



DEVOTION

When Grace Is the Answer

by [Greg Laurie](#) on Oct 15, 2022

“For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ.”

-2 Corinthians 1:5

God used the apostle Paul to pray for the healing of others, yet He didn't answer Paul's prayer when he asked Him to remove his own physical suffering.

In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul wrote, “I was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. . . . I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell” (verses 2, 4 NLT).

As a result, Paul suffered something that he described as “a thorn in the flesh.” We don't know what this thorn was, but we could translate it from the original language as “a stake in the flesh.” It was a brutal thing.

Some commentators think that Paul's *unspecified affliction* was a disability that Paul may have had. Others believe it might have been an injury from his stoning in Lystra. Whatever it was, Paul asked the Lord three times to take it away. But instead of saying yes to Paul, God extended His grace to him. I love what Paul said about this: “So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (verses 9–10 NLT).

Sometimes, we want God to take away a certain thing from us, so we pray again and again for Him to remove it. But maybe God wants to use it in our lives. After all, when we've gone through hardship, we can more effectively minister to others who are suffering.