

1. Overinflation of our self-importance will bring loss.
2. Boasting is a way that we declare importance of an action, a possession, or a reality. Usually, to draw attention to our own perceived importance. It's a way of seeking worship.
3. Paul's boasting is always related to God's grace and God's importance. (1 Cor 4:7)
4. All that you have is given to you; your intellect, your genetics, your opportunities. You should not be exalted, but The One that gave you these things should.
5. The nature of the thorn:
  - It's not your sin
  - It's painful and embarrassing
  - It's evil or at least not good
  - It prevents Paul from exalting himself
  - It shows inability
6. God's grace is sufficient for your circumstance.
7. There is a link between the grace of God and power. When we take our weakness and add a mustard seed of faith that God's grace is enough, God puts forth a mighty display of His power.
8. Our weakness is the vehicle, the instrument, the stage that reveals God is at work.
9. Boasting in our weakness shifts the importance off from us and put it on the Lord.
10. We see God's grace most clearly when we're weak. When we embrace God's grace, we are made strong. Nothing can touch us then: not weakness, not insults, not distresses, not persecutions, not difficulties.

# GREEK & HEBREW WORDS

**skólops** [pointed stake, thorn] - it's something sharp and pointed for impaling.

**kolaphízō** [to buffet]; to cause physical impairment, with a sense of humiliation /torment.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Take a moment and summarize what this passage is about.
- What items stand out to you as important? Why?

Kyle said, "Boasting is a way that we declare importance; We declare something about an action, a possession, or a reality to draw importance from it. We usually boast in a broken way, we boast about something to draw attention to our own perceived importance. It's this nasty comparative where we push other people down to rise above them."

- Do you agree with this statement? If so, why do you think we tend to do this? If not, why do you think we have a tendency to boast?

Verse 9 says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness?"

- How do you or others tend to apply that to our personal, professional, or spiritual lives?

God gives his power to his people so they can accomplish his goals and purposes in and through them. Please read Philippians 4:13. It's not given for our convenience, or so we can accomplish our own goals, or fulfill our desires.

- Does this idea align or clash with how we typically think of God's power in our lives?
- How might this shift how we ask God to work his power in and through our personal, professional, or spiritual lives?

How would you explain what Paul is saying in v. 10 to someone who doesn't understand what it is saying? How is it that we can make sense of the idea here that "when I am weak, then I am strong?"

### For Personal Reflection

What are a few things you are most tempted to boast about? What is it about each of these things that you value?

Perform the following mental exercise for each of those things: Think about how that thing you are tempted to boast about is, in reality, something you received rather than something you did or earned all on your own.

- How does God turn out to be the originator of that which you are tempted to boast about?
- What realizations have become more obvious? About God? About yourself?
- Is there a particular "weakness" or "thorn" in your life that is embarrassing or frustrating to you? Something that highlights that "you are not enough" or don't have it all together?
- How might it help reveal your need to depend on God's grace and power or to bring glory to himself through your life?

## QUOTE

“God did not give Paul any explanations; instead, He gave him a promise: “My grace is sufficient for thee.” We do not live on explanations; we live on promises” ~ *Warren Wiersbe*

## TODAY'S WORSHIP

Sky Spills Over  
House Of The Lord  
All Creatures Of Our God And King  
Yes I Will  
Shout To The Lord