

### 3 Ways God Gives Grace to Keep Going

I woke in the middle of the night and the rawness of it all washed over me again. Our family faced a heart-breaking situation. I tried to fix it, but it seemed hopeless. I knew sleep would not come easily. I had no words left for prayer. I was prayed out.

Anxiety welled up and I reached for God. The Holy Spirit began to bring Scriptures to mind, so I began to “pray” them. Soon peace started to push out the anxiety until it was gone. Somewhere in the first chapter of 1 Peter I drifted off to sleep.

At the time, I was away from home staying with my oldest daughter. My grandson was just a few days old and I was helping out. The next morning, Kelley reported on how Micah slept the night before. Then almost as an afterthought she added, “The second time I came back to bed, Jeremy asked me to pray with him. He felt strongly we should pray for *you* right then.”

“What time was that?” I asked.

“It was about 3:15, 3:20,” Kelley replied.

That was the same time I lay awake in bed with anxiety threatening to take over. I know because I had looked at my phone. God did not fix the situation like I’d hoped, but He was not idle. He saw my need and He cared. He poured out His grace through the heart of my son-in-law and gave me the peace and strength to keep going.

Sometimes God intervenes in our trials in physical ways. He heals. He frees. He delivers. But He does not *always*. Often God works in far more miraculous ways. He pours out His grace to cover our soul needs.

God physically delivered the apostle Paul many times, like the release from prison shackles in Philippi. But it wasn’t those physical rescues Paul marveled over. No, Paul preached passionately about the lavish, unbounded grace of God poured out to sustain him in the midst of his trials.

Sometimes God allows struggles and difficulties to remain in our lives because He is using them to work out His spiritual and eternal purposes. He works in and through our trials to spiritually conform us to the image of Christ and to refine our faith and character.

Yet in the midst of those trials – while His “soul work” is being accomplished - God extends His grace to comfort, encourage, strengthen, and provide.

### 3 Ways God Extends Grace in Trials

1. **Presence** - God may not change our difficult circumstances, but He will be with us. He will draw us close to His side through the presence of His Spirit to

encourage, comfort, and console. He will ease our pain and grief through the fellowship of His people. He will even later use that experience to comfort others. Praise be to the God of all comfort! (See 2 Corinthians 1:3-7.)

2. **Power** – When we have no strength to go on, God has more than enough. Acknowledge your need to God and accept His strength. Allow Him to push out any pride and self-sufficiency and make room for the abundant flow of God's power. What we lack in our weakness, God will provide by His grace. (See 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.)
3. **Provision** – Even if God doesn't change our basic circumstances, He still meets our needs in the midst of them. Sometimes He makes physical provision. Sometimes He protects us from additional difficulty. But all the time, He is our Helper and Provider. (See 2 Corinthians 1:10-11.)

God may not always save the job, heal the illness, or calm the storm. But He will always give you an anchor of grace to hold you securely to the Solid Rock while the storm rages. God may not remove your difficult circumstances, but He will graciously give you everything you need to keep going.

*This post is adapted from Kathy Howard's new Bible study Lavish Grace: Poured Out, Poured Through, and Overflowing. Lavish Grace is a 9-week journey with the apostle Paul that helps readers discover God's abundant grace for their daily lives and relationships. You can find out more about Kathy, her speaking and writing, and find free resources at [www.KathyHoward.org](http://www.KathyHoward.org).*