

“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.”

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Introduction

- We are born into, live and die, in a world filled with suffering
- We often experience physical, mental and emotional suffering
- As Christians, we also experience, to some degree, suffering for Christ's sake, persecution because of our faith in Him
- In the midst of our suffering, we often cry out to God for His help, for relief

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Introduction

- But, when God chooses not to remove our suffering, we may become weak in our faith or abandon it completely
- Paul too, in the midst of great suffering, asked God to remove his thorn in the flesh
- Instead of removing it, God gave Paul an answer that should encourage us, “My grace is sufficient for you for power is perfected in weakness.”

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What was Paul's thorn in the flesh and why was it given?

2Co 12:7 Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me--to keep me from exalting myself!

4

What was Paul's thorn in the flesh?

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Why was Paul's thorn in the flesh given to him?

2Co 12:7 Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me--to keep me from exalting myself!

6

God's purpose to humble Paul overruled Satan's purpose to torment and destroy him

Rom 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

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God's purpose to humble Paul overruled Satan's purpose to torment and destroy him

Rom 8:29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

Rom 8:30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

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Paul in Paradise had received inexpressible revelations from the Lord

2Co 12:1 Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2Co 12:2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago--whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows--such a man was caught up to the third heaven.

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Paul in Paradise had received inexpressible revelations from the Lord

2Co 12:3 And I know how such a man--whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows--

2Co 12:4 was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.

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Paul refused to reveal or boast in these revelations to keep men from exalting him

2Co 12:5 On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to *my* weaknesses.

2Co 12:6 For if I do wish to boast I will not be foolish, for I will be speaking the truth; but I refrain *from this*, so that no one will credit me with more than he sees *in* me or hears from me.

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Paul prayed three times for the Lord to remove the thorn

2Co 12:8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.

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God's answer, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

2Co 12:9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

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God's answer, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

1Co 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1Co 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

1Co 15:11 Whether then *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

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God's answer, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

2Co 4:6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

2Co 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;

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God's answer, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

2Co 4:8 *we are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;

2Co 4:9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

2Co 4:10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

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God's answer, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

2Co 4:11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

2Co 4:12 So death works in us, but life in you.

2Co 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

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God's answer, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

2Co 4:17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

2Co 4:18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

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Paul would gladly boast about and be content in his weaknesses for Christ's sake

2Co 12:9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

2Co 12:10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

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Paul would gladly boast about and be content in his weaknesses for Christ's sake

Php 4:10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.

Php 4:11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

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Paul would gladly boast about and be content in his weaknesses for Christ's sake

Php 4:12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

Php 4:13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

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His grace is sufficient for us even if our suffering must remain

1Pe 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to *your* elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

1Pe 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,

1Pe 5:7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

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His grace is sufficient for us even if our suffering must remain

1Pe 5:8 Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

1Pe 5:9 But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

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His grace is sufficient for us even if our suffering must remain

1Pe 5:10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you.

1Pe 5:11 To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.

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His grace is sufficient for us even if our suffering must remain

Rom 8:35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."

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His grace is sufficient for us even if our suffering must remain

Rom 8:37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

Rom 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

Rom 8:39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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