

***Returning to the Authentic Gospel
Restoring Our Faith – Embracing the Gospel Victory
2 Corinthians 2:12-17***

1. Our STRUGGLES with the Gospel

2 Corinthians 2:12–17 (ESV) — When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.

Paul started the Church in Corinth...

He has spent 18 months with them, pouring out his life for them...

Then he finds out that they are being turned against him and it crushes him...

He makes a quick visit, but things don't go well at all

He leaves in haste...

He writes his "severe letter" and sent Titus to deliver it, collect any gifts for the Church in Judea, and then meet Paul in Troas...

Paul went to Troas and the Lord opened a door for evangelism there, but his heart was restless

He worried for Titus... He worried for the Church in Corinth...

2 Corinthians 11:28 (ESV) — And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

A statement I have said to myself and others desiring to walk with the Lord...

"If it was easy, everyone would do it!"

2 Timothy 3:12 (ESV) — Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted

1. Our STRUGGLES with the Gospel

2. Our SURRENDER to the Gospel

2 Corinthians 2:14 (ESV) — But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

Here Paul paints for the Corinthian Church a picture that would be very vivid for them, but can get lost in our day...

It is the picture of a Roman Victory Procession...

The victorious king rides in the front in his chariot...

The king is draped in purple...

All down the road on either side are priests offering up aromatic spices to the Roman gods

Following behind are the captured enemies who will be offered as sacrifices to the Roman gods...

Paul paints this shocking picture to explain his total surrender to the victory of Christ...

Matthew 16:24 (ESV) — Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Luke 14:33 (ESV) — So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Galatians 2:20 (ESV) — I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

1. Our STRUGGLES with the Gospel

2. Our SURRENDER to the Gospel

3. Our SCENT of the Gospel

2 Corinthians 2:15–16 (ESV) — For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

Paul saw his life as a sacrificial offering to God through Jesus Christ...

Philippians 2:17 (ESV) — Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

2 Timothy 4:6 (ESV) — For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

When we give our lives for God’s glory we are the vertical aroma of Christ to God...

Revelation 8:3–4 (ESV) — And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.

Romans 12:1 (ESV) — I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

However, we are also a horizontal aroma of Christ...

To some our lives smell of death, but to others we bring the scent of life!

1. Our STRUGGLES with the Gospel

2. Our SURRENDER to the Gospel

3. Our SCENT of the Gospel

4. Our SINCERITY through the Gospel

2 Corinthians 2:17 (ESV) — For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God’s word, but as men of sincerity, as

commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

A “peddler” was one who would dilute their wine with water or use false weights...

The word translated, “peddle” means...

To engage in retail business, with the implication of deceptiveness and greedy motives.

Paul gives FOUR REALITIES of his preaching of the Gospel that stand in stark contrast to the Gospel peddlers...

First, “men of sincerity”

The word Paul used to contrast himself was sincerity which means...

The quality of sincerity as an expression of pure or unadulterated motives—‘sincerity, purity of motives.’

Second, “commissioned by God”

The literal translation is “as by God”, but the meaning is, “as sent/commissioned by or from God”...

Paul’s ministry was built upon what he could take from people, but what he was sent by God to give to people...

Third, “in the sight of God”

This is literally “before God”

Therefore Paul was preaching the gospel before an audience of ONE!

Fourth, “in Christ”

Means “in union with Christ” or “as a representative of Christ”

Later he will make this more explicit...

2 Corinthians 5:20 (ESV) — Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

**Returning to the Authentic Gospel
Reconciling Our Faith – Embracing the Gospel Victory
2 Corinthians 2:12-17**

1. Our _____ with the Gospel

2. Our _____ to the Gospel

3. Our _____ of the Gospel

4. Our _____ through the Gospel