

THORNS, PRAYERS, AND CROWNS

2 CORINTHIANS 12:1-10

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS —
JANUARY 16, 2022

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Corinthians 12:1-10 ESV

1 Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I know that this man was caught up into paradise. 5 On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses— 6 though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. 7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave 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 of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

SERMON RECAP

1. God will use the thorns in your life to do a transforming work in you.
2. God will use the thorns in your life to display His power to sustain you and to use you.
3. If there is more than one way for God to use a thorn, there is more than one way to pray about a thorn.
 - Pray for God to remove thorns.
 - Praise God for what He’s doing with thorns.
 - Ask God for the strength to endure thorns.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What does the passage say?

1. Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 aloud as a group and take some time to let group members share observations about the passage. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you have read quite yet. Simply share what you all observe from the text. You might ask for a volunteer to explain this passage in their own words.

What does the passage mean?

2. From Paul’s past experiences, what might have given Paul reason to be proud? Yet, how did God use a thorn to make Paul more like Jesus?
3. What does it mean that God’s power is made perfect in weakness?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. What thorn are you facing that you are unable to remove on your own? How does this passage



- challenge (or confirm) your current thinking about your thorn?
2. For the sake of Christ, how does this passage call on you to change the way you live? For the sake of Christ, how does this passage call on you to change the way you pray?

LEADER NOTES

- We are (depending on when your group meets) about halfway through our commitment to 21 days of prayer and fasting as a church family. Let's use this opportunity to encourage groups in **C-G-M** (caring, growing, making disciples) during these 21 days.
- **CARING:** Take some time to check in with your group. How are you all doing with your commitments to pray and fast? What has been encouraging? What has been difficult? Are there adjustments that could be made to help all group members finish these 21 days well? How can we shepherd group members during this time?
- **GROWING:** Please consider spending extended time in prayer with your Church Group family during your CG meeting this week. Pray that God will use the weaknesses in our lives to do transforming work in us and through us and that we will grow to be more like Christ. Let's pray that we will grow in our spiritual disciplines and rhythms.
- **MAKING DISCIPLES:** Pray for those you know who need Jesus. Consider using the [Global Outreach 2022 Prayer Guide](#) to pray for our MBC missionaries.
- Please remind your group that we will have a churchwide night of prayer on Friday, January 21st. The prayer night will be from 8pm to 6am at MBC Tysons. We hope you and your group will join us!