

LIVE IT OUT

Peoria Sermon Reflection Guide for the week of July 4th – 5th, 2026.
Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 12:8-9, Hebrews 4:16, Matthew 27:46,
Proverbs 3:5-6, John 1:14, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 5:8.
~ Happy 4th of July Weekend ~

1. Why do you think Paul included this struggle in his story?

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Paul could have highlighted his victories, miracles, and ministry accomplishments, yet he chose to share a painful struggle that God did not remove. How does Paul's honesty challenge the way we view weakness? Why might God use our weaknesses to reveal His strength?

2. Why does it often seem easier to focus on the thorn rather than the blessings that are still around you? What influence does culture have on this?

Read: Philippians 2:12-16

Paul reminds believers to live differently than the world around them. Our culture often magnifies problems, frustrations, and what is missing. How can focusing on God's grace change our perspective? What blessings or evidences of God's faithfulness might be easy to overlook when we are fixated on the thorn?

3. How would you encourage someone who finds themselves in a cycle of doubt?

Read: Psalm 42:5-6, Hebrews 6:19

Throughout Scripture we see people wrestle with questions, fears, and uncertainty. What encouragement would you offer someone whose unanswered questions are beginning to affect their trust in God? How can we help one another move from doubt toward hope?

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4. Why do we often want explanations more than God's presence?

Read: Proverbs 3:5-6

The sermon taught that we often ask for reasons while God offers relationship. Why do explanations feel so important to us? Have you ever experienced a season where God's presence became more valuable than finally receiving an answer?

5. What does "God with us" mean during a season when life doesn't make sense?

Read: John 1:14

Jesus did not remain distant from our pain; He entered into it. How does knowing that God is present with you change the way you face suffering, uncertainty, or disappointment? What practical ways have you experienced His presence during difficult seasons?

6. What does abiding actually look like for you right now?

Read: John 15:1-8

Jesus reminds His followers that spiritual fruit grows from remaining connected to Him. When life feels uncertain, what helps you stay connected to Christ? What spiritual practices or rhythms help you abide instead of merely trying harder?

7. What unanswered question (thorn) are you bringing to God today, and what would it look like to trust His grace for the next step?

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9, Gal 2:20

God did not remove Paul's thorn, but He promised sufficient grace. What situation are you still seeking answers for? Instead of focusing on finding the answer, what would it look like to trust God's grace for today and take the next faithful step forward?