



OVERCOMING ADVERSITIES
THE LAW OF STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS – PASTOR ALTON TRIMBLE
SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 2016

II CORINTHIANS 12:7-10 (NKJV)

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. ⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

I PETER 3:7 (NKJV)

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

1. EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCE WITH GOD OFTEN COMES AT A PERSONAL COST.

II CORINTHIANS 12:7 (NKJV)

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

- Jacob wrestled with God and came away with a limp.

GENESIS 32:25 (NKJV)

Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.

- David wept in Ziklag before his great victory.

I SAMUEL 30:4 (NKJV)

Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

- Mary was found with child prior to marriage.

MATTHEW 1:18 (NKJV)

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

2. HUMAN ARROGANCE IS A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT OF GROWTH OR PROGRESS FROM THE PLACE OF WEAKNESS.

II CORINTHIANS 12:7a (NKJV)

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations...

3. GOD HAS A REMEDY, IT'S CALLED DIVINE RESTRAINT.

- Kept David from avenging himself.

I SAMUEL 25:39 (NKJV)

So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! For the LORD has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head." And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife.

- Kept Jabez in God's favor and blessing.

I CHRONICLES 4:10 (NKJV)

And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested.

- Keeps us in our everyday lives.

PSALM 19:13 (NKJV)

Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression.

- Keeps our heart and lips.

PSALM 141:3 (NKJV)

Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.

- Keeps us from the enemy.

JOHN 17:15 (NKJV)

I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

4. WE ALL GET TO BE "MEMBERS IN THE THORN IN THE FLESH" CLUB.

- a. Paul's thorn in the flesh.

II CORINTHIANS 12:7 (NKJV)

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

GENESIS 4:13-15 (NKJV)

GALATIANS 6:11 (NKJV)

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!

5. WHATEVER THE THORN OR STAKE IN PAUL'S FLESH, SATAN MEANT IT FOR HIS UNDOING BUT GOD USED IT FOR HIS GOOD.

- a. Affliction can be a blessing in disguise.
- Can be the impetus for growth or increase.

EXODUS 1:12 (NKJV)

But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel.

- Can cause clarity of heart and mind therefore brings peace and sweet relief.

JOB 5:17 (NKJV)

Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.

- Can result in our being better instead of bitter.

JOB 23:10 (NKJV)

But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.

- Can be the impetus for our returning to God.

PSALM 78:34 (NKJV)

When He slew them, then they sought Him; and they returned and sought earnestly for God.

PSALM 119:67 (NKJV)

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.

- Can enable proper perspective of God and self.

DANIEL 4:28-37 (NKJV)

- Can be an opportunity for God's glory to manifest on our behalf.

II CORINTHIANS 4:17 (NKJV)

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...

- Can produce fruit of righteousness.

HEBREWS 12:11 (NKJV)

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

6. THE PROCESS OF GROWTH IN MANAGING WEAKNESS TO STRENGTH.

- The first part of growth in managing weakness :
 - a. Acceptance of my disabilities is the first step to my growth beyond them.

- Jacob’s cry for help.

GENESIS 32:26 (NKJV)

And He said, “Let Me go, for the day breaks.” But he said, “I will not let You go unless You bless me!”

- Moses’ cry of intercession.

EXODUS 32:31-32 (NKJV)

- Solomon’s cry for wisdom.

I Kings 3:7-9 (NKJV)

- David’s cry for cleansing.

PSALM 51:1-2 (NKJV)

- The penitent thief’s cry.

LUKE 23:42 (NKJV)

Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

- Philippian jailer’s cry

ACTS 16:30 (NKJV)

And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

- b. Learning to successfully live with disabilities, struggles or issues in your life.

II CORINTHIANS 12:9 (NKJV)

And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

I TIMOTHY 1:12-14 (NKJV)

TITUS 3:7 (NKJV)

...that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.