

# Below the Surface: Praying for Relief...Trusting God's response.

## Sermon Notes

April 29, 2018

### Staying humble in the midst of greatness. **2 Corinthians 12:1-7a**

- Visions and revelations were becoming quite common in Paul's life and people noticed.
  - His boasting was to draw attention to the Lord's manifested power, not to gain for himself. (1a)
  - He credits them to being from the Lord. (1b)
- He deflects celebrating his own visions and revelations and even withheld one from others for 14 years.
  - As a man in Christ, Paul had an experience that gave him audience to hear and see heaven. (4)
  - Paul was not able to identify his own personal state (physical or spiritual) at the time. (3)
  - Acknowledges that much of it will remain unshared. (4b)
- Paul will only boast about his weaknesses and the amazing work of God. (5)
  - He could boast truthfully about his personal successes of God working through him.
  - He chooses not to boast of himself for the purpose of helping others keep an appropriate view of him as a man saved by grace in spite of impressive revelations that come from God. (6b-7a)

### Experiencing hardship so that God is glorified. **2 Corinthians 12:7b-10**

- Paul's "thorn" was to keep him humbly dependent. (7b)
- Paul prayed and pleaded three times to have it removed. (8)
- God's response: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* (9)
  - His grace is enough—God was giving him revelations, visions, incredible impact upon others. Not to mention that God spared him from himself on the road to Damascus.
  - With the "thorn" keeping Paul humbled and dependent, God's power was more evident as the source of all that was being accomplished through Paul.

### Take aways:

1. God wants to be seen by you and others as the source of your life's accomplishments.
2. A humble heart is where God does his greatest work.
3. See the grace in the difficulties of life and let the power of God be displayed through you.
4. Trust God's response—he knows what he is doing!