

## Open It

What are your thoughts when you hear someone share about spiritual experiences that seem completely beyond your reach?

## Consider It

What question would you like to ask Paul about his vision or revelatory experience (12:1-4)?

Why did Paul refrain from boasting about his spiritual experiences (12:5-6)?

What do we know about Paul's thorn in the flesh (12:7)?  
Who gave it? What was it? Why was it given?

What is God's role and Satan's role in Paul's suffering (12:7)?

How did God answer Paul's prayer for healing (12:8-9)?

Would Paul have been healed if he had more faith?  
How did Paul exercise faith? What did faith require of him?

How does God's perspective on power and weakness differ from that of the world (12:9-10)?

What should we learn from Paul's example? How should we respond to unanswered prayer? How should we respond to chronic pain, weakness, or physical limitations?

Has there been a time in your life when you experienced the sufficiency of God's strength in your time of weakness?

How might your story of God's faithfulness encourage another Christ-follower? How might you share your story?

## Tested and Triumphant!

*"Strength in Weakness"*

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Sunday, November 17, 2019

*I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. <sup>2</sup> I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. <sup>3</sup> And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—<sup>4</sup> was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell. <sup>5</sup> I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. <sup>6</sup> Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, <sup>7</sup> or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. <sup>9</sup> 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 about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 Corinthians 12:1–10 (NIV)

## Sermon Proposition

God wants you enjoy His favor in surprising, yet significant ways.

### **God's Favor Is Celebrated in Humility**

*I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. <sup>6</sup> Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, <sup>7</sup> or because of these surpassingly great revelations.*

2 Corinthians 12:5-7 (NIV)

### **God's Favor Is Enjoyed in Weakness and Pain**

*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 about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NIV)

### **God's Favor Is Enjoyed in Unexpected Answers to Prayer**

*Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*

2 Corinthians 12:7-9 (NIV)

### **Live It!**

I will adjust by beliefs about God and His ways by...

I will trust God and hold on to His promise to...

I will obey God's word by...