

The Fragrance of the Gospel
2 Cor. 2:12-17

"How does this piece of history apply to the burdened believer today? Jesus Christ, our great commander-in-chief, came to foreign soil (this earth) and completely defeated the enemy (Satan). Instead of killing five thousand persons, He gave life to more than 5,000 persons—to 3,000 plus at Pentecost and to another 2,000 plus shortly after Pentecost (Acts 2:41; 4:4). Jesus Christ claimed the spoils of battle—lost souls who had been in bondage to sin and Satan (Luke 11:14-22; Col. 2:15; Eph. 4:8). What a splendid victory.

The victorious general's sons would walk behind their father's chariot, sharing in his victory; and that is where believers are today—following Christ's triumph. We do not fight for victory; we fight from victory." Wiersbe

- I. How do you change self-centered thinking? The only way that that can change is through Christ-centered thinking, which is having a strong conviction of knowing that Jesus Christ defines our life and gives us our identity. Paul knows who he is in Christ. He understands that all of God's promises apply to him personally, just like they apply to us personally, and it kept his focus and perspective Christ centered. He also knows that Jesus is his leader. He doesn't want to follow anyone else, not even himself. The only person he wants to follow and serve is Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 2:12-14

2 Cor. 1:20-22

Joshua 5:13-15

Joshua 1:9

Deuteronomy 31:8 *The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."*

- II. Paul thanks God that he is a soldier in the victorious procession led by Jesus Christ. He is a leader who always conquers and is always victorious. Paul serves his cause, wears his armor, and bears his name in battle. He gives thanks because we believers are always being led in triumphal procession. The procession we march in is the procession of conquerors that have defeated the enemy of death, sin and eternal damnation because of Jesus going into battle before us as our leader.

2 Cor. 2:15-16

Rom. 8:35-39

- III. God chose to manifest the fragrance of the knowledge of Jesus Christ everywhere through us (vs. 14b-15). We became the unmistakable fragrance of the gospel to the world. Our life, how we live and what we say, our love, our convictions, our morality, integrity and uncompromising stand for the cause of Christ is the fragrance that influences and attracts people to accept Christ into their hearts so that they too can experience the smell of victory and freedom through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Cor. 2:16-17

John 3:17-18

"We Christians have the unmistakable 'scent' of Christ, discernable alike to those who are being saved and to those who are heading to death. To the latter it seems like the very smell of doom, to the former it has the fresh fragrance of life itself." (Redpath)