

The Lord's Grace is Sufficient for You

2 Cor. 12:1-10

"...the thorn hurts. It is a constant trial, and it is ever obtrusive. It is always there; it is a reminder. It is a nuisance. Paul even says, '...to torment me' (2 Cor. 12:7). You may say, 'God, that's not very nice.' But to quote F.F. Bruce..., it is to give Paul 's pride a knockout blow. It keeps one's feet on the ground. It keeps me from thinking that I have arrived, that I am good enough, that I am worthy. It hurts so that I might be driven to love more. It is obtrusive so that I might develop empathy and won't be judgmental. Are you, like me, one of those who can hardly keep from pointing the finger? God has a way of sending a thorn in the flesh. It's obtrusive, just to make you aware of it all the time. It's a reminder of your sin. It's a nuisance that produces humility." R.T. Kendall

- I. Pride is a powerful enemy of the cross. It is what got Satan thrown out of heaven and it is what Satan uses to his advantage to undermine the ministry of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. He loves to destroy familial bonds, interpersonal relationships, marriages, ministries and the necessity of the body of Christ through deceptive and insidious pride. It is the one enemy we need to be very wary of so that we keep ourselves humble, effective and productive in grace of Christ.

2 Cor. 12:1-6

1 Cor. 2:12-13

"The highest lesson a believer has to learn is humility. Oh, that every Christian who seeks to advance in holiness may remember that well! Andrew Murray

Philippians 2:5-8 *5In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death- even death on a cross!*

- II. A thorn is anything God allows in our life, be it a weakness, insult, hardship, persecution or difficulty, which rids us of our pride. His will is to produce in us a humble dependence upon His grace to give us what we need to deal with whatever difficult circumstances we might be going through.

2 Cor. 12:7-9a

Jn. 1:16

James 1:2-4

Heb. 12:7-13

James 4:5-6 *5 Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? 6 But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."*

"Some of us are so busy telling God what He ought to do about our situation that we are incapable of hearing what He wants to do and say to us! We are so sure that the only thing to be done is to remove the problem altogether that we never give the Lord a moment to speak to our hearts about His alternative." Redpath

- III. Christ's power never rests on the proud but only on those who have been refined by the trials he has brought into our lives to conform us more and more into his likeness. He desires to express the power of his grace through the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control of humble believers who choose to esteem others above themselves. It's the kind of power that enables us to store up for ourselves treasures in heaven.

2 Cor. 12:9b-10

Gal. 5:22-26

Phil. 3:7-8

Phil. 4:12-13

1 Pe. 5:5b-10

Phil. 2:3 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,*