

“God’s Grace Is Sufficient!”

Paul’s qualifications

2 Corinthians 12:1-6

- Physical
- Experiential
- Supernatural

What Paul learned . . .

- “Don’t see me! See Jesus!”
- Being “weak” for this purpose is a good thing!

A Thorn in the Flesh

- A “thorn” – something sharp and painful sticking deeply in the flesh so that it remains there and can’t be pulled out.
- The man to whom God granted an actual visit to Heaven is the man to whom God gave a messenger of Satan to “fisticuff” him again and again.
- How is this even possible?
- *“Every now and then there comes a frightful attack. Each is inhuman, is like an implacable demon who beats a defenseless mortal to pieces with hellish glee.”* Lenski

What was the Thorn in the Flesh?

2 Corinthians 12:7

- Satanic suggestions: blasphemous thoughts, issues of conscience, sexual temptations
- A persistent and vicious opponent
- A diseased condition

Paul describes why the Lord allows this

- That I might not think too highly of myself – to keep me from being conceited (2x)
- That I might always be kept in deepest humility.
- The more divine his work was, the more necessary for him was the complete realization of utter dependence on the Lord.

“My grace is sufficient for you.”

2 Corinthians 12:8-10

- Three times I urged the Lord that it might permanently go away from me.
- “He has told me” – once God’s answer is heard, it is forever in our ears – “my grace is sufficient.”
- The Lord’s undeserved grace toward a sinner who deserves the opposite – even one who has seen heaven
- This grace will not abandon Paul, it is mightier than any thorn, any messenger of Satan.
- It was the Lord’s way of leading Paul to total weakness and dependence, Making sure people saw Jesus, not Paul

For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:10