

2 Corinthians 12:1-10 Strength in Weakness

V.7-8 2x Paul speaks of being exalted - heart of the issue: Poison of pride. The antidote? A needle.

Thorn for the Flesh: Greek- wooden stake. No idea what it was.

3 things to know about thorns:

1. **Gift:** v.7 **He saw it as a gift!** Only when we see pride as a terrible poison, can we see the remedy as a gift, even with the pain. **Purpose of Thorns:** drain the infection of pride.
2. **Grace:** V.8-9a thorns drive us to our knees in dependency. Romans 5-it's grace because of what thorns produce. Weakness is the secret to spiritual strength because it reveals grace. **Danger:** if I refuse to see thorns as grace, my only possible response will lead to anger or bitterness.
3. **Glory:** v. 9b-10 God's power being displayed through it. He did it through the weakness of the cross. With Joseph being sold into slavery. **The glory of God is the goal and humanity's greatest good** and it is especially attractive when revealed despite pain through thorns.

Grow Group Questions:

1. What do you think would be the problems caused if we placed emphasis on our "experiences" as a means of our authority or spiritual maturity?
2. Why is pride and self-sufficiency particularly detestable to God? Is it unfair that God would allow all kinds of negative things to "deflate" it?
3. What are my thorns? V. 9-10 explains what thorns can be: weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties. Weaknesses: when you are functioning less than optimal; they maybe physical or emotional. Hardships and difficulties: any situation you feel stuck in what was forced on you (not caused by your sin). Persecutions and insults: abuses due to your faith.
 - a. How have I reacted to them?
4. What will happen if I refuse to see my thorns as a gift or grace? What are the obstacles to seeing thorns as a gift?
5. **Bonus:** Why is making God's glory known so important to Paul?

Announcements 2/4:

- **FSY Bake Sale** - Today! Out in the Lobby
- **Worship Wednesday** - Feb. 7 - Potluck Dinner at 6pm, Worship at 7pm
- **Man Camp** - Feb 23-24 - more info and registration can be found at feathersoundchurch.com/mancamp
- **Family Camp 2024** - March 14-16 - Registration coming up soon!
- Kids Ministry and Nursery Teachers and Volunteers Needed! Contact Katie or sign up at feathersoundchurch.com/servekids
- **His Call International Night of Worship** - Feb. 16 at 6pm - Come expecting to encounter God!
- **Church Clean-Up Day** - Feb 17 From 9am to Noon. Come for an hour or the whole time!
- **Baptisms** - Feb. 18 during the 11am service. If you want to be baptized, sign up at feathersoundchurch.com/baptism