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## Triumph In Christ

2 Corinthians 2:14-17

9/27/17; Grace Church of Lockeford; Bible Study

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This second letter of Paul to the church at Corinth is both correcting and exhorting. While there are still errors he addresses, there are also words of encouragement. The section we will examine today is focused on encouraging the Corinthian believers. As they put into practice the things addressed in Paul's first letter, persecution is increasing. He wants them to know that Christ brings victory, that He is the one who works in and through us, and that faithfulness is most important. Paul first encourages them by speaking of...

### Triumph And Fragrance vv. 14-15

Paul expresses thanksgiving for two reasons in this verse. The first reason is the triumph that we have in Christ. Is this a reason to be thankful? Amen! The immediate context seems to suggest that Paul has victory over the schemes of Satan and the deceitfulness of sin particularly in mind (v. 11). There are several noteworthy factors about this victory.

First, it is God's victory. We are not victorious over sin and Satan on our own! We are thankful to God because He gives victory! Paul writes that God leads us in triumph in Christ. The idea is that the triumph has already been won and we are part of the victory train. When we follow Christ, we follow the victor!

The second noteworthy factor about this victory is that it is continual. God always leads us in triumph! When we follow Christ there is never defeat! Defeat is only experienced when we follow our own way.

The third factor is that the triumph is in Christ. God leads us in Christ's triumph. This triumph was purchased on the Cross by the blood of Christ! It is God's triumph, it is continual, and it is only in Christ.

The second reason Paul is thankful in this verse is that God uses us to spread the knowledge of Him. "Diffuses" is the Greek word φανερώω (phaneroō) meaning *reveal; make clear. To make manifest, to cause to become clearly revealed to the mind, the senses, or judgment.*

God uses us to manifest and reveal the knowledge of Himself. A fragrance is a pleasant aroma. The believer is to make the knowledge of God a pleasant aroma. Paul states this as an accomplished fact. God uses us to spread the knowledge of Him in spite of ourselves. I find this comforting and encouraging. I am a fragrance of God! I have the ability to manifest the knowledge of God through my life! This is done in "every place". Verse 15 gives further detail to this truth.

We are the fragrance of Christ! Those who are being saved and those perishing are impacted by the "aroma" we have. "Being saved" is a passive participle. We are saved by what God does, not by our own effort. This also emphasizes the second tense of salvation, from the power of sin (sanctification). Those who are perishing, the unbelievers, also are impacted by our "aroma". What form this aroma takes is detailed in the next verses as Paul speaks of...

### Sufficiency And Sincerity vv. 16-17

Which is which? This is fairly obvious. To those who are perishing we are the aroma of death. Why? Because they have rejected Christ and our service for Him brings added condemnation! The more light that is rejected, the greater the condemnation. The phrase "death leading to death" is interesting. They are dead spiritually (separated from God), and this spiritual death leads ultimately to a physical and eternal death or separation from God. God spreads this fragrance through us! To those who are being saved, the believers, we are the aroma of life leading to life. They are spiritually alive, they have a relationship with Christ and so they will live for eternity with Him! What a powerful position is ours in Christ! And yet, what a blessed position! We get to be a pleasing aroma to God! An aroma that can lead to life for those who receive Christ, and death for those who

deny Him. In light of these deep and powerful truths, Paul's question is so apt. Who is sufficient for these things? This will be answered in *verse 17*.

“Sufficient” is the Greek word ἰκανός (hikanos) meaning *considerable; many. Fit, meeting adequate standards for a purpose*.

Who is sufficient? How can we meet the standard for God's purpose? According to *verse 17* those who faithfully preach the gospel of Jesus Christ are sufficient. To have triumph in Christ and to be a fragrance of life, we must be sincere. We cannot peddle the Word. “Peddling” is the Greek word καπηλεύω (kapēleuō) meaning *trade in; peddle; a huckster. To peddle, to sell or offer (second-hand goods) for sale from place to place; characterized by false and deceptive practice*.

We are not hucksters deceptively selling the Word of God for monetary gain. We are not selling the Word, the message of Christ, for three reasons. First, because we are sincere. We have pure motives! Our desire is to see people transformed by His Grace! That is what we preach for! We preach the Word of God with pure motives. Secondly, because it is from God. This is not our message! It is a precious Word of truth entrusted to us by our creator and redeemer! It is a message of utmost importance from the King of kings to all people. Thirdly, we speak in the sight of God. In just a few chapters Paul will refer to believers as ambassadors for Christ. If an ambassador knew that his president was watching him, he'd probably mind his P's and Q's. Our King, our ruler, our Master, is watching us. We cannot make merchandise of the message He has entrusted to us!

In and of ourselves we are not sufficient to triumph, to be an aroma, to preach sincerely; we need the reminder that sufficiency is something God produces. He simply requires faithfulness. As we are faithful, He makes us sufficient. What a blessing and joy it is to know that Christ triumphs, and we are led in His victory train. To know that we are a pleasing aroma to God, used by Him to either draw or further condemn. To know that He is sufficient. To know that sincerity is better than prosperity.

**CHALLENGE:** Be faithful and sincere, let Christ's sufficiency flow through you.

V. 14

Thanks - χάρις (charis) *grace. Thanks n. — an acknowledgment of appreciation (to a divinity)*. Noun (subject), nominative, singular, feminine.

Always - πάντοτε (pantote) *always; at all times. Always adv. — at all times; all the time and on every occasion*. Temporal adverb.

Leads in triumph - θριαμβεύω (thriambeuō) *triumph over. To parade triumphantly v. — to parade conquered enemies on a public thoroughfare as a sign of subjugation and humiliation*. Verb, present, active, attributive participle, singular, dative, masculine.

Diffuses - φανερώω (phaneroō) *reveal; make clear. To make manifest v. — to cause to become clearly revealed to the mind, the senses, or judgment*. Verb, present, active, attributive participle, singular, dative, masculine.

Fragrance - ὀσμὴ (osmē) *smell; odor; fragrance. odor n. — any property detected by the olfactory system*. Noun (direct object), accusative, singular, feminine.

Knowledge - γνῶσις (gnōsis) *knowledge. Knowledge n. — the psychological result of perception and learning and reasoning; sometimes simply endowed by God (often with focus on application of the knowledge)*. Noun, genitive of content, singular, feminine.

V. 15

Fragrance - εὐωδία (euōdia) *fragrance; aroma. Fragrance n. — a distinctive odor that is pleasant*. Noun, predicate nominative, singular, feminine.

We are - statement of identity.

Perishing - ἀπόλλυμαι (apollymai) *destroy; perish; lose. To perish (spiritually) v. — to be or become without spiritual life under the condemnation of God.* Verb, present, either middle or passive, attributive participle, plural, dative, masculine.

V. 16

Aroma - same as “fragrance” in v. 14.

Life - ζωή (zōē) *life. Life (state) n. — the condition of living or the state of being alive; especially healthiness, happiness, exuberance, energy, vitality, and the like.* Noun (prepositional object), genitive, singular, feminine.

Sufficient - ἱκανός (hikanos) *considerable; many. fit adj. — meeting adequate standards for a purpose.* Predicate adjective, nominative, singular, masculine.

V. 17

Peddling - καπηλεύω (kapēleuō) *trade in; peddle; huckster. To peddle v. — to sell or offer (second-hand goods) for sale from place to place; characterized by false and deceptive practice.* Verb, present, active, attributive participle, plural, nominative, masculine.

Word - λόγος (logos) *word; message. Message (communication) n. — a communication that is most often spoken, but can come through other means.* Noun (direct object), accusative, singular, masculine.

Sincerity - εἰλικρίνεια (eilikrineia) *sincerity; purity of motive. Sincerity n. — the quality of being honest and straightforward in attitude and speech (the absence of affectation or pretense).* Noun (prepositional object), genitive, singular, feminine.