

L28: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 - Paul's Pleasure in Infirmities

Sermon Intro: Review/Summarize

- Pauline pattern of following the gentleness and meekness of Christ
- Gentleness and meekness in the face of an onslaught of offenses toward Paul
- Paul's gentle, meek boasting

Sermon Preview:

- Paul continues to manifest the importance and power of God's grace taught to him for the Corinthians edification
- Paul's Supplication
- Christ's Answer - Sufficiency of God's Grace
 - Unanswered Prayer is to teach us
- Paul's Lesson Learned - Pleasure in Infirmities

Sermon:

(2 Corinthians 12:7)

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

- **"And lest I should be exalted above measure"**
 - The Corinthians false apostles commended themselves, they exalted themselves
 - God allowed Paul to have a thorn in the flesh that wouldn't provide Paul to be exalted above measure.
 - **"measure"** - 2 Cor. 10:13
- **"through the abundance of the revelations"**
 - **"visions and revelations"** - plural
 - What Paul saw and what Paul heard and understood
- **"there was given to me a thorn in the flesh"**
 - **"given"** - Romans 8 - freely given all things (spared not)

- Philippians 1
- Job
- **"thorn"**
 - Nm. 33:55; Josh. 23:13; Judg. 2:3 - Israel's enemies
 - Gen. 3:18 - curse (crown of thorns)
 - Isa. 10:17, 27:4, 33:12 - to be burned
 - Eze. 2:6 - speaking thorns (do not be afraid of words and looks)
 - Matt. 7:16 - fruit of the prophet
 - Matt. 13:7, 22 (Luk. 8:14) - choke fruit
- **"in the flesh"**
 - Experiencing it while in this mortal body and influencing his life
- **"the messenger of Satan to buffet me."**
 - Heb. 1:5-7, 13-14
 - Ministers of God, ministers a flame of fire
 - Sent with messages
 - **"messenger"** - 2 Cor. 11:13-15
 - Ministers of righteousness but really ministers of unrighteousness
 - Influenced by Satan, Satan's angels
 - Thorny works
 - **"buffet"**
 - Beat, contend, to strike
 - 2 Cor. 10:1ff
- **"lest I should be exalted above measure"**
 - 1 Timothy 3:6 - "not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."
 - God can use the prideful devil to humble you and humiliating for the devil.

(2 Corinthians 12:8)

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

- **"For this thing"** - thorn in the flesh, messenger of Satan for his buffet
- **"I besought the Lord thrice"** - three times
- **"that it might depart from me."**

- Matt. 26:44
- Mark. 14:41
 - :38 - flesh is weak
 - Heb. 2:9-10, 18, 5:6-14
 - "teach"
- The same response the Father had to the Son, so does the Lord to Paul and to us
 - "spare us not"

(2 Corinthians 12:9)

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

- **"And he said unto me,"** - the Lord taught
- **"My grace is sufficient for thee:"**
 - 2 Cor. 9:8
 - "sufficient" - enough, equal to the end proposed, adequate, competent, fit, able, suitable
 - Christ's grace is power for and against the messenger of Satan, the buffeting, the thorn in the flesh
 - Christ's grace provides for this thing to be a good work that abounds and actually manifests God's might and power.
 - Col. 1
- **"for my strength is made perfect in weakness."**
 - **"for my strength"** - a measure and a great measure of your conformity to His image; His sufficient grace
 - **"made perfect"** - finished, complete, not defective, fully manifest, competency - nothing wanting
 - There isn't one area in which God's grace doesn't reach and this is manifest when suffering happens
 - "in weakness." - outward appearance weakness is when and where His strength is made perfect not in getting the results but how you suffer those things with what outlook, with what attitude, with what care
 - Does the cares of the world choke how you suffer or do you see the glory?

- **"Most gladly therefore"**
 - Paul's abundantly glad conclusion
 - Does this make you glad that you will have to suffer?
 - Our wants or His image?
 - Our health, wealth, and prosperity or knowing Christ - knowing suffering plays a major role in your sanctification, in your edification, in your conformity to His image.

- **"will I rather glory in infirmities"**
 - **"infirmities"** - any place in which he isn't firm, any place where he is "in" "firm" any outward, compared to the world's standard infirmity.
 - Romans 5

- **"that the power of Christ may rest upon me."**
 - The sufficient grace strength to handle the suffering in a Christ-like manner.
 - 1 Peter 4:12-14
 - Servant isn't above his master
 - Good works
 - Suffer

(2 Corinthians 12:10)

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- "Therefore" - conclusion

- "I take pleasure" - gratification of the doctrine upon the mind, that which is agreeable to Christ with excitement produced by enjoyment or the expectation of good while in the pain.

- The suffering doesn't rob him, but rather he takes something from it - he takes from it its sting, its blow, its power, its adverse effects and in turn he has pleasure.
 - The very thing you are not to have in suffering is pleasure is where Paul takes pleasure.

- **"in infirmities"**
 - **"in reproaches"**
 - **"in necessities"**
 - **"in persecutions"**
 - **"in distresses"**

- No simply "infirmities", but all that comes upon him or faces and deals with. (2 Cor. 11:23-33)
- Paul isn't simply suffering for Christ's sake, but is taking pleasure in them for Christ's sake.
- Paul does not find pleasure from the suffering, but rather in suffering he takes pleasure because of the manifestation of Christ's strength.
 - Strength, spirituality isn't in the visions, dreams, miracles, signs, wonders, material blessings for you cannot receive one ounce of His strength in and by those things.
 - All of them today after Paul are illegitimate as if it were from God if it isn't self-deception, it is Satan's beguiling.
 - God receives glory in you putting on display His strength in weakness, in fact, it is excellently glorious.
 - Of course we abhor suffering that others go through and we cleave to good, we provide for their necessity, but to teach God's strength and glory is manifest in providing for all their needs and wants is contrary to His operation of perfecting His strength in the saints today.
 - In conclusion, Paul would be robbing them if he so gloried in his revelations for visions and revelations sake - thus why he was not allowed to and by not being allowed to learn a fundamental lesson as a son and daughter of God to shield and always deliver and so spoil the son and daughter wouldn't be provide true conformity to His whole image.
- Philippians 3:9-12

Sermon Conclusion: Review/Summarize