

## 要知道神在基督里坚固我们的恩典——哥林多前书 1:4-9

# We Must Know the Confirming Grace of God We Have in Christ — 1 Corinthians 1:4-9

### *Introduction and Outline*

- Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:4–9; Romans 6:1–14  
**1 Corinthians 1:4–9** (NASB1995)  
4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- The Corinthian church had already received abundant grace from God, but they clearly did not realize that all they had was grace given by God. Instead, they took much pride in it and boasted about it! So Paul, right from the beginning, reminds them that every spiritual blessing they have received is purely the grace of God given to them in Christ.
- Whenever we forget this truth, all kinds of spiritual pride will arise, along with the many sinful behaviors that pride brings. That's why we must know that our spiritual life as Christians is entirely the free gift of God's grace in Christ.
- Outline:
  - Title: We Must Know the Confirming Grace of God We Have in Christ
  - 1. Give Thanks for the Corinthian Church?!(v4.a)
  - 2. Grace Confirmed (v4.b)
  - 3. Power Confirmed (v5, v7a)
  - 4. Testimony Confirmed (v6)
  - 5. Future Confirmed (v7b, v8)
  - 6. Source Confirmed (v9)

### **Give Thanks for the Corinthian Church?!(v4.a)**

- "I thank my God always concerning you": If God put us in the Corinthian church, we probably wouldn't be able to give any thanksgiving at all! This is the notoriously troubled Corinthian church, full of all kinds of serious spiritual problems. And yet, even with such a problematic church, Paul could still offer genuine thanksgiving for them. Why?

*“The heart that is grateful finds no reason for complaint; the heart that is ungrateful finds no reason for thanksgiving.”* — One pastor. Whether you’re a thanksgiving person does not depend on your circumstances, but on your heart — whether you have a grateful heart.

The thanksgiving of non-believers is not addressed to the right recipient. They do not thank the One who gave His life so they might be saved from sin — the One who is worthy of their lifelong worship and service. But Paul’s thanksgiving always had a definite recipient: “I thank my God!”

And yet, what we often see in the lives of believers is not thanksgiving, but complaint. Thanksgiving needs to be cultivated: 1). We must learn to find God’s grace in everything according to Scripture. 2). Once we’ve found grace, we must respond with a thanksgiving prayer, expressing it explicitly to God.

**Psalm 33:5, 119:64** “The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD...The earth is full of Your lovingkindness, O LORD.”

*“A fly flew over the desert and found a corpse; a bee flew over the same desert and found a flower. That’s because the fly was looking for a corpse, while the bee was looking for a flower!”* — One pastor

## **Grace Confirmed (v4.b)**

- “Because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus”: What Paul is thankful for is the grace that is unique to believers (such as repentance and faith in Christ, forgiveness of sins, acceptance by God, being used by God, future resurrection and eternal life...), rather than the common grace that God gives to all people (such as food and clothing, a beating heart, and breath in the lung...).

**【Definition】** Grace is freely given benefit. It’s not earned — it’s received.

**【Consideration】** True grace cannot coexist with three things: 1. Guilt, 2. Obligation 3. Pride.

**【Discernment】** In real life, some people do all kinds of good deeds out of a deep sense of guilt; others, when they see even the slightest fault in someone else, immediately blow it out of proportion and harshly criticize; still others always treat salvation as a heavy moral obligation, something they must spend their whole lives trying to pay back...

**【Application】** Our response to God must not be an attempt to make up for guilt, nor repayment out of a sense of obligation, nor boasting out of pride. It must be a free offering out of gratitude. You remove the impurities of guilt, obligation, and pride, and what you have left is the pure and undefiled grace of God. When we know grace in such a way, we too, like Paul, can offer sincere thanksgiving even in a disappointing church like the one in Corinth.

## **Power Confirmed (v5, v7a)**

- “that in everything you were enriched” : the “that” indicates a logical connection to the previous verse: it is by God’s grace that you were enriched in everything.
- “In all speech and all knowledge... not lacking in any gift” : speech, knowledge, and spiritual gifts: these are abilities to be used in serving God, and they are the “everything” in which the Corinthians were enriched. Clearly, this is not the kind of enrichment that the world seeks.

【Application】 We don’t need to envy the believers in Corinth — we have these things too! The ability to serve God is a grace given to every Christian. If you feel that what you have isn’t enough, it’s likely because you haven’t yet learned to use them by the Spirit!

## **Testimony Confirmed (v6)**

- “Even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you”: This basic meaning here is, “as you apparently have already believed in the gospel.” And it is precisely because of this fact that you now possess all speech, all knowledge, and all spiritual gifts so that you may bear witness for Him.

**1 John 5:11** *"And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."* When you truly believe this testimony, it means the Holy Spirit has established the testimony of Christ firmly in your heart.

【Application】 Is there a confirmed testimony in your heart? Not just curiosity, not just the absence of rejection, but a firm conviction. Many people have heard the gospel message over and over and, outwardly, they may seem polite and welcoming, but inwardly, they have not truly been persuaded. There are always seekers in the church who are “half-believing and half-doubting”; the gospel has not yet been confirmed in their hearts.

【Theology】 Every believer has a moment in their life when the Holy Spirit confirms this message in their heart. This is the moment of regeneration when we are saved.

【Logic】 Paul says, if you already have this confirmed faith—in other words, if you are a true Christian—then you have already received from God all speech, all knowledge, and all spiritual gifts.

【Question】 But this seems very different from our real experience, doesn’t it? When we try to share the gospel and don’t know how to open our mouths, where is the “all speech”? When others ask questions and we don’t know how to answer, where is the “all knowledge”?

【Answer】 That’s because we don’t practice enough. We don’t fully trust that God has given us all speech for the gospel, so we don’t even want to give it a try. The less we practice, the less we’ll know if we truly have all the speech that God has given us.

【Analogy】 A person may have excellent musical talent, but if he never practices, he'll never become a true musician. It is the same with serving God — He has already given us all speech and all speech, but if we do not practice, we will never be truly useful to God.

### **Future Confirmed (v7b, v8)**

- "He will also confirm you to the end": Because of God's grace, the believers in the Corinthian church have a very firm and clear hope for the future.
- "Blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ": Your thoughts, character, speech, and actions will be completely holy, without any stain of sin.

### **Source Confirmed (v9)**

- "God is faithful...": If we only look at the current state of the Corinthian church, we would find no reason to have any optimistic expectation about their future. But Paul does not only see the present condition of the church — he sees the faithful God who has called the church into being. Therefore, he has great hope for the church's future and is able to offer genuine thanksgiving for them.

【Application】 How should we practice thanksgiving? The insight we can learn here is: we must focus our eyes more on God than on people, because God is always faithful and trustworthy.

### **Summary**

Can you see these realities in **our church**? Can you offer the same kind of thanksgiving for the **brothers and sisters around you**?