

When God Say's No

II Corinthians 12:1-10 This boasting will do no good, but I must go on. I will reluctantly tell about visions and revelations from the Lord. ² I^a was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. ³ Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know ⁴ that I was caught up^b to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.

⁵ That experience is worth boasting about, but I'm not going to do it. I will boast only about my weaknesses. ⁶ If I wanted to boast, I would be no fool in doing so, because I would be telling the truth. But I won't do it, because I don't want anyone to give me credit beyond what they can see in my life or hear in my message, ⁷ even though 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.

⁸ Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.

1. Acknowledge your struggle

⁷ even though 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.

2. Ask for help!

⁸ Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away.
Paul asked for change

Paul was not given a change of circumstances but a change of heart

3. Accept God's plan

vs⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

So he would be humble

II Cor 12:7c a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.

II Cor 1:⁸ We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters,^[a] 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. ⁹ Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that **we might not rely on ourselves but on God**, who raises the dead.

So he could reach people

Col 1:24 I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church.

Phil1:12-14 And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters,^[a] that everything that has happened to me here

has helped to spread the Good News. ¹³ For everyone here, including the whole palace guard,^[a] knows that I am in chains because of Christ. ¹⁴ And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers^[a] here have gained confidence and boldly speak God's message^[a] without fear.

II Cor 1:3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

So he would grow up

James 1:2 Dear brothers and sisters,^[a] when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

“What gives me the most hope every day is God's grace; knowing that his grace is going to give me the strength for whatever I face, knowing that nothing is a surprise to God.” [Rick Warren](#)