

Thanks For The Thorn

*"But he 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."*

2 Corinthians 12:9

When we consider the varieties of difficulties in life we are right to resist their presence in our lives. It is appropriate to seek an easy road to travel on as we make our way to the city of God. But life has a way of giving us what Paul calls a "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7). A physical limitation is what the apostle refers to using the metaphor "thorn".

We all know the story of Paul's thorn and how he had three distinct and special times of prayer to the Lord asking for the removal of the thorn. Wisely Paul does not tell us what the thorn was so anyone who is restricted physically in any manner can readily identify with the apostle.

When Paul had concluded his times of prayer regarding the problem, he sensed that the Lord was telling him something profound. Because of his special privileges, Paul was given the

thorn to humble him. Also, he was now able to demonstrate that God's grace is always greater than our need.

Many of us who have had health issues can minister more effectively into the lives of sick people because we can relate how the Lord helped us through our trial. We have found God's grace sufficient and are living proof of what we seek to teach people in pain.

However, there is a learning curve that we must go through. First we seek to have the problem taken away by the Lord. We may fast and pray, we may ask others to help us by praying with us about the issue. Gradually we find that the problem has taken up permanent residence with us, and so we turn from prayer for removal to prayer for grace.

Then we finally arrive at the place where we find

God's amazing grace such a pleasure to have that we begin to thank the Lord for the thorn. There develops a special spiritual intimacy with the Lord that is a taste of heaven itself. We come to understand that our walk with the Lord is richer than when we felt little need of Him with us because of how independent we are.

So, with Paul, we arrive at the place where we say, "Thanks for the thorn." Have you come to see how blessed you are because of your thorn? Are you just arriving at that station in life as your prayers are turning from asking for removal to seeking the amazing grace? Today take your thorn to the Lord in prayer and thank him for it. He is waiting to hear from you. Come and come now.

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