

**WHY BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO NOT SO GOOD PEOPLE - Part VIII**

Reference: **II Corinthians 12:1-10**

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ONE - Sometimes something bad happens as a direct result from a **wrong action** or **wrong inaction** on our part.

TWO - Sometimes something bad happens to convince us to **trust** God.

THREE - Sometimes something bad happens to enable us to better **comfort** someone else.

FOUR - Sometimes something bad happens to remind us of our **eternal reward** in heaven.

FIVE - Sometimes something bad happens so that God is **glorified** in and through that situation.

SIX - Sometimes something bad happens to act as the agent God uses to conform us to **resemble** His Son, Jesus.

SEVEN - Sometimes something bad happens to present us unusual opportunities to **evangelize** and to **encourage** others to do the same.

EIGHT- Sometimes something bad happens to reveal to us the true nature of a **friendship**.

NINE - Sometimes something bad happens to **test** our faith.

TEN - Sometimes something bad happens to \_\_\_\_\_ someone from becoming prideful.

Reference: **II Corinthians 12:1-10**

Negative pride is an **EGO** problem:

**E** – **E** \_\_\_\_\_  
**G** – **G** \_\_\_\_\_  
**O** – **O** \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: **I Peter 5:5b** (see screen)

Sometimes God uses troubles to resist us and humble us and smash our pride so that He can then use us. I want us to see how problems and pride intersect.

**verses seven through ten** (see screen)

Paul mentions he had received “an abundance of revelations,” meaning Paul had received numerous divine revelations.

**Question:** What was Paul talking about? There are two suggestions:

- \_\_\_\_\_ revelation (sometimes called specific revelation)  
**Definition:** Special revelation is truth from God that man could not have ascertained on his own unless God **revealed** it to him i.e. \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ instances of Jesus **revealing** Himself to Paul **verses one through five** (see screen)  
References: **II Corinthians 12:1; Galatians 1:1; II Corinthians 11:5; II Corinthians 12:2-5** (see screen)

To address a possible potential pride problem, God permitted Satan to inflict Paul with what Paul referred to as a “*thorn in the flesh.*”

**verse seven** (see screen)

This troublesome problem was characterized as “...*a messenger of Satan to buffet me...*” This was something Satan himself had caused; BUT, the ultimate cause was God Himself because Satan is subservient to a sovereign God and cannot do anything that God doesn’t permit him to do.

Definition: **Divine Passive** means that God didn’t cause this problem, but He decided to be passive and \_\_\_\_\_ this problem.

**Question:** What was this thorn?

**Answer:** Theologians and biblical commentators all agree that this was a representative (non-literal) thorn. There have been numerous suggestions as to what this thorn represented. Two opinions mentioned most often are:

**One** - This thorn in the flesh was an \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. false teacher and counterfeit apostle) that was opposing Paul.

The word “*messenger*” is the Greek word most often translated as angel. Since this thorn acted as a messenger from Satan, the argument is that this was an actual angel sent from Satan and the only angels Satan controls are fallen (unfaithful) angels or demons. The interpretation is that a demon-affected person infiltrated the Corinthian congregation, advertised himself as an apostle and tried to discredit Paul.

**Two** -This thorn in the flesh was a \_\_\_\_\_ that affected Paul’s eyes. Some believe it was a disease called “ophthalmia,” an ailment that causes an inflammation of the actual eyeball or its membranes or eyelids and is symptomatic of other eye diseases.

Reference: **Galatians 6:11; 4:13, 15** (see screen)

In the phrase “*thorn in the flesh*” (**vs. 7**), the Greek word translated as “*thorn*” is the word meaning a \_\_\_\_\_. That meant this thorn represented significant pain.

In order for troubles to fully impact us, two things have to be true:

- The problem or trouble has to be \_\_\_\_\_ to get our attention.
- The problem or trouble has to be \_\_\_\_\_ to be outside our ability to control it.

Paul then asked God to remove this thorn, but God refused to do that. In fact **verses eight and nine** indicate that, instead, Christ told Paul that He would manifest His strength through Paul’s weakness.

**verses eight and nine** (see screen)

God didn’t **remove** his problem; but, God promised Paul the **grace** he needed to \_\_\_\_\_ that problem. The Greek word translated “*grace*” is “*charis*” and means a generous benefit given to someone who could never earn it. The definition I use is that divine grace is God giving us something we \_\_\_\_\_.

But grace isn’t limited to just salvific grace at salvation. Grace is applicable to all categories of our existence, meaning God’s grace is sufficient to meet our need at the time we need it.

Reference: **Acts 4:33** (see screen)

Divine grace is not only salvific grace; but, is also a spiritual force God releases into us to \_\_\_\_\_ us to do all He has assigned us to do.

Paul admitted to his weakness because:

Principle: **Christ’s strength** demonstrates itself \_\_\_\_\_ in **our weaknesses**.

**verses nine and ten** (see screen)