

Title: **“My strength is made perfect in weakness”**

Text: **2 Corinthians 12:1-10**

INTRODUCTION

1. The outstanding Apostle Paul

- a) In Faith
- b) In Life
- c) In Ministry
- d) In accomplishments

2. The Apostle Paul was a wonderful:

- a) Example
- b) Inspiration

¹ *“It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord:*

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

³ *And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—*

⁴ *how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

⁵ *Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities.*

⁶ *For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.” 2 Corinthians 12:1-6*

A DIFFICULT LESSON: A THORN IN THE FLESH

“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.” 2 Corinthians 12:7

1. The problem identified

- a) A thorn in the flesh was given
- b) A messenger of Satan was sent to buffet Paul

2. The problem understood

- a) To keep Paul humble
- b) To prevent him from being overly exalted (in his own mind/ heart)

SEEKING AN ANSWER FROM GOD

“Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.” 2 Corinthians 12:8

1. Answer sought in Prayer

2. Answer sought in Pleading

3. Answer desired:

To see the thorn in the flesh removed!

A PROFOUND ANSWER FROM THE LORD

“And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ ” 2 Corinthians 12:9a

1. God’s offer of Grace

2. God’s promise of Strength

3. The Problem of the thorn in the flesh will remain!

PAUL'S RESPONSE TO THE LORD

^{9b} *“Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

¹⁰ *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 12:9b-10*

1. Glad acceptance of God's Answer

- a) Most gladly
- b) I will boast
 - i) In my infirmities
 - ii) In reproaches
 - iii) In needs
 - iv) In persecutions
 - v) In distresses
- c) For the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ

2. Profound comprehension of the Paradox of Strength

- a) Deep understanding
- b) Deep wisdom
- c) Deep faith

“For when I am weak, then I am strong” 2 Corinthians 12:10b

CONCLUSION

1. The Future that lies ahead

- a) The Evil One may attack
- b) A thorn in the flesh may not be removed
- c) We may have to bear with suffering

2. The Faith that we must Sustain:

- a) In the Presence of God
- b) In the Provision of God
- c) In the Power of God
- d) In the Protection of God
- e) In the Promises of God

Let us believe that God's grace is sufficient for us and that His strength is made perfect in weakness.