

GRACE THAT SUSTAINS

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. 2 Peter 3:9

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Romans 6:1-2

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. 3 Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. 5 An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 6 It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. 7 Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. 2 Timothy 2:1-7

GRACE: of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues

Who or what do you currently look to for strength?

Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved. Psalm 55:22

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars.” 2 Chronicles 16:9

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

How do we know if we are relying on ourselves or God?

Are we growing in spiritual maturity in the process? Are we willing to do the hard thing, even if it's not what we want? Do we remain faithful or go back to old ways?

HOW DO WE BECOME STRENGTHEND IN GRACE?

SOLDIERS: Guard

Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. 2 Timothy 2:4

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:11-12

Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them (7)... As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful (22). Matthew 13:7 and 22

Where do I need to defend/protect and fight for my faith, my marriage, my family?

ATHLETES: Train

An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 2 Timothy 2:5

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, Hebrews 12:1

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. 25 Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 1 Corinthians 9:24-25

Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; 8 for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:7-8

What do I need to set down? Where do I need to exercise self-control?

What do I need to train for?

FARMERS: Work faithfully

It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. 7 Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. 2 Timothy 2:6-7

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. Galatians 6:7 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

What am I planting? What am I sowing?