



SHAPED BY THE CROSS

A JOURNEY THROUGH 2 CORINTHIANS

Oct 31, 2021

PRIMARY SCRIPTURES

I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. 3 And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows— 4 was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell. 5 I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. 6 Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, 7 or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

SUMMARY

Suffering and hardship for the sake of Christ build a greater dependence on the Lord within us. It is through these difficulties that we also experience God’s peace and the power to endure by faith. We also gain a deeper insight and understanding into the suffering Christ endured for us through His death on the cross. Paul boasted in his sufferings because of these outcomes which serve to remind us of holding the godly perspective that hardships deepen our relationship with Christ..

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-6. Why do you think Paul referred to himself in the third person in these verses?
2. Read Acts 18:9-10, 23:11, and 27:23-24. Describe how you see Paul being encouraged by the Lord in these verses.
3. Paul suffered greatly with the thorn in his side, he pleaded with God three times to remove the thorn but his request was denied. In what ways do you believe the thorn was used by God in Paul’s life?
4. Read Romans 5:1-5. List the things that suffering produces in the life of a Christian. How have you seen that to be true in your own life?
5. Faith in Christ has great blessings but often comes with great sufferings also. God calls us to commitment, not to comfort. Share what commitment to Christ has cost you. How does sharing that with other believers encourage you and encourage them as well?

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