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# The All-Sufficient Christ

*"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all,  
how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"  
(Romans 8:32).*

When Paul weighed in his mind the enormous challenges that confronted him as an apostle of God, he asked himself, "Who is adequate for these things?" (2 Corinthians 2:16). Every Christian shares Paul's concern. We look inside at what we are, we glance around at the journey that we are taking, we look ahead at what we will face as the future comes to meet us, and our hearts immediately shout, "I don't believe that I can manage these things!"

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul answered his adequacy question with a simple and straightforward statement that only a buoyant and robust faith can make. He said that we do not find our adequacy in ourselves (2 Corinthians 3:5a), but we find it in God (2 Corinthians 3:5b). This sufficiency, he further said, is not just a partial help, a temporary portion of strength, or a mighty wave that is available every now and then; rather, it is a "sufficiency in everything" (2 Corinthians 9:8). In writing to the Romans, Paul mentioned tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword—seven tragedies that we hope we will not experience—and then said, "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:35). What an affirmation! He said that the Christian will not only get through such storms as these, but that he will live a triumphant life in the midst of them!

This theme of adequacy in God is unfolded throughout the New Testament. The full portrayal of what God has done and continues to do for us is given through the inspired penmen.

*His adequacy is seen, first, in the salvation He has given to us. Through Jesus' death, He has not partially pardoned us, but He has completely forgiven us. We have been freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24). One is not justified in stages, with a few sins being forgiven at one time and a few more at another time. A person is either justified or he is not, completely saved or completely lost. When God forgives, He forgives perfectly, removing every sin for all time.*

Not only are we saved, justified, and redeemed when we enter into Christ through faith, repentance, confession of Jesus, and baptism for the forgiveness of sins; but, in Him, we are kept saved by God's grace as we walk in the light. We enter into God's grace, and then we live in it. John wrote, "If we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Notice that John said "all sin" is continually cleansed. Jesus cleanses us from "all unrighteousness"—not part of it or most of it, but all of it (1 John 1:9). As we live in Christ, we receive the forgiveness that was pictured by Isaiah the prophet: "Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool" (Isaiah 1:18b).

*We see His adequacy, second, in the way He supplies our daily sustenance. He does not satisfy our greed, but He always provides for our need.*

God told Israel that He would rain manna down from heaven, and each person was to gather an omer of it for his daily food. He would not allow Israel to gather in manna for two days, except on Friday, because He wanted them to know that He would provide for them day by day. Moses recorded that, as the Israelites went out to gather their manna, most of them had to guess at whether or not they had collected an omer of it. They did not have a large supply of measuring bowls, and many of them had to rake the manna into pieces of cloth or various kinds of containers, doing their best to get the right amount. They were honestly seeking to get an omer, just as God had commanded. Moses said, "Some gathered much and some little. When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no lack; every man gathered as much as he should eat" (Exodus 16:17b, 18). When they measured what they had gathered, they found that God had worked with them, making sure that every person had exactly what he needed. Day by day, even as we do, they saw the adequacy of God.

Jesus taught us not to worry about what we are to eat, or wear, or about what is happening in our bodies (Matthew 6:25–34). "Pagans worry about things like that, but Christians don't," He implied. Christians trust in their heavenly Father. Just as our God cares for the birds, the lilies, and the grass, He cares in a far more significant way for those who are walking with Him.

*We see His adequacy, third, in the strength that He gives us to face the trials of life.* Paul said that he knew how to get along with humble means; and he said he also knew how to live in prosperity. He had lived in every kind of circumstance you can imagine, and yet, he said, "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am" (Philippians 4:11). We may wish we could ask Paul, "How did you do it? How was it that you were able to be content in all those unusual circumstances you faced?" He answers us in those brief words of his that many of us memorized as children: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

As heroes of the faith are enumerated in

Hebrews 11, we see a strange list of those who are heralded as victorious:

And others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground (Hebrews 11:36–38).

When we see these precious ones in heaven and ask them, "Did God give you the strength that you needed to live through all of that pain and suffering? Did He empower you to face all of those unbelievable trials?" Is there any doubt about what their answer will be? They will say, "Oh, yes. The world could not see it, but when we needed the strength, God always supplied it. With every new difficulty and with every unimaginable valley, God gave us the strength we needed to travel through it."

*We see His adequacy, fourth, in the service we try to render to Him.* Rahab, a harlot in Jericho, developed a belief in God (Joshua 2). She did not have a big Bible like the one we have. Her knowledge of God came from only two stories: the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and the defeat of Sihon and Og, two great Amorite kings. She accepted this evidence of her "Bible" and believed in God. When she was called upon to demonstrate her faith, she hid the spies on her roof and told the king's inquirers that her visitors had gone down the road toward the Jordan. She did the best that she could with what she had. God accepted her offering, gave her an opportunity to let her faith grow, and perhaps (according to tradition) allowed her to marry one of the spies who rescued her. She let faith in God fill her heart. Only two women are mentioned by name in Hebrews 11 as heroines of faith, and Rahab is one of them (11:31). She went from the house of shame to the hall of fame because she accepted the evidence that she had, believing in and standing with the God of the Israelites. As it was with Rahab, so it is with us: God takes our little and does amazing things with it.

Paul said, "For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have" (2 Corinthians 8:12). If we just do what we can, God

will receive our offerings as great gifts. A widow gave two mites, almost the smallest possible gift anyone could give, but God accepted that gift and made it live forever (Mark 12:44). As we live with obedient hearts and as we walk by faith, we see the adequacy of God. He takes our five loaves and two fish and feeds thousands. He puts His hand over ours and makes us strong. He enables one believing soldier to rout a hundred.

This great God, who is always able, enables us. We win with divine will power—our will (or faith) joined with His will and power. We do not worry about our impotence; we live in His omnipotence, led by His wisdom, sheltered by His power, and encircled by His presence.

Eddie Cloer



*Paul raised five important questions at the end of Romans 8: "If God is for us, who is against us?"; "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"; "Who will bring a charge against God's elect?"; "God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns?"; "Who will separate us from the love of Christ?" (vv. 31b–35a). Study carefully the answers to each of these questions, and you will find that the faithful Christian stands always in the unlimited adequacy of God.*