How Paul Dealt With His Thorn in the Flesh

Ken Chapman · 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

INTRODUCTION

- Life's like a rose in the sense that there's a lot of thorns as well.
- The fact that he simply left it in the most vaguest of terms and saying, I have a thorn in the flesh, you might be able to say, Yes, Paul, so do I.
- Don't trivialize, don't minimize what someone else is going through. Just because their suffering may be different than yours.

1 He Did Not Blame God

Luke 13:16; Job 1:20–22; Job 40:3–5

- Paul recognized that the source of suffering was sin. And that sin entered into this world because of the work of Satan.
- Jesus says this woman with her physical infirmity was bound by, not by the hand of God, but by Satan.
- In all this Job did not sin, nor charged God with wrong.
- There's a difference in saying God is doing this or God is allowing this to happen, and charging God or blaming God with that wrong.
- I laid my hand over my mouth. Job says, I'm just going to be quiet. I'm not going to charge God with this.

2 These Thorns Can Actually Serve a Purpose

1 Peter 1:6–9

- Our God is so wise, so powerful, and so compassionate, that though we're allowed to suffer, he can use those difficult times in our lives and actually make them positive.
- He says that the trials that we undergo are a testing of our faith.
- How do you know you've got real faith in God? You don't know until it's tested.
- It's not to live in a bed of roses in this life. It's not to have everything work out perfect in this life. The end of our faith is the salvation of our soul.

3 Prayer Was a Powerful Tool During a Crisis

2 Corinthians 12:8

- He saw that prayer was a powerful tool during a crisis. He says three times. I prayed three times that this might be removed from me.
- They're mentioned so many times even in Scripture because of the absolute essentiality of them.
- Number one, he is God and you are not.

- In Paul's case, in Job's case, and maybe in our case, it is certainly the case that God knows better than we do.

4 He Accepted God's Answer

2 Corinthians 12:9

- He says, God, please remove this thorn. God came back to him and said, No, I will not.
- The test of our mettle as a Christian is not when things are going right. The test of our mettle as a Christian is when things are going wrong.
- Paul said, I accept the wisdom and the position of God.
- Maybe that's the greatest lesson that we can learn in all of this is to truly humble ourselves before God. In accepting God's will in our lives. Even when it doesn't line up with ours.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **Learn to accept His will. Learn to love Him and trust Him in the good times and the bad.**

MY NOTES