



INTRODUCTION

We've all seen athletes point to heaven after touchdowns or home runs. And we've heard actors thank God during their acceptance speeches. We know God can be glorified in our moments of success. But what about moments of weakness? How do we keep going when our circumstances are crippling and God seems to be saying, "No"?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Imagine a God you could control. What would you like or dislike about him?
2. Read **2 Corinthians 12:10**. How does the apostle Paul's call to delight in weakness challenge the values and assumptions of the culture in which we live?
3. Describe a time when God said "no" to your prayers. Did it cause you to question his existence? Did you submit to his will or struggle to deal with the situation in your own strength?
4. Read **2 Corinthians 12:6-9**. What does the fact that God didn't remove Paul's "thorn," but chose to use Paul's weakness to demonstrate his own power tell you about God's priorities?
5. How could the story of Paul's "thorn" strengthen your faith when God seems uncooperative?

MOVING FORWARD

While we have permission to ask God to remove our thorns, God has the right to say "no" to our requests. What do you do when God chooses to showcase his power on the stage of your weakness? Take "no" for an answer. When you do, God gives you something in return: sustaining grace.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:9