

READ

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

James 4:6-10

CONSIDER

There are various ways in which God can answer our prayers. The most common responses that we often experience and have discerned are “yes,” “no,” “slow,” “wait,” or even “not yet.” But God’s response to Paul in a time of need and challenge was not as simple or direct. Rather, in response to the apostle’s petitions, God tells him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” This was not the expected answer that Paul was anticipating, but it was part of the Spirit’s work to humble and remind him of his need for God. Even when the outcome is not what we hope for or if there is no resolution, can we trust in God’s grace, which is sufficient for us and can sustain and carry us through?

Humility is not just a character trait, but a daily surrender and trust in God, putting to death our sin, and practicing repentance and belonging within a community. Without this posture and practice, we cannot hear and discern the will of God among us and learn to take steps to respond to Him with faithful obedience. In neglecting the development of humility, we close ourselves off the transformative and liberating power of the Spirit in and through us. In our own lives and as a way of being the church, let us continue to enact this value, resisting placing our confidence in our own strength and wisdom, but surrender ourselves in our weakness to experience the sufficiency and perfecting work of God’s grace.

Pastor Jon Nip

PRAY

Gracious God, we ask that you would humble our hearts and keep us from becoming arrogant and conceited. Help us to surrender to your work in us to increase our humility amidst the circumstances and challenges we face. Holy Spirit, would you show us our weaknesses and help us to accept them so that we will boast only in your grace and strength. We ask that you

shape us into your church by this value so that the gospel can be witnessed through us as we engage the world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

DIVING DEEPER

What would be our response to God's answer of "my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" to our prayers? Are we able to accept it? Why or why not?

How do we learn to be more aware and accept our weaknesses? What might it look like to fully relinquish our own control and strength in order to rely on Him?

How can prayer and repentance help us mature in humility and surrendering to God? What is a way you can develop that practice in your life?

In what ways does humility play a part in building up community and engaging the world with the gospel?