

10 November 2021

***“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. 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.” - 2 Corinthians 12:9-10***

Dear Friends,

In the verses above, Paul is speaking to the Corinthians about a ‘thorn in his side’ that he had asked God to remove. Most scholars believe it is a physical thorn of some type that Paul believed limited his abilities to perform his service to our King. He was obviously frustrated that God would not do as he asked Him to do in removing the thorn.

A couple weeks ago, I underwent a full knee replacement that has been very difficult for me. Now, in no way am I equating Paul and my situation but there are some principles that are good to contemplate on, at least for me. As most men of my generation, we were raised (as our fathers before us) to “tough it out” when things were hard. In fact I remember my own father (if not in exact words, at least in implication) to tell me we as men should always help those in need but should not ask for help ourselves. Many people think this is ridiculous (and maybe it is) but most men my age resonate with those thoughts.

The problem with thoughts like that is that when you do get in a place where you really need someone, it is hard to ask for help even when you really do not have a choice. Elaine has been amazing for me during this time. She has helped me do everything and has pushed me in the physical therapy as well. Each day has been better but I am a long way from independence and that is frustrating. The spiritual side of this is I understand Paul’s frustration probably better than I ever have before and my dependence upon Jesus and my family is more real. The point though, is that this dependence upon Jesus is meant to be the norm, not the exception. How different would our lives be if we approached every day with the attitude that says to our Lord “I cannot do what You have asked me to without Your strength. I am totally dependent on You.”

To be sure, I will probably still struggle with an attitude of self-sufficiency most of my life but I hope this lesson remains in my thoughts. When we go through hard times, the best question we can ask our Lord is “what are You trying to teach me right now?” This is what He is teaching me now.

Thanks so much for praying for me, the recovery will be long and at times very painful (if yesterday’s PT session is any gauge) but I am on schedule. Yesterday my screams scared our poor dog to death☺. Please pray for the pain, the doctors are encouraging me to cut back on the opioids to 1/3 of previous. I am doing that. Thanks also for praying for my son David and his Covid. He is mostly recovered and working full time now.

You are precious to us and your prayers are deeply coveted.  
Thank you so much!

