but when it comes, the Lord is faithful to His promise.

“He giveth more grace.” Have you ever thought of that rather unusual word: “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things”? What a word that is, and Scripture does not exaggerate. “God is able” – we often have that in Scripture; we believe it: “God is able to make *all grace* abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things” – not that you have a stock in hand, but like the manna, day by day, when you need it; like Elijah’s barrel of meal and cruse of oil, not a stock in hand, but when you need it, it is there.

“But He giveth more grace.” Perhaps some of you are saying, What does this *but* mean at the beginning? “*But* He giveth more grace.” Well, without going into detail, James has been speaking of all kinds of sins and corruptions to which even the people of God are liable when tempted and left to themselves. The chapter before is almost entirely about speaking wrongly – wrong words, evil words, false words, untrue words, unnecessary words, and who can tame their tongue? And then you come to this chapter and it is talking about adultery and the spirit of adultery; it is speaking of lusts; it is speaking of temptations; it is speaking of all these things, if you will, the conflict, that the believer still has the remains of corruption in his heart. In himself he is not able to walk worthy. In himself he is not able to obey the Lord’s commandments. In himself he is not able to stand in the hour of temptation. “*But*,” and then comes this blessed *but*, this glorious *but*. “*But*,” though you and I cannot do it, though you and I are helpless, though you and I are unworthy, there is an answer to it. How can we stand the trying day? How can we endure to the end? What about Satan’s temptations? What about the allurements of the world? What about our own corrupt hearts? “*But*” – there is an answer there – “He giveth more grace.” His grace is able to deal with all these things, to reign over them, to subdue them.

There is a point not touched much upon today, but it came in our chapter this morning (Romans 8. 13) and it comes a lot in the epistles: the

mortifying of the flesh – *mortifying* meaning to put to death. The mortifying of the flesh. We cannot do it, and by nature we do not want to do it, but the Lord enables you to do it. That path the Lord leads you, and you do not want to walk that way; you say, How can I go? “He giveth more grace.” It is this glorious *but*. “*But* He giveth more grace.”

There is a beautiful word on this point. “It pleased the Father that in Him” – that is in Christ, His beloved Son – “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.” Now that is a fulness of grace and it *dwells* in Christ, which means it can never be exhausted. The people of God have been receiving from this fulness since the day Adam fell, and it still stands ever flowing, full and free, and it shall do till the end of time and to all eternity. You think of the thousands of sinners who have received from it, but it is still there for Him to give more grace. You are enriched when the Lord gives it to you. The Lord is not any the poorer for giving it. And the point is, He delights to give it. He is not a niggardly giver. He delights to give the blessings of His grace. He delights to give salvation.

I think I have told you over the years, in my early days when I used to preach quite a lot at the old Willenhall chapel, there was one of the old patriarchs there, an old, godly man, and when he was young he was sorely tempted by Satan, and Satan seemed to attack him like this: “Well, the Lord will bring you to heaven at last, not that it will do Him any good or delight Him, but only because He has promised. He cannot break His promise. He said He will not fail you; He will bring you through; but He will not do it gladly.” And the old man said, “Satan, the Lord has told me that it is *the Father’s good pleasure* to give me the kingdom.”

O the delight that the Lord has in giving the blessings of the gospel! “He openeth His hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.” He openeth His hand, as one old preacher round here said some years ago – that means He is not tight-fisted. O “the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.” “For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.” There is that overflowing well, and the sheep go and they drink of the water, and then they are taken away, and the lambs grow up and they drink of that water, and so it goes on year after year, generation after generation, and there that well is still overflowing with water. The well does not dry up. “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

“He giveth more grace.” And it is out of this fulness. But the Word of God does not put it just like that, not just *out of* His fulness. It is *according to* His fulness, and that is what Gadsby means when he says, “My every need He richly will supply.” It is according to His fulness. O that fulness of love and mercy and grace that is treasured up in Christ! It is the fruit of His atoning sacrifice. It ever abides to meet all the needs of all His poor, unworthy people in providence and in grace.

In John chapter 1 we have it like this: “And of His fulness” – not His fulness – “*of* His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” What does that mean? Grace to make you feel your need; grace to supply it. Grace today; grace tomorrow. “Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” So it is an inexhaustible fulness. It is spoken of as an ocean without brim, without shore. And the wonderful mercy that when the sinner comes there in all the depths of his need, that grace is still flowing, that grace is still abounding.

O but the faithfulness of God to this promise! His blessed faithfulness! “He giveth more grace.” The sinner does not deserve it. He has not only sinned against the law; he has sinned against grace; he has sinned against light and against knowledge. But the Lord still blesses him with that grace. “Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.” That means two things: that the Lord will remove mountains; His grace is sufficient to remove your mountain, whatever it is. Whether it is your sin, or whether it is in your home, or your circumstances, or providence, the grace of God can remove it. It also means that in giving more grace, He is going to bring the whole blood-bought church of God safe to heaven, and the shout in that day will be to the praise of this grace He has given. We have it in Ephesians: “To the praise of the glory of His grace.”

“He giveth more grace.” “He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.” Over the years I have told you a story. I was told it was about Mr. Dawson of Bethersden when he was in great trouble, that when he went into the vestry there was some money, and there was a little note with it: “More to follow,” and it happened week by week till he was brought through all his trials. That was how I was always told the story, but accidentally I picked up a book

this week, written in the 1800s with a similar story. It was about a poor man whose minister had a lot of money left to give to this poor man, but he thought it was not wise to give it all to him at once, for though he was godly and though he was poor, he thought he might squander it all at once. So he let him have a little allowance week by week, and always told him there was more to follow. But that is a good illustration.

You go back over your past life. You were in need and the Lord helped you, and His grace visited you, but that was not the end. It has been all through your life, and you look back and you say, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped me.” And then you think perhaps of tomorrow, and this week, and the coming days, but it is this: there is more to follow.

“Have you on the Lord believed?

Still there’s more to follow.”

It will not be exhausted, and the wonderful thing is sometimes you feel the trouble – well, you have brought it on yourself, and you deserve it, but it is still “He giveth more grace.” Perhaps there has not been much prayer, but now you are urgent in your prayer, but the Lord does not always rebuke His people and say, “Thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel.” “He giveth more grace.” It is all through the merits of His beloved Son. O beloved friends, this evening in all your different needs, providence, grace, your sorrows, today, tomorrow, you young ones, you older ones, life, death, you with your little families, you with burdens before you, O to be able to look at this gracious word that “He giveth more grace.”

There is a well-known hymn on it. I think some of you know it. I will read it to you because it is a good commentary on the text:

“He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labours increase;
To added afflictions He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials He multiplies peace.

“His love has no limits, His grace has no measure,
His power has no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.”

Now beloved friends, that is just it.

“But He giveth more grace.”