

Fragrance of Christ

2Corinthians 2:9-17

Coming to Christ in salvation cost us--He is now Lord of our life. He calls the shots, takes us where He wants us to go, doing His will, not our own, *'Lord over our choices'* Matt.

He tests us in order to trust us w/ Himself. Especially true for church leadership. The church in Corinth had a problem--sexual problem & not dealing w/. The kind not even pagans indulged in. Man sleeping w/ his father's wife, step mother, **incest**.

The leaders & church did nothing so Paul did--used severe methods to bring the man to repentance. *Kick him out of the church* in order that you might bring him back when he repents-it worked. Sometimes doctors have to cut in order to heal w/ severe illness

The man repents--Paul says forgive, love, restore him back into fellowship. The church & leadership were tested to see if trusted to do the right thing.

*9 For to this end also I wrote that I might put you to the **test**, whether you are obedient in all things. 10 But whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, 11 in order that no advantage be taken of us by **Satan**; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.*

Satan takes advantage—deceives--especially issues of discipline in the church. **First** Satan tempts--entices—got the man thru lust & now living in sin---betraying trust of fellow believers. **Now** Satan whispers *there's no forgiveness for you*. Devil uses next device—he overwhelmed w/ grief.

Paul steps in after the man repented says restore for fear he drowned in his guilt be overwhelmed w/ sorrow & Satan get a victory. Don't let the devil have two victories **Enticed thru Lust** & drowned in grief.

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Restore...in spirit of meekness...don't shun...but bring back into fellowship...just as if it never happened.

12 Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ and when a door was opened for me in the Lord, 13 I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia.

Paul deals w/ ministry issues & the effect the gospel has on believers and unbelievers. He first makes mention of his travels & reason for not coming to Corinth as planned. Critics accused him of vacillating, erratic & unreliable because he didn't come when he said.

Paul saw an open door in Corinth but was waiting in Troas for Titus. He had sent him w/ a stern letter to Corinth for them to deal w/ issues of sin & division in the church. He wanted to hear back from Titus if they accepted Paul's rebuke & correction or not....he needed to know before he came but Titus didn't show up in Troas so Paul changed his plans and went on to Macedonia. Not indecisive but by wisdom & caution spirit led.

14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. 15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?

Next Paul talks of the power of the gospel & illustrates by Roman triumph.

2:14-7:4 Paul switches & deals w/ his ministry in Macedonia--finally Titus arrives w/ a good report 7:5,6,7 From 2:13 departure for Macedonia 7:5 he arrives. 2:14-7:4 is called parenthetical or the great digression where he describes & defends the ministry & his apostleship

Roman triumph illustrating the effect of the preaching of the gospel. RT focuses on victors and conquered—victors rode in triumph & conquered

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chained to chariots and dragged along. The whole procession was accompanied by burning of fragrant incense. Paul depicts those involved in ministry as victors & the work of ministry of gospel as a triumphant march. The victors and the army are believes the conquered are the defeated.

The fragrance of the gospel of Christ is to the saved sweet aroma life to life but to unrepentant, sinner bitter aroma death to death.

No one is adequate....goodie too shoes...condemning...holier than thou...look down on.... **2Cor 3:5** *Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,*

17 *For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.*

Many peddling, making merchandise off, adulterating--admixture to gospel, water down--image of wine making water down for bigger profits Word/faith

John Trapp (1600) on peddling.. *'This is one of the devil's depths, Rev 2:24 whereunto God's faithful ministers are perfect stranger.'*

Sincerity w/o wax – ancient Grk meaning-pure, transparent, able to bear the test of being held up to the light, to bear the intensity of the sun. **Marble statue**. Paul is saying my message and ministry did not have and hidden agenda no false motives—all is tested by the light of day.

Speak in sight of God in Christ—Conscious of Paul's audience--not the people first but to the One w/ Whom we have to do-God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Words Paul spoke tested in sight of God in Christ alone.