

THORN IN THE FLESH

2 Corinthians 12:6-10

2 Cor 12:6 *For though I would desire to glory,* If I were to desire to brag/boast about this supernatural experience I would be a fool.

I will say the truth: I will tell it like it is

I forbear, resist temptation to do so

Lest any man ... I am a human just like you. I struggle with same struggles as you.

2 Cor 12:7 God concerned that I become puffed up & too elated because of awesomeness of these revelations. Therefore --thorn

Thorn: point or prickle (something to cause bodily annoyance or disability):

Messenger of Satan ... errand-boy, emissary, carrier from Satan

To buffet me: beat me up; knock me around with the fist. Idea of causing shame & humiliation & indignation on part of sufferer.

Lest I should be exalted above measure. In case I might have a tendency to become haughty & caught up with how great I am. 1. Spiritual attacks 2. Persecution 3. Physical or mental Gal 4:13; 6:11; 2 Th 3:17

2 Cor 12:8 ... *besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.* Urgently petitioned & begged Lord 3 times

Affliction can be a treasure. Absolutely functional, it triggers life's greatest insights and accomplishments. Fred Greve

Often the same thing that makes one person bitter makes another better.

The same sun melts ice and hardens clay.

God will take care of what you go through; you take care of how you go through it.

There are two ways we can meet difficulty: either we can alter the difficulty or we can alter ourselves to meet it.

Nothing shows more accurately what we are than the way we meet trials and difficulties.

Many people want to go to the promised land without going through the wilderness.

Interesting to note: God did answer Paul's prayer. Even though it was not according to Paul's request.

2 Cor 12:9 *My grace is sufficient for thee:* My power & energy to do will of God is all you need...

Grace: energizing power & supernatural desire to do will of God. James 4:6

God allows infirmity in flesh

1. Humble us
2. Give more grace
3. Have more power

for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Experience the totality of my grace if & when humbled before God.

Perfect: complete, accomplish, consummate, finish, fulfil,

Strength:.. miraculous power , ability, abundance, might, power, mighty (wonderful) work.

Weakness: feebleness , frailty: disease, infirmity, sickness

Barnett: *The grace and power of God interlock with human lives at the point of mortal weakness.*

Hughes: *Indeed, the abject weakness of the human instrument serves to magnify and throw into relief the perfection of the divine power in a way that any suggestion of human adequacy could never do. The greater the servant's weakness, the more conspicuous is the power of his Master's all-sufficient grace.*

Most gladly therefore will I rather glory ... I choose to boast concerning weaknesses that I have been experiencing--so that God's supernatural, explosive, effective, mighty miracle-working power might overshadow everything I am & everything I do.

will I rather glory in my infirmities I am going to show recognition to my weaknesses as the very reason God is blessing my ministry & life so much.

that the power of Christ may rest upon me: Tent upon me. Reference to the Shechinah glory of God in the OT (Ex.40:34).

2 Cor 12:10 Take pleasure: Think well of; approve of; think very highly of

In While I am experiencing

Infirmities: Sickneses, maladies, infirmities

Reproaches: insult, injury. harm, hurt, reproach.

Necessities: distressing things; needs not being met

Persecutions: Torments & tortures at the hands of others

Distresses: Anguish, backed into a corner; Times when caused strain and anxiety.

for when I am weak, then am I strong. The less I have, the more I depend on Him.

God's attitude about suffering **James 1:2-4** ...*But let (allow) patience (endurance) have her perfect work* (her complete and effective results)

that ye may be perfect (so that you might be completely & effectively brought to a place of maturity) *and entire* (fully developed), *wanting nothing* (lacking nothing, complete).