

What the Thorn Did for Paul

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

We do not know for sure what this thorn was. Some suggest that it was a physical issue to Paul in the form of an eye ailment. Paul was supernaturally blinded when he converted to Christ (Acts 9:9), and it is possible that some issues lingered in later years. If this was true, it would have been a physical and emotional trial for him. Whatever the thorn was, it was a burden to him, and it brought pain. But what was the purpose of the thorn? What did it do for Paul? God allowed it to be given to Paul (what a gift).

1. It kept him _____ vs. 7

- Paul thought he could be a better Christian if he were relieved of his weakness, but just the opposite was true. Prov. 16:18-20
- “Humility is preparation for service and service is the test of humility.” 1 Peter 5:5-6
- James 4:10

2. It drove him to his _____ vs. 8

- “I besought the Lord thrice” means continued prayer. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19
- “Anything is a blessing which makes us pray.”
- It would have been no problem for God to remove the thorn.
- Unanswered prayer does not mean that the need is not met. Sometimes we get a greater blessing when God doesn’t answer our prayers. God always answers the need even though it seems He is not answering the prayer. Romans 8:32, Philippians 4:19-20

3. It allowed Christ to _____ vss. 9-10

- Because of the above, God’s power was allowed to through Paul.
- “Be content to keep the thorn, if it saves thee from being exalted above all measure.”
- Charles Spurgeon
- Weakness is strength if Christ is in it. Remember Gideon’s pitchers, David’s sling and Moses’ rod. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- There is grace to meet every need. Grace enabled Paul to accept his weakness, glory in it, and take pleasure in it! Paul knew that his weakness would bring glory to Christ, and that is all that mattered. 2 Corinthians 4:7

“Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities...” the difference in your thorn and Paul’s may be what you are allowing God to do with it.

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