



PAUL

Paul

December 7

[2 Corinthians 12:6-10](#)

The painful thorn

Paul tells us a bit about himself and how that an ongoing problem helped him not to become proud.

He wrote, "I wouldn't be a fool if I told you about all my achievements—I would be telling the truth. But I don't want anyone to think that I am great because of the things they have seen me do or heard me say. In fact, to keep me from becoming full of myself I was given a problem that has been like a painful thorn in my flesh. It reminds me of my weakness and keeps me from becoming proud.

"I asked the Lord three times to take this problem away. But every time He said, 'My grace is all you need. When you are weak, My power shows up best in you.'

"So, now I am glad that I have this weakness, because it helps me to rely even more on God's power and protection. For when I feel weak, I am actually strong because of God's power in me."

Can any good come from the things that frustrate me?

If you have stood on a thorn or had a sharp stone in your shoe, you would know that every step hurts until you stop and take it out. Paul tells us of a thorn that kept bothering him. We know that it wasn't an actual thorn, but a problem that pricked and irritated him all the time. Yet Paul's problem didn't keep him from doing God's work; it actually helped him depend more on God's grace and power. He could have been proud of who he was (see [2 Corinthians 11:21-28](#)), but instead his thorny problem helped him to humbly trust God for strength and wisdom every day.

What frustrations do you have? Does someone make life difficult for you? Remember that God can use people and difficult situations to change your attitude and get you to rely more on His wisdom, strength and grace.

Verse for today

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. [Romans 8:37](#)