

Life Principle Day Twenty-Six:

*Adversity is a bridge to a deeper relationship with God.*

Today's Reading

2 Corinthians 11:16-12:10

Our walk through life includes injury and adversity. I have had stitches in my lip and twice in the same thumb. I have broken a leg and an arm. The arm fracture required two surgeries to repair. Compared to most, my resume of medical situations is probably short. Overall, I have been blessed with safety and good health. Nevertheless, adversity is part of every life.



Compared to the apostle Paul's list of injuries and adversities, mine is insignificant. He experienced beatings, lashings, stoning, imprisonment, shipwreck, sleeplessness, hunger, and danger...just to name a few. But the one adversity that apparently impacted him in ways unlike any of the others remained nameless. Paul refers to it only as "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment

me" (v. 7). We can only speculate what this "thorn" might have been. Most certainly, he had prayed in the midst of every adversity he had experienced. But this nameless one was especially troublesome. About this one he prayed three times...to no avail. While the stoning and shipwrecks he mentioned had come and gone as experiences of the past, this thorn remained into the present. And yet, God did not remain silent while Paul struggled. He extended to Him a promise that is valid for all people in every circumstance of life...even you... "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (v. 12:9)

You see, though adversity in your journey has its unpleasant side, it serves as a bridge to a deeper relationship with God. It causes you to seek Him, rely on Him, and confide in Him. It causes you to recognize that the grace of God is adequate to strengthen you for any situation...even those where God chooses not to remove the thorn. As you turn to God in the face of adversity, you come to realize, "When I am weak, then I am strong." (v. 12:10) And that strength doesn't come from you. It comes from the One with whom you are growing deeper in relationship.