

Amazing God – Amazing Grace  
I Peter 5:10-11

conclusion he summarizes what he just said.  
Let's read our text first.

Last week we talked briefly about some of the highs and lows of Peter's life. We all have them, right?

One minute you're driving down the road of life and everything seems to be going well and the next thing you know you hear a loud pop and you're pulling over to the side of the road with a flat tire.

One day you're gainfully employed and the next day you're on the unemployment line.

One day you're healthy as a horse and the next day you're sicker than a dog as the sayings go.

One day you are able to freely express your faith in and through your work and the next day you're being sued for discrimination.

Ups and downs, highs and lows, they are as much a part of life and as different from each other as winter and summer, storms and sunshine, biting into a peach or biting into a lemon.

On different occasions in this letter Peter has addressed the issue of persecution. The unfortunate reality is that faith in Christ doesn't make for a smooth road to travel in this life. Sometimes it is fraught with heartache and struggle and persecution. It might even be more difficult for you as a Christian than it was before you were born again. Life as a Christian has its own unique set of challenges and trials. Jesus told us to expect it.

In our text today, Peter has one more piece of advice or perhaps word of comfort and encouragement to these believers undergoing and enduring persecution. His words are for us today. I invite you to turn to I Peter 5:10-11. In a sense Peter comes full circle from where he began. In the beginning of his letter he summarized what he is about to share in the body of the letter and in the

Now turn back to chapter 1:3-7.

Did you notice the similarities in what he said? There is persecution is temporary and eternal glory and stand strong in your faith. As he began the letter with an anthem of praise, so he ends the letter with a doxology of praise.

Throughout the letter Peter has encouraged committed godly living in spite of persecution. Hang in there even when things are tough, even when throwing in the towel seems to be the easiest or safest path. *What is happening now won't last. What will happen later won't end.*

Summing up everything he said in the previous chapters he simply helps us in verse 10 to see our aid in persecution.

#### I. OUR AID IN PERSECUTION – v. 10

When you're going through a tough time it's nice to know you have someone you can count on to help you out, to encourage you, to draw strength from.

Solomon knew that when he penned Ecclesiastes 4:9-10. "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!"

Peter knew all about falling and having someone to help him up again. He denied Christ three times but after the resurrection, Jesus was right there to lift him up.

I hope whenever you are going through some really difficult time in life, that you have someone beside you. We need help in times of trouble and persecution, but most importantly remember that God is always with you.

Notice first that Peter says where our help comes from – “God”.

David knew that. He wrote in Psalm 20:7 “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.”

Psalm 34:4 “I sought the Lord, and He answered me; He delivered me from all my fears.”

That’s another way of referring to trusting God.

Psalm 62:8 “Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.”

Solomon sums it up nicely in Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not in your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.”

The prophet Isaiah concludes in 41:10 that there is nothing to fear because God is always with us.

Folks, when it comes to persecution no matter what it is there is really only one source of aid that is always dependable. We can look to others or to things to encourage us or help us escape but ultimately and only do we find lasting help in all our sufferings when we look to God. He will never let you down.

I love my Dad and through the years whenever I had a mechanical problem I could call him up, have him listen over the phone and he could diagnose it for me. Monday I called him because I couldn’t get the snow blower started. The chord would only pull out about 4 inches. It felt like something inside was locked up. I called Dad and explained what was going on. He said “I’m afraid I can’t help you out on that one. You can take the cover off and try and move the fly wheel by hand.”

Psalm 46:1-3 “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains

fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.”

God may not get you out of the suffering but He will get you through it.

Notice the kind of help that we get from the Lord.

A. His Grace – It’s Sufficiency Is Immeasurable

He is “the God of all grace.”

Grace is God’s riches at Christ’s expense. He gives to us what we do not deserve.

It is God’s grace that saves you.

It is God’s grace that sustains you.

It is God’s grace that surrounds you.

It is God’s grace that shelters you.

It is God’s grace that secures you.

It is through grace that He calls us.

It is through grace that He completes us, makes us perfect.

God’s grace toward us is 100%. He withholds nothing back from us that will ultimately be for His glory and our good.

Grace means gives us all that we need to get us to glory.

It also means that grace is all we get.

Look back again at I Peter 3:12.

What Peter is saying is that in grace we get all the benefits of God but we get none of His wrath that will be poured out on those who do evil. Pastor John Piper says that God is only grace toward those who believe. Therefore we can have hope in God’s grace because He knows what He is doing.

No matter how difficult that thing is we are going through right now, we can know that His grace is sufficient for whatever it is. If His grace is

sufficient to save us as we read in Ephesians 2:8-9, His grace is sufficient to strengthen and sustain us. II Corinthians 12:8-10 “But He (the Lord) said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

The Message says that God’s grace is all you need and concludes in verse 10 by saying that when we let Christ take over, the weaker I get, the stronger I become.

When you feel like you are at the end of your rope let Him be the rope holder.

When you feel like you are at your wit’s end, let Him be your wisdom.

When you feel weak, let Him be your strength.

When you feel overwhelmed, let Him be your overcomer.

When we begin to focus on the strength and provision of His grace we look beyond our circumstances and to His provision and promises. His grace is sufficient for you in everything at the moment of your need.

If you need grace for a difficult boss or co-worker or neighbor, it’s there.

If you need grace because you are being ridiculed for your faith, it’s there.

If you need grace because of an illness or diagnosis, it’s there.

God’s grace is sufficient for everything you’re going through.

In 1:10 we saw that this grace saves.

In 2:3 we saw that this grace tastes good.

In 4:10 we saw that this grace is many faceted.

In Romans 6:1 we find that grace is greater than all our sin.

In Hebrews 4:16 we discover that this grace helps us in our times of need.

In James 4:6 we learn that He gives grace to the humble.

We receive God’s grace right when we need it.

Turn on the light switch and the light comes on instantly.

Turn on the faucet and water comes out the spout right away.

The grace of God is supplied to us in an immeasurable amount.

God’s aid doesn’t stop with His grace.

We see His aid in His glory.

### B. His Glory – It’s Splendor Is Infinite

“And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ...”

Peter refers to what Theologians term “effectual calling”. This calling is God’s action to bring us out of darkness into His light, meaning that He causes you to come to Him or perhaps more simply put, He comes to get you because we won’t come on our own. After all, we are dead spiritually.

Let’s say I am mowing in the way back and Robyn wants to call me to dinner. We have a large bell outside the back door and either she or David will ring the bell calling me to come and eat. Now I may or may not hear the bell. They may try another time or two to get my attention, but with my ear protection on I’m virtually dead to the world. I can’t hear anything. So one or the other will come out to where I am mowing to get me to come to dinner.

That is effectual calling.

On my own accord, because I am spiritually dead, I won’t hear the call of God until He comes to get me through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. Scripture says we don’t seek Him, He sought us. At that point by faith I make a decision to trust Christ and receive His grace for salvation. Even though the math may not add up, God does 100% of the

work and I do 50%. He has made salvation possible without any thing on my part. According to James my faith is confirmed through my actions. My actions don't save me. My faith in what He has given by grace does. My actions demonstrate that a heart change has taken place by grace through faith.

And then we read in Romans 8:28-30 that the effectual call of God keeps us all the way to the end, to glorification or as Peter puts it we are "called to His eternal glory in Christ".

What that means is that when we by faith trust in Christ, we will share in His glory. It is not our own glory, it is His glory.

Let's say that a director or producer wins an award for best picture at some ceremony. All the cast will participate in the glory the director receives because they are in a sense 'in him' because they were part of the movie he produced.

Because we are in Christ, the glory that is His will be something that we will participate vicariously through Him.

We look up at a full moon and remark about how beautiful it is as it shines in the night sky. The splendor of the moon doesn't come from itself, it is from the sun. The moon only reflects the light of the sun.

So it is with us. We don't have our own glory, but will reflect the glory of Christ. But what we notice about this glory is that it is eternal. It will never end. It is infinite.

John Phillips writes "God's grace guarantees us a share in God's eternal glory."

All of this is made possible because God sees to it Himself. It's by His grace. What He gives us is permanent and eternal. The splendor of His glory is infinite.

We read next that God gives us aid in yet a third way through His grace.

### C. His Guarantee – Our Suffering is Impermanent

In Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, the master confectioner created the everlasting gobstopper, a piece of candy that is supposed to last forever. We know that's not possible. Besides, where's the fun in that.

The Ever Ready battery will eventually lose power.

One day while visiting my Dad Robyn went to what they call the Amish Wal-Mart in Fairview. Another patron showed her a kitchen knife. She said it would be the last knife she ever bought.

I doubt it.

Peter once more brings up the topic of suffering. It's a vein that has run deep throughout this letter. Here's the scoop he says on suffering. It won't last. It's only temporary. "after you have suffered a little while."

It doesn't seem like it's temporary when you are in the middle of the pain does it, but Peter assures us that it is going to pass.

When I had my gall bladder problems a number of years ago and I would get an attack, I would curl up in a fetal position on the floor waiting for what seemed like forever until the pain subsided. When the doctor wanted to confirm that it was the gall bladder he sent me to a clinic. They put me on a table and proceeded to tell me that they were going to inject this stuff in me that would trigger an attack. They said it would last about three minutes. Well, that was fun!! It seemed like forever.

Pain has a way of dulling our concept of time. We wonder if and when the difficulty we are going through will ever end. It seems like a long tunnel with no light at the end in sight.

I'm sure the Israelites after 400 years of slavery in Egypt never thought they would escape captivity, but have to endure the whip of task masters.

I wonder if Job thought his suffering would ever end as he sat on the town dump in sack cloth and ashes scraping his skin to try and relieve the physical agony from the boils that covered his body. The mental and physical anguish must have been intense after having lost everything.

In John Newton's timeless classic we come to understand just how amazing God's grace is not just to take a worm like me and save me, not just to give this blind man sight to see His salvation, but oh so much more.

Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come.  
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.

Be assured dear friends, that if you are going through some personal hardship, some suffering, some persecution that it won't last. It's temporary. Let God's grace comfort you and strengthen for in your suffering. It is sufficient for your need.

There is one final way in which we experience God's aid.

#### D. His Giving – It's Supply Is Intentional

Notice again from verse 10. "And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

There are four things that He gives to us. But before we get to them I want you to notice an important word. It's the word "Himself". Here's the thing and why it's important – God oversees this work in you Himself. It's His doing and like grace, these are His initiative to be of help to you.

Notice what He does for us in and because of the suffering we are going through. You may notice some overlap in meaning. They are closely related to each other. We might say that each word strengthens or supports the previous word.

Back in November I was biking on a Saturday for my work out. That particular day as I was watching the news there was a segment by the weather guy demonstrating an umbrella he designed and marketed. It withstands 55 mile an hour winds, not just gusts, but gale force winds. It has Teflon material that whisks the water away so that when you come in out of the rain it will be dry. It's vented to allow wind to pass through. The best feature is the structure. How many of you have been out in the rain and wind and had your umbrella pop up? This has a reinforced ribbing for maximum strength.

So what does God do through and after our trials?

#### 1. God shapes us

The NIV uses the word "restore" while the KJV uses the word "perfect". It's the idea of making complete. The word was used of the disciples in Matthew 4:21 sitting at the end of the day mending their nets.

Think about that in reference to your suffering. You can come out feeling like you just went 10 rounds with the heavy weight champion. You're bruised, battered, and bloody from the pummeling you just received from life. God takes you and restores you. Jesus tells the story about the guy left for dead along the road and a Good Samaritan came along and helped him, restored him.

James adds some perspective to the perfecting or completing process in James 1:2-4.

John Phillip again writes "As a tailor uses a needle to make way for the thread, so God uses suffering in

our lives to make way for the perfecting of our soul.”

If you are feeling all torn apart from suffering, let God be the one to put you back together. Let Him mend you. Let Him make you complete.

## 2. God strengthens us

The KJV uses the word “establish” where the NIV uses the term “to make you strong”. It’s used in Luke 9:51 of Jesus who was determined to go to Jerusalem knowing He would go to the cross. It’s a word that means to fix firmly or to set fast. You could say that God bolts us down to keep us from tipping over.

Some of you will remember that Weebles wobble but they won’t fall down.

I had a friend who lived in California. She said that they would have to attach book cases to the wall so that during an earthquake they wouldn’t fall over.

God strengthens you to keep you standing.

## 3. God secures us

Here, the KJV uses the word “strengthen”. It means to make sturdy. It’s like the support beams of a bridge or the pillars that hold up a large porch. We are secure when we rest on Him.

II Thessalonians 2:17 “May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.”

Isaiah 41:10 tells us there is nothing to fear because God strengthens us. Are you secure in Him in your time of suffering?

## 4. God settles us

This word means to lay a foundation. The strength of the building is in its foundation. It was used by Jesus in Matthew 7:24-27 when He told the story of the wise and foolish builders. One built his house on a solid foundation. The other built his house on sandy ground. Both experienced the same storms, but only the one on solid ground withstood the storm.

The question to ask yourself is this: on what type of foundation have you built your life? The storm will determine the kind of foundation you have built your life on. If you are buckling under the pressure of the storm you are in, it may be you are on the wrong foundation. The idea Peter conveys here is that the foundation God settles us on is immovable.

We sing this wonderful hymn:  
 The Lord’s our Rock, in Him we hide,  
 A Shelter in the time of storm;  
 Secure whatever ill betide,  
 A Shelter in the time of storm.  
*Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,  
 A weary land, a weary land;  
 Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,  
 A shelter in the time of storm.*

In your state of weariness from suffering is God you Rock and Shelter in the time of your storms?

God is our aid in persecution.  
 Let’s close with our attitude of praise.

## II. OUR ATTITUDE OF PRAISE – v. 11

As I said at the beginning of the message Peter begins and ends with praise. Verse 11 is considered a doxology of praise to God. It is His grace that will reverberate from our lips in praise for eternity. In this verse we find both our affirmation of who God is and our approval of what He has done.

### A. Our Affirmation Of God’s Worth

The word “power” or “dominion” speak of the authority and strength of God to rule. Everything, even our suffering, is under His control.

Psalm 8:3 speaks of all that is the heavens being work of His hands.

We have an amazing God, who has given to us His amazing grace.

The angels resonate His worth as they stand around His throne and respond “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being.” (Revelation 4:11)

Let me close with this poem from Spurgeon.  
 When storms of sorrow toss my soul;  
 When waves of care around me roll;  
 When comforts sink, when joys shall flee,  
 When hopeless griefs shall gape for me,  
 One word the tempest’s rage shall quell –  
 The word, Thy name, Immanuel.

After the defeat of the Egypt army, Moses led Israel in a song.

Exodus 15:11 “Who among the gods is like You, O Lord? Who is like you – majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?”

Peter acknowledges the powerful hand of God in everything, that He is the final authority over it, even our suffering, and in that acknowledgement offers an anthem of praise.

At the end of the day after Job had lost all his possessions and his 10 children he had this to say: “The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.” (Job 1:21)

In all that happens to us we need to affirm God’s worth, which then leads to our approval of God’s work.

## B. Our Approval Of God’s Work

It’s a simple closing. We say it at the end of saying our prayers. “Amen.” So be it or let it be so or we’re in agreement. There wasn’t anything else that Peter could say. It’s like putting an exclamation point at the end of a sentence for added emphasis.

Are you giving God the praise He is due even in the suffering? Through it He wants to make you perfect, establish, strengthen and settle you. What you are going through is only temporary. The glory that awaits you is eternal.