

# Thankful for the Thorn

by *Christine Wentzel*

"Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it [the thorn in his flesh] away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."  
2 Corinthians 12:7-9



This is my go-to section when I'm feeling low dealing with daily chronic pain for the past 40+ years. When I read this section I think of Paul's thorn, Jesus' crown of thorns, Jesus' cross, my cross ( Matthew 16:24) -it all harmonizes.

I am reminded the pain is there for a holy reason. If it serves no sanctified purpose then God is just an all-powerful bully and my faith in Him is false. But that would contradict everything His Spirit reveals to me through His Word, and every blessing so lovingly given to His adopted child.

Just like me, the Apostle Paul pleaded to be out of the pain. Just like me, he experienced frustration physically, emotionally and spiritually. Just like me, he thought the Lord's work would be better served without it. But God knew we were both wrong. Without the reminder of physical limits, without it reminding our weakness is Christ's strength, would we still focus on Jesus? Paul says it was to keep him from being conceited. I have said many times that if it weren't for my "thorn", I shudder to think where I'd be today.

Paul goes on, "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 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." 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

I marvel when I meet people like Paul. Christians who radiate the power of peace (and joy!) in the face of loss, life-threatening diseases, or persecution; It's impossible for me not to stand in awe watching the Light of Life blazing through the cracks made by their thorn. So if Christ can demonstrate His strength in my weakened flesh to reveal His face to someone in need, praise God!

At the end of the day I want to confess like Paul in Acts 20:24: 'However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me-the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.'

Heaven is my Home. Thank you Lord for gift of a thorn given at the precise time I need it to keep me on the narrow path that leads me there. Amen

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**Scripture References:** 2 Samuel 17:29; 2 Kings 4:10; Proverbs 31:20; Matthew 25:35; Romans 15:25; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 2 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 3:14; Hebrews 6:10

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