

Learn to Accept Yourself

O Lord Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you. **—Psalm 84:12**

Acceptance, therefore, means, you don't deny the handicap. Don't live in denial—pretending it is not there. God has allowed it, and it is there to stay. How do you get your nourishment, your strength? Accept your handicap or disability.

But there is more. Know that God loves you. Most important of all, know that you are saved. The greatest thing in the world is knowing that you will go to heaven when you die. There is only one reason you are saved: that God was good to you. He gave you the gospel; never forget that this life is not all there is.

Know that you must be special, because you are special. There is a definite reason why God has given you this thorn in the flesh. It is to drive you closer to Him, not further from Him. It is to keep you from being smug, conceited, or taking yourself too seriously. God could step in and take it away. But if He doesn't, it will stay only because God's purpose in it all is still unfulfilled.

Although I wish with all my heart that God would remove my own "thorn in the flesh," I have to say also that I have become reconciled to its permanence. What I never thought I would say to God, I now find myself praying: "Lord, I believe now that it would be wrong if You took my thorn away." I have stopped praying that it will go away, because I think it is one of the best things that ever happened to me.

I would therefore urge you, if you are waking up each morning and saying, "It's still here," to admit that, though you want it removed, there is a greater purpose in it all that God alone understands.

Whatever your handicap or disability is, if you accept it as being from God, it is only a matter of time until you see a purpose for good in it. Take your handicap from God with both hands. Why? Because He loves you, and it was His inscrutable, sovereign way of getting you to develop intimacy with Him.

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