

“Learning to Be Thankful for Things That I Am Not Thankful For” *II Cor. 12:6-10*

Open: Story

- Paul is closer to the end of his ministry than the beginning and God send’s Paul a message by way of a vision. (I Cor, 12:1-4). This message causes Paul to be humbled while looking at his ministry. **vs. 6-7**
 - Paul reveals to us that because of the infirmities in his life he remained humbled.
 - Paul reveals that if it wasn’t for the infirmities, He would have become proud and therefore limited in how God could use him.
 - Paul reveals that he did not enjoy the infirmities in his life, but learned to be thankful for them, because he enjoyed God’s hand on his life.
 - Paul realized that it was the infirmities that kept him usable.
 - So many Christians are more focused on being comfortable than being used. They get bitter and angry at God for allowing certain things in their life instead of looking to see how God could use those things to increase their ability to serve God.
- The Apostle Paul 3 times seeks the Lord’s face and asks God to get rid of “*a thorn in the flesh.*” **vs. 8-9**
 - 3 times Paul receives the answer of no, “*My grace is sufficient for thee.*”
 - So many times, we ask for God to take away the very thing that He brought into our life as an answer to our prayer of being used by Him for his Glory.
- Paul recognizes, that the positive he has received through the negative experience was greater than having no difficulties in life at all. **vs. 10**
 - Paul wanted healing but instead received Grace.
 - Paul wanted healing but received humility to be used more by God.
 - Paul wanted healing but was used to show the strength of God in his weakness.
 - Paul wanted healing but instead the Power of God rested on him in a mightier way.

Tran: Application

- Frequently in our life there are times when we go through things, we do not enjoy it.
 - Health Problems Loss of Loved ones
 - Family Issues Fears
 - Financial Struggles
- If we have the right perspective on life; afterwards we can look back and find ourselves grateful for those times.
 - Abraham – Delayed Promises.... Promises sweeter
 - David – Enemies and betrayals Relationship with God was closer
 - Moses – Speech impediment.... Miracles more miraculous
 - Jesus – Calvary.... Made redemption sweeter
 - Paul – Thorn in the flesh... Made serving God more powerful
 - John – Isle of Patmos... Made heaven more real.

- When we are faced with the difficulties of life, instead of complaining about how rough our life is maybe we should get into a habit of asking God what He wants to accomplish in our life through this difficulty He has allowed to come.

I. Circumstances

- a. Health
 - i. Personal
 - ii. Loss of Loved one
- b. Financial
 - i. Good
 - ii. Bad
- c. Events
 - i. Political
 - ii. Weather
 - iii. Interaction with people

II. Talents

- a. Abilities
- b. Responsibilities

III. God's Will for my Life

- a. What I want vs what He wants
- b. What I think I should be doing vs what He tells me I am to do
- c. Where I want to be vs where God leads me

*Close: I Thess. 5:18 "In everything give thanks: for **this is the will of God** in Christ Jesus concerning you"*

- In Everything give thanks...for this is the will of God.
 - It is the will of God that you're going through what you need; so give thanks for it.
 - If we are not in this to see God's will accomplished through our lives, then why are we in this at all? **I Cor. 15:28-30**
 - **Rom. 8:28** "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*"
 - It is the will of God that you give thanks while you're going through what your facing.
- Do not wait until the time of difficulty is over to be thankful for it, live thankful and looking for the blessing in the trial you are facing.
 - You will receive strength in the difficulty.
 - You will help others receive strength in your difficulty.
 - You will receive the greatest blessing of all, getting close to the heavenly father.
- Have you been thankful, or have you gotten bitter? Have you learned to be content? **Phil. 4:11** "*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*"
 1. In the state of going through something distasteful and not understanding why I should be thankful.
 2. In the state of being thankful for something I am going through even though I do not understand it
 3. In the state of enjoying the blessing I received for being thankful in everything.

Phil. 4:11

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."