

THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST

“I have become a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power.” —EPHESIANS 3:7

As Christians, we are all called to be disciples of Christ, and are operating between the tension of knowing our own inadequacy and knowing the adequacy of Christ.

Paul makes two contrasting statements about himself concerning this. First, he is a servant of the gospel. This is his self-awareness. There is only one reason he is an apostle of Jesus Christ, and that’s because it is the will of God. As a servant, he knows something that is essential for all servants of God to know, and that is in ourselves we are incapable. We do not have what it takes. In Ephesians 3:8, Paul says, “Although I am less than the least of all God’s people...” In 1 Timothy 1:15 & 16, he refers to himself as the worst of sinners, and in 2 Corinthians 12:11, he says, “I am nothing.” This is not a false humility, but his genuine understanding of himself, because Paul knows that his credentials for being a servant of God are not his own.

Contrasting his self-appraisal, Paul says, “I have become a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power” (Ephesians 3:7). God is giving Paul what is not natural to him, pouring His strength and sufficiency into him, and exchanging Paul’s poverty for His riches. As servants of God, we need to understand that though we are incapable of being what God has called us to be, counteracting that, is everything we are not, Christ is.

Paul is not in the least orientated to himself and his own capability, but strictly to Christ and His capability. Whenever he talks about the fact he is a servant, and less than the least, he is, at the same time, saying, “But God’s grace has been poured into me.” Grace is God giving to him what he is undeserving of; his sin for Christ’s righteousness, his weakness for Christ’s strength. “Although I am nothing, I want you to understand something equally true,” says Paul. “Jesus Christ is everything in me.”

When Paul wanted the thorn removed from his flesh, Christ said to him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:8-9). If we’re operating in anything other than our dependence on Christ, we are destined to fail. As His servants, we can be absolutely honest about our inadequacies, because we are operating in the grace of our Lord and it is essential we remain completely orientated to the sufficiency of Christ in us.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, it is a privilege to be a part of your work in this world. Help me to always depend upon your sufficiency in everything You call me to do. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: In my service for Christ, am I resting in His sufficiency?