**“A THORN IN THE FLESH”**

**2 Corinthians 12:1-10**

***Sermon Review***

*What was the Main Point of the Sermon from Sunday?*

*What part of the Sermon did you find to be the most beneficial?*

***SMALL GROUP LESSON***

1. How are powerful people treated in our society?
2. Why are we typically afraid to disclose our weaknesses to each other?

**2 Corinthians 12:1-10 (NLT2)**
1  This boasting will do no good, but I must go on. I will reluctantly tell about visions and revelations from the Lord.
2  I was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don’t know—only God knows.
3  Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know
4  that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.
5  That experience is worth boasting about, but I’m not going to do it. I will boast only about my weaknesses.
6  If I wanted to boast, I would be no fool in doing so, because I would be telling the truth. But I won’t do it, because I don’t want anyone to give me credit beyond what they can see in my life or hear in my message,
7  even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.
8  Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away.
9  Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.
10  That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

***EXPLORE***

* + - 1. Who was the man in Christ whom Paul described? ([12:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+12%3A2))
			2. Why was Paul reluctant to speak about his vision? ([12:3-6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+12%3A3-6))
			3. What happened during the revelation Paul described? ([12:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+12%3A4))
			4. Why did Paul have a "thorn"? ([12:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+12%3A7))

* + - 1. What was Paul’s response to his "thorn"? ([12:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+12%3A8), [10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+12%3A10))
			2. What purpose can suffering serve? ([12:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+12%3A9))

***APPLY***

1. What can we learn from Paul’s example about dealing with physical discomfort or hardship?
2. How can you allow the Lord’s power to take over where you are weak?
3. How does the Christian perspective on power and weakness differ from that of the world?
4. What does this passage teach us about the problem of evil and God’s sovereign will?
5. How should you respond if God chooses not to heal you?
6. What difference should it make knowing God has promised you an all-sufficient grace?
7. In what area of your life do you want to rely more on God’s strength and power, rather than your own?

**Additional Thoughts:**

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