

Defining Greatness

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

*"Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.*

*In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.*

*Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."*

- Invictus by William Henley

Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-6

1.) We Need To Dismiss How We Once Thought About the World's Applause.

2 Corinthians 12:11, *"I have been a fool! You forced me to it..."*

Read verse 1.

Read Verse 4.

Read Verse 6.

2.) We Need To Dismiss How We Once Thought About Weakness.

Read verses 7-10

Romans 8:28

Read Verse 8.

James 5:13, "**13** Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray..."

verse 9, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Read verse 10.

Weaknesses are not sins, but experiences and circumstances that are hard to bear and that we can't remove either because they are beyond our control or because love dictates we not return evil for evil — Steve Shelby

"I've never struggled to believe in God...I already had a "gospel" of my own — the promise that love and wealth are the world's to give to the popular and gifted. I didn't need to trust God, because I already trusted another god: the NBA....When the injuries came, I started reading Scripture. I had the odd, unsettling thought, "I don't think I'm really saved." —Landry Fields

"When I first started getting injured, I prayed, "God, leave it up to me, and leave me alone." Now, I pray, "Thank you, Lord, for doing this and driving me back to you...Suffering has made the gospel real to me."—Landry Fields

Main Idea: Weakness in the Christian Life Provides A Platform for God To Display his Strength.

verse 9, "...Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

*"Out of the light that dazzles me,
Bright as the sun from pole to pole,*

*I thank the God I know to be,
For Christ - the Conqueror of my soul.*

*Since His the sway of circumstance,
I would not wince nor cry aloud.
Under the rule which men call chance,
My head, with joy, is humbly bowed.*

*Beyond this place of sin and tears,
That Life with Him and His the Aid,
That, spite the menace of the years,
Keeps, and will keep me unafraid.*

*I have no fear though straight the gate:
He cleared from punishment the scroll.
Christ is the Master of my fate!
Christ is the Captain of my soul!"*

-Dorothy Day