

# GOD WILL NEVER GIVE YOU MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE

## The Bible Doesn't Say That: Part 1

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*"We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. ...But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead." (2 Corinthians 1:8–9, NIV)*

*<sup>7</sup> ...I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a THORN in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. <sup>8</sup> Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. <sup>9</sup> Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. <sup>10</sup> That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7–10 NLT)*

### What is a "THORN"?

**σκόλοψ:** Something pointed, sharp, as a stake, the point of a hook, a thorn, prickle. Something which causes severe pain or constant irritation. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)

### A CONSTANT IRRITATION THAT DOESN'T GO AWAY.

### What Was Paul's Thorn?

- VOCATIONAL (1 Co 9:11-14) *"is it too much to reap material things from you?...the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel"*
- FINANCIAL (Php 4:12) *"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want."*
- PHYSICAL (Ga 4:13-15) *"I was sick when I was with you...you would have taken out your own eyes"*
- EMOTIONAL (2 Co 1:8) *"we despaired of life itself"*
- RELATIONAL (2 Tim 4:14 | 2 Tim 1:15) *"Alexander, the metalworker, has hurt me in many ways..." | "everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me including Phygelus and Hermogenes."*

## HOW TO THRIVE WITH MY THORN

### 1. RECOGNIZE GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MY THORN.

*I was given a thorn...*

*"That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good. God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son..." (Romans 8:28–29, The Message)*

- GOD USES MY THORN TO DEVELOP ME.  
*to keep me from becoming proud*
- GOD USES MY THORN TO DIRECT ME.  
*Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away.*
- GOD USES MY THORN TO DEEPEN ME.  
*My grace is all you need.*

**THE WILL OF GOD WILL NEVER LEAD YOU  
WHERE THE GRACE OF GOD CANNOT SUSTAIN YOU.**

### 2. REJOICE IN GOD'S PROVISION FOR MY THORN.

*So now I am glad...*

*"We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation." (Romans 5:3–4, NLT)*

*"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:8, NIV84)*

### 3. RELY ON GOD'S POWER FOR ME.

*Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away*

*My power works best in weakness. So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me*

*For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

*"...vast crowds came to hear him preach and to be healed of their diseases. But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer." (Luke 5:15–16, NLT)*

4. RECYCLE GOD'S PRESERVATION.

*So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses...*

*"Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story..." (Psalm 107:2a, NIV)*

**NEXT STEPS**

**Healing for Hearts Seminar: Loss & Loneliness  
September 19<sup>th</sup> 9a - 3p**