

## Paul's Thorn in the Flesh

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

June 26, 2022

*And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was **given** to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be **exalted** above measure.<sup>8</sup> Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.<sup>9</sup> And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.<sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10**

To have luck, chance or fate is to deny the sovereignty of God, so we must know that whatever is happening in our life, God is in control.

### Why the struggles?

Personal sin.

**Life and the sin of those around us.**

**Disciplining and strengthening us.**

**Keep us from sinning.**

God is more "concerned" about our holiness than He is our happiness!

Paul had a thorn and asked that it be taken away, instead God used it.

Nowhere in Scripture do we see where Christ followers "had it easy" or were promised an easy life. In fact, what we see promised is that we will have trouble, but God would be with us.

If the easy life was the mark of a believer, God sure did hate Paul.

### In our passage today the "struggle" was to keep Paul from sinning!

Pride (selfishness) can be traced back to every area of sin in our life. Sin has to do with what WE want.

Paul's "thorn" was there to keep him from sinning, of becoming prideful.

**Thorn** – in the Greek it is *skolops* which literally means splinter. Ever had a splinter? If it's not taken care of it is painful and something so small can cause so much discomfort.

**"Given me"** – Paul eventually saw it as a gift.

### Where Satan gifted it (the thorn), God used it.

**A messenger of Satan** – "God gave Paul a thorn and let the devil deliver it." **Tony Evans**

It was eventually considered a "gift" by Paul. It was from the Lord but delivered by Satan. Remember Job? The Lord says to the enemy, "*Have you considered my servant Job?*"

Whatever we are dealing with as God's children, it must pass thru His hand. I'm reminded of Genesis 50:20, *"What you meant for evil God used for good."*

**God's grace is sufficient in all.**

Paul's thorn caused Him to depend and lean on the Lord, each day it was a reminder of his depravity and His constant need of Jesus.

Ever been to the Dr. and they had to inflict pain in order for you to get better (shot, meds, chemo, etc.)?

The Lord tells Paul that His grace is sufficient.

**Prayer Focus:**

**What thorn(s) are in your life?**

**Have you asked God to remove them?**

**Maybe instead of removing them He wants to use them, for you to depend on Him!**