



# Berean Christian Fellowship

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“Sufficient” Grace for the Thorn — P6

**“And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)**

It is clear from Scripture that “sufficient” grace often leaves mortal life less than pleasant. That’s because it comes in answer to a “thorn” in your flesh that torments you—illness, injury, persecution, temptation, etc. God doesn’t give us thorns, but He does allow them. Thorns don’t kill you, but they do rob your life of enjoyment, focus you, and can cause you to *wish* you were dead.

Think of the following analogy—you’re walking barefoot down a beautiful lane on your 100 acre ranch. You reflect how blessed you are to live in a wonderful house, own lots of land, drive a nice car, eat apple pie every evening, and have a full fridge of soda. In the middle of these thoughts, you step on a thorn. Instantly, all those thoughts vaporize. You are in pain! You don’t care about your house, your car, or your land—in fact you now wish you had less land so you weren’t so far from a pair of tweezers! You just want to get that thorn out! Each step brings you pain and blocks out your thoughts. Your walk back to your house is a constant reminder of the pain. Your focus is the hope you have of getting the thorn out or the release that death would bring you. This becomes your “life” for the duration of that walk.

Similarly, Hannah and the woman with a hemorrhage (Matt. 9:20) were focused on what they didn’t have because of their thorn. For Hannah it was a son—her entire life was focused on this pain. For the woman with the bleeding problem, it was to be physically healed—she’d do anything to find relief. In these examples, the thorn wasn’t permanent, but it was painful while it lasted. For others, the thorn seemed permanent, as in Paul’s case

where his thorn pushed him beyond hope of physical restoration and focused him entirely on spiritual labors. But for Job and Jeremiah, their thorns were so life-altering (in the worst way) that while they had them, they were intently focused on the only remaining hope they had—the resurrection and eternity.

As we’ve discussed before, God gives grace in different ways—some people may have relatively thorn-less walks while others are given joy and happiness in their walk with their thorn. But for many Believers with thorns, there is little joy, because God only gives “sufficient” grace to deal with it, which means the thorn stays, but He gives most the strength to keep walking down that lane of life (if barely), rather than jumping off the nearest cliff.

We don’t always know why God gives only “sufficient” grace to some. Perhaps He is building a testimony in our lives or teaching us something or focusing our hearts and minds on eternity. In Paul’s case, God allowed a thorn in his flesh to save him from pride. Job was afflicted to bring glory to God by proving satan wrong. Jeremiah endured torment so that he could testify of God’s Holiness and judgment for sin. These three men had their lives focused on spiritual matters by the thorn that robbed them of happiness in the flesh.

We don’t always know why thorns are allowed in our lives and why some of us are only given “sufficient” grace to deal with them. But we do know that it will all work together for our good and God’s glory. Great is the reward for the suffering servant who endures by the grace of God! So, in all these things, may we repeat with Jeremiah, “*The Lord is my portion, says my soul, Therefore I have hope in Him*” (Lam. 3:24) — in this way, we will be “*fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*” (Heb. 12:2). With this confidence we can say with Job, “*Though He slay me, I will hope in Him*” (Job 13:15a). Even so, Amen.

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