

transforming
GRACE

**WHAT IS THE ONE THING
IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU THINK,
“IF GOD WOULD JUST TAKE
THIS AWAY, I’D BE OKAY”?**

- physical limitation or a health issue
- relationship
- regret from your past

2 CORINTHIANS 12:1-10

GRACE IN OUR WEAKNESS

Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" that he wanted removed, but God chose not to remove it, to display His grace and strength.



2 CORINTHIANS 12:1

I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.

Paul had a rocky relationship
with the church in the
city of Corinth and
was having to defend
his apostleship.

**PAUL KEEPS POINTING TO
HIS SUFFERING AND
WEAKNESS AS PROOF
OF THE MINISTRY
GOD GAVE HIM**



2 CORINTHIANS 12:2-4

² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows.

³ And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—

⁴ was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell.

WHAT IS THE THIRD HEAVEN?

first heaven:

sky and atmosphere

second heaven:

sun, moon, and stars

third heaven:

dwelling place of God



Pictured: Hydrus Constellation
located 200,000 light years away

Paul doesn't defend his apostleship by pointing to this incredible experience.

**INSTEAD, HE POINTS TO
HIS WEAKNESS AND
THE STRENGTH
OF CHRIST JESUS**



2 CORINTHIANS 12:5-7

⁵ I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses.

⁶ Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, ⁷ or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.



WHAT IS THIS "THORN IN THE FLESH"?

Physical, psychological, ongoing temptation
or personal struggle, relationships and opposition?

We don't know! The Bible is vague because
if we knew **exactly** what Paul's thorn in the flesh was,
we might be tempted to compare or dismiss it.

The intention of Satan was to harm Paul,
but God was using the same circumstance
to accomplish His good purpose in Paul

HUMILITY

DEPENDENCE

DEEP EXPERIENCE OF GRACE



2 CORINTHIANS 12:8

⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

In whatever weakness, hardship, suffering, or limitation you may be facing, His grace is sufficient.

In your weakness, His power and strength will be displayed.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9-10

⁹ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

WHAT IS THE ONE THING YOU WISH GOD WOULD REMOVE?

Pray to God to remove it,
but if he doesn't, know and trust that
His grace is enough.

When you are weak in yourself,
you are strong in the Lord.