

July 28, 2022

The Lord wants you to experience real and abundant life:

2 Cor. 12:6-10 *Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 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. 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.* (NIV)

Here is a Biblical parallel that we can learn from: *what seems to be a weakness, can actually become the source of our strength.* Paul was stating that we all need to be learners. The first step in learning is *to admit you don't know everything.* **Pv. 12:1** *Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but whoever hates correction is stupid.* (NIV) All of us need to be humbled. Paul admitted that he needed to be kept from becoming conceited. We all have the tendency towards pride and conceit. The second step in learning is that *God teaches us in our weakness.* Paul was *made weak* to learn that he *was weak.* God shows us His strength in our weakness. When we recognize our own weakness, we gain His wisdom. We always have a choice. We can become bitter, or we can become better. Our thorns are His proving ground. How we respond to trials and adversity shows who is really in control. The final step of learning is to recognize that *the thorn still hurts.* The struggles or trials bring us to the end of our own strength and the beginning of His strength. **Heb. 12:11** *No disciple seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.* (NIV) Paul chose to trust in what the Lord was doing in his life so that His power would rest on him. Paul realized that the power of Christ trumps any power, anywhere at any time. We would be wise to do the same.

Dear LORD, help us to become better, not bitter. You are always at work in us. Your works are always perfect. Thank You for the work You continue to do in us. In Jesus Name, Amen