

Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10





Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

Introduction

**Why do bad things happen to
good people? That only happened
once and He volunteered.**

R.C. Sproul



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ
4. Intensify our reliance on the sufficiency of Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ
4. Intensify our reliance on the sufficiency of Christ
5. Increase our contentment in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ
4. Intensify our reliance on the sufficiency of Christ
5. Increase our contentment in Christ
6. Conform us to the image of Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

I. The Revelation (v. 1-6)

II Corinthians 12:1-2

“I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

I. The Revelation (v. 1-6)

II Corinthians 12:3-4

“And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—
whether in the body or out of the body I do not
know, God knows— and he heard things that cannot
be told, which man may not utter.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

I. The Revelation (v. 1-6)

We have no way to validate
anyone's claim to have been to
heaven or have received a revelation



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

I. The Revelation (v. 1-6)

II Corinthians 12:5-6

“On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses— though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

I. The Revelation (v. 1-6)

Paul doesn't want anyone to think more highly of him than what they see in his life and hear from his lips



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

I. The Revelation (v. 1-6)

When someone claims to have received a revelation, be like the Bereans and test every word against Scripture



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

I. The Revelation (v. 1-6)

- 1) God uses suffering to reveal our spiritual condition in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

II. The Reason (v. 7)

II Corinthians 12:7

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

II. The Reason (v. 7)

2) God uses suffering to increase
our humility in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

II. The Reason (v. 7)

Micah 6:8

“He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

“Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

“Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less”

“Humility is the foundation of all virtues”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

“Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less”

“Humility is the foundation of all virtues”

“True humility is simply agreeing with God”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

II. The Reason (v. 7)

What was Paul's "thorn in the flesh?"



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

II. The Reason (v. 7)

The truth is: we simply don't know the identity of Paul's thorn in the flesh



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

II. The Reason (v. 7)

Would God ever allow a demonic
attack against someone for a
purpose only known to Himself?



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

III. The Request (v. 8)



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

III. The Request (v. 8)

“Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

III. The Request (v. 8)

3) God uses suffering to deepen
our communion with Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

III. The Request (v. 8)

Trials can be God's way of showing us how much He desires to deepen

His communion with us



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

III. The Request (v. 8)

We, like Christ, should end our prayers with

“Yet not my will, but Yours be done.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

IV. The Response (v. 9a)



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

IV. The Response (v. 9a)

But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you,
for My power is made perfect in weakness.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

IV. The Response (v. 9a)

4) God uses suffering to intensify our reliance on the sufficiency of Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

IV. The Response (v. 9a)

How much better is it to have the grace of Christ be fully sufficient for you, than to simply have no thorn at all?



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

IV. The Response (v. 9a)

The idea of a pain-free existence
may exclusively be a Western idea





Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

V. The Resolution (v. 9b-10)



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

V. The Resolution (v. 9b-10)

“Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

V. The Resolution (v. 9b-10)

5) God uses suffering to increase
our contentment in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

V. The Resolution (v. 9b-10)

5) God uses suffering to increase
our contentment in Christ

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

1 Timothy 6:6



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

V. The Resolution (v. 9b-10)

Philippians 4:11b-13

“...for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

Conclusion



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

Conclusion

6) God uses suffering to conform us to the image of Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

Conclusion

6) God uses suffering to conform
us to the image of Christ

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.”

Romans 8:28-29a



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ
4. Intensify our reliance on the sufficiency of Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ
4. Intensify our reliance on the sufficiency of Christ
5. Increase our contentment in Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

God uses suffering to:

1. Reveal our spiritual condition in Christ
2. Increase our humility in Christ
3. Deepen our communion with Christ
4. Intensify our reliance on the sufficiency of Christ
5. Increase our contentment in Christ
6. Conform us to the image of Christ



Thankful for the Thorn

II Corinthians 12:1-10

Conclusion

My prayer is in any and all
circumstances that the power of
Christ may rest upon you