Thorns

Shawn Jeffries · 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

INTRODUCTION

- He's talking about a stake. He's talking about a stake that was piercing through him.
- He's talking about going through something in his life that was bringing him immense pain and agony.
- While battling our thorns, maybe we found ourselves doing something that a lot of people do when they get thorns, and that is asking the question of why.

1 Thorns Should Be Expected

2 Corinthians 12:7

- We learn from this chapter that thorns should be expected. They should be expected even for Christians.
- Just because we are Christians and followers of Jesus, that doesn't mean we won't get thorns.
- Even though Paul had accomplished so much as an apostle, notice he still had to receive pain from a thorn.
- We don't know exactly what Paul's thorn was because the Bible doesn't tell us.
- Since Paul doesn't tell us exactly what his thorn was, we can't sit here and compare our problems and our thorns to his.
- Thorns in this life are inevitable. They are gonna take place. None of us are immune from getting thorns.

2 Our Thorns Should Draw Us Closer to God

2 Corinthians 12:7–8; 1 Peter 5:6–7; Philippians 4:6–7

- Notice how he didn't blame God. You see that? He didn't blame God.
- He blamed the devil. He blames Satan. He called his thorn a messenger of Satan.
- He actually prayed to God three times. … He drew closer to God as a result of this thorn.
- You cast all of your anxiety or your care on him because he cares for you. That's how you get through thorns. You take them to God.
- In everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God.
- Prayer is not some last ditch effort that we put into practice whenever we don't know what else to do.

3 God Won't Always Remove Them

2 Corinthians 12:9; Proverbs 3:5–8

- God responded to a prayer request from Paul by saying no. He said, No, my grace is sufficient for you.
- God is not like the big grandpa sitting in a rocking chair who just can't say no.
- He didn't give Jesus what he wanted, but he gave him what he needed to endure the cross.
- We need to trust that no matter how he responds to our request, it's going to be in our best interest.

- Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding in all your ways, acknowledge him, and he'll make your path straight.

4 Our Thorns Can Actually Help Us

2 Corinthians 12:7–10

- Most gladly, therefore, Paul says, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so the power of Christ may dwell in me.
- Therefore, I'm 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.
- Sometimes he will let them stay right where they are because he wants to use them.
- He was given this amazing privilege by God, but with that privilege came the danger of pride.
- God was actually using that thorn to spiritually discipline him and make him more dependent upon him and keep him humble.
- While our thorns may be painful, while they may hurt, … God can still use them.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **Is there anyone here who needs help? Who needs to come to God so he can remove the greatest thorn you could ever have, the worst thorn you could ever have, the thorn of sin.**

MY NOTES