



Making Concessions in Life

2Corinthians 12:7-10



Observations

- I have learned, over the years, that the Christian life is a life of
 - Hoping
 - Hurting
 - Trying
 - Failing

Wanting, but not receiving

- There is really no guarantee that, even when God hears our requests, they will be granted
- Sometimes children of God don't get what they want



The Question in This Lesson Is:

- When we as Christians don't get what we believe we need, how do we respond?
- If a specific request we have prayed to God about doesn't happen, or the deadline passes, or we don't do well on an exam we've been getting ready for, how do we react?
- If God says to you, "I've given you my grace and that's enough," will we be satisfied?




From God's Perspective, His Grace is Enough

- **Question: If God didn't do any more for us from here on out, but saves us from hell, could we complain?**

But God Has Not Left Us With Just Salvation

- **Do you realize that if you own your own car right now, you are richer than 95% of the world's population (let alone you can hear, see, walk, and think)?**



Remember What Job Told His Wife, Job 2:9-10 NIV

“His wife said to him, “are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!”

He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we except good from God and not trouble?”

In all this Job did not sin in what he said.

The weather changes on EVERYBODY!



Observations About Paul

- ▶ Paul had to wrestle with the question, *Is God still a good God if I am stuck with a problem that He won't handle?*

Paul Wrote About His Thorn in the Flesh

- ▶ This was more than the usual annoyances of life
- ▶ This was more than a bad day at the office
- ▶ This thorn is more like some circumstance that you didn't ask for
- ▶ This is something you pray about, and God gives you grace to keep on going such that God will be glorified



Our Son's Birth With Special Needs Has Been Somewhat Like That

- ▶ **In 1988 when we were told that there may be a problem with our son, I PRAYED FOR A CHANGE!**
 - ▶ **Maybe it was a mix-up**
 - ▶ **Wrong test paper**
 - ▶ **Wrong genetic sampling**


**But We Got The Same Answer
Paul Did:**

Rely On God's Sustaining Grace!



We Aren't Told What Paul's Thorn Was!

- **But every time he had a private thought**
- **But every time he went to a new town and met new people**
- **But every time he walked or tried to write a letter that physical issue was ever-present (that look people give you when they notice something is not standard about you)**



The Thorn Obviously Troubled Paul's Heart and Became a Matter of Intense Prayer

Three Times He Pleaded With the Lord To Take It Away!

- **This was no recitation of the Lord's prayer**
- **I'm sure Paul matched the intensity of his pain with the intensity of his prayer**
- **No doubt, this reminded the Lord of the three times He Himself prayed asking the Lord to remove His cup of suffering**



Sometimes You Can't Articulate Grace Until You Appreciate Grace!

- Paul was put in a position to understand the “worth Of Grace.”
- If God had removed the thorn, Paul may never have embraced the grace of Christ
- Paul did not get the answer he wanted, but the one God new was best

“My grace is sufficient for you; for my power is made perfect in weakness.”
- Paul, “I will supply the strength, courage, and my presence that you need with the problem you have.”



Healing Grace May Be What We Want, But Sustaining Grace is Sometimes What We Need!

- ▶ Why doesn't He remove all of our thorns?
Perhaps He wants us to lean on *His* grace and not *our* strength
- ▶ Why does He sometimes not remove the enemies we have from our lives?
Perhaps He wants *us* to love like *He* loves
- ▶ Why doesn't He erase our physical flaws?
Perhaps He wants us to know we are loved *in spite of them*

Observations

- Why doesn't God make us all gifted singers, and gifted speakers?

Perhaps He wants to remind us that the power is in the *message* and not the *messenger*

- Why would God allow some of His children to endure life with a painful circumstance?
- Paul gives his answer in 2 Corinthians 12:7

“Lest I should be exalted above measure (to keep him from becoming conceited) through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh...”



Of All The Sins God Hates, Pride Has To Be Near The Top Of The List!

- One who thinks that they are better than others, communicates self-sufficiency and lack of dependency
- A man once said , *“We don’t know all about God’s providence with the thorns we have, but we do know that God prefers an occasional limp versus a perpetual strut.”*



The Plan Of Salvation

Hear the Gospel	Acts 15:7
Believe the Gospel	Acts 15:7
Repent Of Sins	Acts 17:30
Confess Christ	Acts 8:37
Be Baptized	Acts 8:38