

any other. In other words, allow your testings to develop you but not to puff you up.

### III. The Discipline of Personal Limitations

#### Basic Scriptures:

Romans 10:1-3

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

1 Corinthians 4:6 ff

#### A. Introducing the Subject

1. In a sense every limitation may fall into the more general category of adversity. But we have already limited that category by definition and we now proceed to a more realistic discipline. It is unfortunate, in my thinking, that some have been unwilling to see the present subject as a discipline. Some have thought of it as a lack of spirituality, others as a unique frustration, and some have sought to deny that it existed. We will define all of these things shortly.

2. Notice however, our Scriptures as being introductory to the subject. In the Romans 10 passage, with deep fervor, Paul tells us of his great desire for Israel. He is elaborating on an expression in 9:1-3. But he is showing at the same time the mark of futility. For no matter how much he wishes it, he cannot save them and he cannot give his own salvation in pledge for them. They must come even as he has come. His personal limitation is the inability to secure the desired end. The thought of 2 Cor. 12 is somewhat different. The limitation is the thorn in the flesh. The Lord has allowed Satan to buffet the Apostle to secure a measured humility. Hence weakness is present instead of strength. The Apostle has learned to react properly to this but the limitation is there. Of a different sort is the limitation in 1 Cor. 4. Using himself and Apollos as examples, the writer seeks to convey the needed picture of truth to the disaffected congregation. But if they will not hear, he cannot achieve. The personal limitation is made the more real by the matters of space and time.