

Advancing Through Adversity

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NASB)

⁷ “Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!

⁸ Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.

⁹ And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

¹⁰ Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Most likely, you do not enjoy your areas of weakness. Most of us tend to be problem solvers; often when we identify a deficiency in our life, we stop at nothing to correct the issue.

Our drive to be the best—or, at the very least, “normal”—generally leads us headlong down the path of self-sufficiency. After all, doesn't the Lord want us to solve the problems we encounter?

While it is true that through God, dramatic changes can occur in the lives of His children, we ourselves must not take credit for the power to change. Our own strength is weak and faulty. [John 15:5](#) says “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.” The strength of God is limitless. (See [Philippians 4:13](#).)

Philippians 4:13 (NASB)

¹³ “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

Paul captures this image perfectly in [2 Corinthians 4:7](#), when he says, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.”

We can trust this statement because of the apostle Paul's credentials in adversity: He had been imprisoned, beaten, shipwrecked, and persecuted. Moreover, he struggled continually with a personal ailment, which he referred to as his “thorn in the flesh” ([2 Corinthians 12:7](#)).

2 Corinthians 12:7 (NASB)

⁷ “Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!”

The Lord used these things in Paul's life to keep him centered on divine power, not his own. Pride puts us in opposition to God. What weaknesses are present in your life that the Father may be using to keep your eyes on Him? Praise God today for those things that bring you into complete dependence upon Him alone.