

His Grace is Sufficient

II Corinthians 11:22-33 [NLT] – *Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. ²³ Are they servants of Christ? I know I sound like a madman, but I have served him far more! I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. ²⁴ Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. ²⁶ I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. ²⁷ I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm. ²⁸ Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak without my feeling that weakness? Who is led astray, and I do not burn with anger? ³⁰ If I must boast, I would rather boast about the things that show how weak I am. ³¹ God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, who is worthy of eternal praise, knows I am not lying. ³² When I was in Damascus, the governor under King Aretas kept guards at the city gates to catch me. ³³ I had to be lowered in a basket through a window in the city wall to escape from him.*

II Corinthians 12:1-10 – *It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. ³ And I know such*

a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—⁴ how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

- “**inexpressible**” – unspeakable, on account of its sacredness.

⁵ Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. ⁶ For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.

- “**infirmities**” – weaknesses.

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

- “**lest I should be exalted above measure**”:
 - **James 4:10** [NLT] – Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.
 - **Matthew 23:12** [NLT] – But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.
- “**a thorn in the flesh**” – sharp, painful splinter or thorn.
 - **A “thorn”** – never used for a sickness or disease.
 - **Flesh** – God is the Father of spirits. [**Hebrews 12:9**]
- “**messenger of Satan**” – AGGELOS; angel; demon.
- “**buffet me**” – to strike with the fist; to treat with violence and insult.

⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- “**depart**” – or, withdraw itself from.
 - **Beck** – “Three times I begged the Lord to have him leave me alone.”
- “**grace**” – supernatural favor; divine influence; God’s ability in us to do what we couldn’t do on our own.
- “**sufficient**” – to be possessed of unfailing strength; to be strong, to be enough; to defend, ward off; to be satisfied, to be contented.
- **Ephesians 4:27** – *nor give place to the devil.*
- “**infirmities**” – weaknesses; inability to produce results.