

And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:9

All throughout the weeks leading up to Easter we have been looking at the way God’s gift of grace has been revealed in the people in the Easter story. Last week we talked about how God’s grace was revealed in the way He helps those who have struggled with fear. We are grateful for the way the Bible shows us that the people called to follow him were imperfect and often struggled to be faithful because of moments fear. Peter, a cornerstone of the church, often failed to respond in faith. Remember, he began to sink in the water when he took his eyes off of Jesus and thought about the raging storm around him. That was later followed by his denial of Christ before the rooster crowed just as Jesus had told him he would. How broke-hearted Peter must have been. How hopeless he must have felt when Jesus was crucified. If he was unable to be faithful to God while Jesus walked beside him how did he ever hope to be faithful with Jesus gone, crucified. That is when the grace of God was revealed. When the tomb opened up and the light of the world stepped out from the darkened tomb bringing to creation the tangible truth that “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” John 1: 5 But even more than that the resurrection of Christ revealed the truth that darkness could not conquer the Light. Victor Hugo once said “Dawn and resurrection are synonymous. The reappearance of the light is the same as the survival of the soul.”

Perhaps Victor Hugo had heard the Old Testament scriptures that read: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Psalm 27:1 or “You, Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.” Psalm 18:28 or even “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.” Isaiah 60:1 The great gift of grace in the resurrection is that the Light of God has not only come into the world, but it has come upon us. It has taken the guilt and shame of our unfaithfulness and has reminded us that “Christ did not come into the world to condemn the world but that through him they might be saved” John 3:17. There in lies the gift of grace, the hope found in the grace of God poured out through the faithfulness of Christ even onto death, because through Christ’s death and resurrection we are given the opportunity to believe in him, to receive him into our hearts, and to be given “the right to become children of God.” John 1:12.

Without the Grace of God that offers forgiveness to those who believe in Christ and are put back into right relationship with Christ through the atoning gift of his body and blood on the cross, we are simply disciples who have failed to be faithful and are cowering in fear of judgement. With belief in the resurrection and its evidence of God’s redeeming grace we are like Peter. Saints who are sinners that fall and get back up to try again. Even in our own failures we who struggle to look into the eyes of one so faithful can find a Savior, who does not condemn but gives us grace to start again. To serve him just as Peter was instructed to feed Christ’s sheep. That grace not only allowed the disciples to come out of hiding, but gave them purpose and drive to dare to serve Christ knowing all the time that the survival of the soul was secured through Christ. The cross and the empty tomb are the means through which the light of Christ goes into the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.

So this Easter take hold of God’s grace and feel the hope that leads us to sing “Christ the Lord is risen today, sons of men and angels say. Raise your joys and triumphs high; sing, ye heavens and earth reply.” Charles Wesley

I heard someone say that Christianity was the best system on earth to give hope. I say; that the Christ of Christianity is the only source of hope for earth and those who abide on it. So let me keep it real – what would you be willing to do for Christ if you truly believed that failure could not remove you from the hand of God? What would you be willing to give in response to grace that removes condemnation and promised eternal life?