

# 2 Corinthians 2 Commentary

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2 CORINTHIANS - PAUL'S MINISTRY IN THE LIGHT OF THE INDESCRIBABLE GIFT  
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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll  
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Overview of Second Corinthians		
2Co 1:1-7:16 Character of Paul	2Co 8:1-9:15 Collection for the Saints	2Co 10:1-12:21 Credentials of Paul
Testimonial & Didactic	Practical	Apologetic
Past: Misunderstanding & Explanation	Present: Practical Project	Future: Anxieties
Apostle's Conciliation, Ministry & Exhortations	Apostle's Solicitation for Judean Saints	Apostle's Vindication of Himself
Forgiveness, Reconciliation Gratitude	Confidence	Vindication
Ephesus to Macedonia: Change of Itinerary Explained	Macedonia: Preparation for Visit to Corinth	To Corinth: Certainty and Imminence of the Visit
2Co 1:1-7:16	2Co 8:1-9:15	2Co 10:1-12:21
<a href="#">2Corinthians written ~ 56-57AD - see Chronological Table of Paul's Life and Ministry</a>		

## INTRODUCTIONS TO SECOND CORINTHIANS:

- **IRVING JENSEN** - [Introduction and study tips](#) - excellent preliminary resource - scroll to page 1877 (Notes on both 1-2 Cor begin on p 1829)
- **JOHN MACARTHUR** [2 Corinthians Introduction](#) - same as in the Study Bible
- **JAMES VAN DINE** [2 Corinthians - Author, Purpose, Outline, Argument](#)
- **CHARLES SWINDOLL** - [2 Corinthians Overview](#)
- **MARK SEIFRID** - [The Message of Second Corinthians: 2 Corinthians as the Legitimation of the Apostle](#)
- **J VERNON MCGEE** - [2 Corinthians Introduction](#)
- **DAN WALLACE** - [2 Corinthians: Introduction, Argument, and Outline](#)
- **DAVID MALICK** - [An Introduction To Second Corinthians](#)

**2 Corinthians 2:1 But I determined this for my own sake, that I would not come to you in sorrow again.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:1 But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:1 So I made up my own mind not to pay you another painful visit.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:1 κρινα γ ρ μαυτ το το τ μ π λιν ν λ π πρ ς μ ς λθε ν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:1 So I decided that I would not bring you grief with another painful visit.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:1 For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:1 So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:1 κρινα γ ρ μαυτ το το τ μ π λιν ν λ π πρ ς μ ς λθε ν.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:1 And I decided this to myself, not again to come in sorrow unto you,

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:1 But I determined this for myself, that I would not come again to you with sorrow.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:1 In fact, I made up my mind about this: I would not come to you on another painful visit.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:1 Indeed, I made up my mind not to come to you again in grief.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:1 But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:1 So I made up my mind not to make you another painful visit.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:1 For I decided not to come to you again in painful circumstances.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:1 I made up my mind, then, that my next visit to you would not be a painful one,

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:1 I decided not to visit you again while I was distressed.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:1 But it was my decision for myself, not to come again to you with sorrow.

- **I determined:** 2Co 1:15-17, Ac 11:29 15:2,37 1Co 2:2 5:3 Titus 3:12
- **that:** 2Co 2:4 2 2Co 1:23 2Co 7:5-8 2Co 12:20-21 2Co 13:10 1Co 4:21
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 4:21 What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?

2 Corinthians 7:8 For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it—for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while—

2 Corinthians 12:14 Here **for this third time I am ready to come to you**, and I will not be a burden to you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you; for children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

2 Corinthians 13:1-2 **This is the third time I am coming to you.** EVERY FACT IS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES. 21 I have previously said when present the second time, and though now absent I say in advance to those who have sinned in the past and to all the rest as well, that if I come again I will not spare anyone,

2 Corinthians 13:10 For this reason I am writing these things while absent, so that when present I need not use severity, in accordance with the authority which the Lord gave me for building up and not for tearing down.

## PAUL MADE UP HIS MIND

This is not a good chapter division for here Paul expresses his second reason for not coming, the first reason being "to spare you," explaining his motives for not coming for an earlier visit....

2 Cor 1:23-24+ But I call God as witness to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth. 24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but are workers with you for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm.

[Guzik](#) - Carrying on the thought from chapter one, Paul defends himself against the Corinthian Christians. Some among them criticized him because he changed his travel plans and did not come when he planned to. They used this change of plans to say of Paul, "He is unreliable and untrustworthy. We don't need to listen to him at all." But Paul explains there were many reasons why he did not come as planned, one of them being he was trying to spare the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 1:23).

**But I determined this for my own sake** - In 2 Cor 1:15+ he had stated "I intended at first to come to you." In other words what he had only "**intended**" before (because [boulomai](#) expressed his wish or desire), he has now "**determined**." or as the **NET** renders it "I made up my own mind." **MNT** - "purposed in my self." **TLB** paraphrases it "No," I said to myself, "I won't do it. I'll not make them unhappy with another painful visit."

**That I would not come to you in sorrow again** - **Sorrow** speaks of mental pain like Paul expressed in Ro 9:2 over the continual unbelief of his people Israel. This statement is similar to 2 Co 1:23 in which Paul affirmed "I call God as witness to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth."

**McGee** - Paul admits that he was discouraged with them. If he had come to visit them, it would have been in sorrow. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**MacArthur** - Paul, who had already had a painful confrontation at Corinth, was not eager to have another one ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Adam Clarke** explains that "Because of the scandals that were among them he could not see them comfortably; and therefore he determined not to see them at all till he had reason to believe that those evils were put away." ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**Come...again** implies a previous visit which had been painful and caused the Corinthians **sorrow**. This of course does not refer to the first stay in Corinth for 18 months during which he founded the church (Acts 18:1-10,11+). In 2 Cor 12:14 Paul writes that for a "**third time I am ready to come to you.**" (see also 2 Cor 13:1-2). **Denney** writes "that the natural meaning is that Paul had once visited Corinth in grief, and was resolved not to repeat such a visit." ([Expositor's Bible](#))

**A T Robertson** on **come...again** - What does Paul mean by "**again**" (palin)? Had he paid another visit besides that described in Acts 18 which was **in sorrow** (en lupēi)? Or does he mean that having had one joyful visit (that in Acts 18) he does not wish the second one to be in sorrow? Either interpretation is possible as the Greek stands and scholars disagree. So in 12:14 "The third time I am ready to come" may refer to the proposed second visit (1:15f.) and the present plan (a third). And so as to 13:1. There is absolutely no way to tell clearly whether Paul had already made a second visit.

**MacArthur** on **not come...again** - The apostle was referring to a painful visit he had earlier made to Corinth. Learning of the false prophets' arrival, Paul left Ephesus and hurried to Corinth to deal with the situation. The visit was not a success; in fact, someone (possibly one of the false apostles) openly insulted Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 2:5-8, 10; 7:12), and the Corinthians did not defend him. It was that painful visit that had prompted Paul to write the "severe letter" he referred to in 2:4. By giving the Corinthians time to repent, Paul hoped to avoid another painful encounter with them. Thus, his change in travel plans was not motivated by fickleness and unreliability, as the false teachers claimed, but by Paul's sensitivity toward his beloved church. ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

**Ray Stedman** - To put it briefly, his second reason for not coming was because the Spirit led him to see that he had already caused pain enough by his **letters** and his **painful visit**. If that would do the work, then there is no point in adding any more to it. Paul is like a skillful surgeon. The surgeon has to cut people, but a good surgeon cuts only as much as he has to. He derives no joy

out of cutting people's bodies open to remove the tumor, or the cancer, or whatever. As soon as that is done, and thoroughly done, he stops cutting, because he does not like to create pain. That is what Paul is saying here. "I wrote to you a sharp and painful letter." (Some think it is what we call First Corinthians. Other scholars say, "No, there is another letter here he is referring to that is lost to us." I do not know which is the case; I lean toward the latter view that there is another letter we do not have.) At any rate, Paul says, **"I have already caused you much pain by what I wrote. The Spirit has shown me that if I came again I would just cause more pain; that might be quite unnecessary, so that is why I did not come, because," as he puts it so beautifully, "I don't want to cause you pain. When you hurt, I hurt. Who is going to make me glad if I unnecessarily cause you to hurt? I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears."** What a beautiful picture of this great apostle writing, the tears flowing from his eyes. "I want you to see that, behind the writing, and the sharp rebukes, there is not a desire to hurt you, but a great heart of love that is unwilling to let you miss the love and the joy of God. That is why I wrote." This is a marvelous picture of the spirit in which we ought to handle misunderstandings. Not to hurt in return, not to retaliate, not to try to get even because somebody has misunderstood us, but to explain it as plainly and simply and clearly as we can, always with the intention that if there is anything hurtful to be said that it be as minimal as possible; and that we affirm our love and our concern for the individual involved. That is the way Paul did it. ([When You Are Misunderstood](#))

**Guzik** - It seems that Paul thought it best to give the Corinthian Christians a little room, and give them space to repent and get their act together. He didn't want to rebuke and admonish them all the time. Since this was Paul's heart, he knew that another visit of the same kind would be of little benefit for either Paul or the Corinthian Christians.

**Wiersbe** - In 2Cor 11:23–28+, Paul lists the many trials he had endured for Christ's sake, and he names as the greatest burden "the care of all the churches" (2Cor 11:28). A true shepherd, Paul had these infant churches on his heart and on his shoulders, like the High Priest of Israel (Ex. 28:12–21). ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines](#))

**Determined** (2919) (**krino** is a root of English words like critic, critical [kritikos] = a decisive point at which judgment is made) primarily signifies to distinguish, to decide between (in the sense of considering two or more things and reaching a decision), to make up one's mind, to separate, to discriminate.

**Sorrow** (grief) (3077) **lupe** see verb **lupeo** means sadness, grief, pain, sorrow. **Lupe** is used in Septuagint of Ge 3:16 (twice) of literal pain in childbirth, but most NT uses are figurative of pain in one's heart ("heartache"). **Lupe** is a word that describes that which is grievous or produces an emotional "heaviness". Uses in 2 Cor 7:10+ of godly sorrow that produces repentance without regret or worldly sorrow that produces death (2 Cor 7:10+). Describes giving to God "not **grudgingly** (reluctantly, unwillingly) or under compulsion." (2 Cor 9:7+) Classical Greek = **Lupē**, a noun appearing from Aeschylus (ca. Fifth Century B.C.) on, is used both of the pain of body and pain of mind, though more often it means the subjective feelings of sorrow, vexation, and grief. All 14 uses clearly a **keyword** in 2Cor chapter 2 - Lk. 22:45; Jn. 16:6; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 16:21; Jn. 16:22; Rom. 9:2; 2Co. 2:1; 2Co. 2:3; 2Co. 2:7; 2 Co. 7:10; 2 Co. 9:7; Phil. 2:27; Heb. 12:11; 1 Pet. 2:19

## 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I cause you sorrow, who then makes me glad but the one whom I made sorrowful?

AMP For if I cause you pain [with merited rebuke], who is there to provide me enjoyment but the [very] one whom I have grieved and made sad?

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

NET 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I make you sad, who would be left to make me glad but the one I caused to be sad?

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:2 ε γ ρ γ λυπ μ ς, κα τ ς ε φ ρ α ν ω ν με ε μ λυπο μενος ξ μο ;

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I cause you grief, who will make me glad? Certainly not someone I have grieved.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained?

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved?

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:2 ε γ ρ γ λυπ μ ς, κα τ ς ε φ ρ α ν ω ν με ε μ λυπο μενος ξ μο ;

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:2 for if I make you sorry, then who is he who is making me glad, except he who is made sorry by me?

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I make you sorry, who then is he that maketh me glad but he that is made sorry

by me?

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I cause you pain, then who will cheer me other than the one being hurt by me?

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I grieve you, who is left to cheer me up, except the one saddened by me?

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me?

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained?

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I inflict pain upon you, then who is there to cheer me except the one pained by me?

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:2 for if I cause you distress I am causing distress to my only possible source of joy.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:2 After all, if I had made you uncomfortable, how could you have cheered me up when you were uncomfortable?

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:2 For if I give you sorrow, who then will make me glad, but he who is made sad by me?

- 2Co 1:14 11:29 Ro 12:15 1Co 12:26
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## IF HE GRIEVES THEM WHO GIVES HIM JOY?

**For** (gar) term of explanation - Paul explains why he had made up his mind not to come to the Corinthians.

**if I cause you sorrow (lupeo), who then makes me glad** ("who is left to cheer me up") **but the one whom I made sorrowful (lupeo)?** - **NET** = "if I make you sad, who would be left to make me glad but the one I caused to be sad?" As the **NJB** says "if I cause you distress I am causing distress to my only possible source of joy." **IF** is first class conditional assumed to be true. Paul used **euphraino** to emphasize the special joy which comes through the fellowship of the Christian community

**McGee** - Paul didn't want to come in his sorrow, with tears in his eyes. He would have had them weeping, too. Then who would make Paul glad? They would all have been boo-hooing into their handkerchiefs! ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**Wiersbe** - Paul did not want to visit the church as a stern father, but as a loving friend. The church should have brought joy to his heart, not sorrow. If he had made them sorry, how could they in turn make him glad? He wanted to give them time to make matters right in the church; then he would visit them and their fellowship would be joyful. ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines](#))

**MacArthur** explains this **one whom I made sorrowful** - Although Paul was sensitive to the Corinthians' pain and sadness from the past confrontation, because of his commitment to purity he would confront them again if necessary. "The one whom I made sorrowful" refers to one convicted by his sin. In particular, there was apparently on Paul's last visit, a man in the church who confronted him with the accusations taken from the false teachers. The church had not dealt with that man in Paul's defense, and Paul was deeply grieved over that lack of loyalty. The only thing that would bring Paul joy would be repentance from such a one and any who agreed with him, and Paul had been waiting for it. ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Cause...sorrow** (3076) **lupeo** from **lupe** = sorrow) signifies pain, of body or mind and means to cause one to experience severe mental or emotional distress or physical pain which may be accompanied by sadness, sorrow or grief. Describes Peter, John and James' emotions when they accompanied Jesus to Gethsemane. Describes the young man who had many possessions after he heard Jesus words (Mk 10:22+) . **Lupeo** is a keyword in 2 Corinthians (7v out of 21v in NT) - Matt. 14:9; Matt. 17:23; Matt. 18:31; Matt. 19:22; Matt. 26:22; Matt. 26:37; Mk. 10:22; Mk. 14:19; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 21:17; Rom. 14:15; 2 Co. 2:2; 2 Co. 2:4; 2 Co. 2:5; 2 Co. 6:10; 2 Co. 7:8; 2 Co. 7:9; 2 Co. 7:11; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 4:13; 1 Pet. 1:6

**Makes...glad** (2165) (**euphraino** from **eu** = well, good + **phren** = mind, intellect, disposition) means in active sense to make someone glad, to cheer someone up, to make them joyful in mind, to cause them to be glad (2Co 2:2, Lxx = Ps 19:8, Pr 23:15). In the middle voice or passive voice **euphraino** means to be glad, to be joyful, to celebrate or be jubilant (used 4 times with this sense in story of Prodigal son = to feast in token of joy), to enjoy oneself, to be delighted, to keep a day of rejoicing. Euphrainō is associated with rejoicing at a banquet. It appears four times in reference to the rejoicing at the return of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32).

**2 Corinthians 2:3 This is the very thing I wrote you, so that when I came, I would not have sorrow from those who ought to make me rejoice; having confidence in you all that my joy would be the joy of you all.**

Amplified - And I wrote the same to you so that when I came, I might not be myself pained by those who are the [very] ones who ought to make me glad, for I trusted in you all and felt confident that my joy would be shared by all of you.

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote this very thing to you, so that when I came I would not have sadness from those who ought to make me rejoice, since I am confident in you all that my joy would be yours.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:3 καὶ γράψα το τοῦτο, ἵνα μὴ λθὼν λπην σχοφῶνδε με χαρεῖν, πεποιθὺς ἐπὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ὅτι ὑμεῖς πάντων μὲν σὶν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:3 That is why I wrote to you as I did, so that when I do come, I won't be grieved by the very ones who ought to give me the greatest joy. Surely you all know that my joy comes from your being joyful.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice, for I felt sure of all of you, that my joy would be the joy of you all.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:3 I wrote as I did so that when I came I should not be distressed by those who ought to make me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:3 καὶ γράψα το τοῦτο, ἵνα μὴ λθὼν λπην σχοφῶνδε με χαρεῖν, πεποιθὺς ἐπὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ὅτι ὑμεῖς πάντων μὲν σὶν.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:3 and I wrote to you this same thing, that having come, I may not have sorrow from them of whom it behoved me to have joy, having confidence in you all, that my joy is of you all,

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote this very thing, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:3 I wrote this very thing so that when I came I wouldn't have pain from those who ought to give me joy, because I am confident about all of you that my joy will also be yours.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:3 Thus I wrote to you with reference to this matter that at my arrival I might not be grieved by the very ones needed to make me rejoice. I have no doubts about it; you—all of you—are my joy.

NEB This is precisely the point I made in my letter: I did not want, I said, to come and be made miserable by the very people who ought to have made me happy; and I had sufficient confidence in you all to know that for me to be happy is for all of you to be happy.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote as I did, so that when I came, I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice; for I am confident about all of you, that my joy would be the joy of all of you.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote as I did so that when I came I might not be pained by those in whom I should have rejoiced, confident about all of you that my joy is that of all of you.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:3 Indeed, I wrote as I did precisely to spare myself distress when I visited you, from the very people who should have given me joy, in the conviction that for all of you my joy was yours too.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:3 This is the very reason I wrote to you. I didn't want to visit you and be distressed by those who should make me happy. I'm confident about all of you that whatever makes me happy also makes you happy.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:3 And I said this very thing in my letter, for fear that when I came I might have sorrow from those from whom it was right for me to have joy; being certain of this, that my joy is the joy of you all.

Message - That was my reason for writing a letter instead of coming—so I wouldn't have to spend a miserable time disappointing the very friends I had looked forward to cheering me up. I was convinced at the time I wrote it that what was best for me was also best for you.

- **I wrote:** 1Co 4:21 5:1-13
- **so that:** 2Co 12:21 13:1,2
- **I would not:** 2Co 12:11
- **having confidence:** 2Co 1:15 7:6 8:22 Ga 5:10 Phm 1:21
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A "MISSING LETTER"

**This is the very thing I wrote you, so that when I came, I would not have sorrow(lupe) from those who ought (dei) to make me rejoice** - In other words if he had made them sorrowful, how could they in turn make him rejoice? **NET** - "And I wrote this very thing to you, so that when I came I would not have sadness from those who ought to make me rejoice." **NLT** = "That is why I wrote to you as I did, so that when I do come, I won't be grieved by the very ones who ought to give me the greatest joy" The identification of this letter is not certain. The purpose of the letter was to "get all the painful work out of the way. Then when he did visit them personally, it would be a pleasant visit because they would have taken advantage of the opportunity he gave them to get right." (Guzik)

**Guzik** poses and answers an interesting question regarding the "missing letter" - Does this mean that something is missing from our Bibles? Not at all. Not every letter that Paul wrote was inspired Scripture for all God's people in all ages. We can trust that what Paul wrote in the missing letter was perfect for the Corinthian Christians at that time, but not perfect for us; otherwise, God would have preserved it. We shouldn't think that everything Paul or the other Bible writers wrote was necessarily Scripture.

**MacArthur** - Paul's reason for writing was that those in sin would repent—then there could be mutual joy when the apostle came. ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**McGee** - Paul wanted to come to them in joy. He had been hoping to get word from them telling him that they had corrected those things about which he had written them. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**Utley** on the **very thing I wrote you** - There are several theories that try to explain these verses: (1) some call this an EPISTOLARY AORIST, which means it would refer to II Corinthians (cf. NJB); (2) some believe this refers to I Corinthians; (3) others believe that this refers to the previous lost letter mentioned in 1 Cor. 5:9; and (4) others think this refers to a severe lost letter, possibly partially preserved in 2 Corinthians 10–13.

**Having confidence in you all that my joy would be the joy of you all** - My joy is your joy. **NIV** = "I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy." **Amplified** = "I trusted in you all and felt confident that my joy would be shared by all of you." **NEB** = "I had sufficient confidence in you all to know that for me to be happy is for all of you to be happy."

**Wiersbe** - He wanted to give them time to make matters right in the church; then he would visit them and their fellowship would be joyful (Borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#))

**2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of great distress and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears, not to make you sad, but to let you know the love that I have especially for you.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:4 κ γ ρ πολλ ς θλ ψεως κα συνοχ ς καρδ ας γραψα μ ν δι πολλ ν δακρ ων, ο χ να λυπηθ τε λλ τ ν γ πην να γν τε ν χω περισσοτ ρως ε ς μ ς.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:4 I wrote that letter in great anguish, with a troubled heart and many tears. I didn't want to grieve you, but I wanted to let you know how much love I have for you.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:4 For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:4 For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:4 κ γ ρ πολλ ς θλ ψεως κα συνοχ ς καρδ ας γραψα μ ν δι πολλ ν δακρ ων, ο χ να

λυπηθ τε λλ τ ν γ πην να γν τε ν χω περισσοτ ρωσ ε ς μ ς.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:4 for out of much tribulation and pressure of heart I wrote to you through many tears, not that ye might be made sorry, but that ye might know the love that I have more abundantly toward you.

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be made sorry, but that ye might know the love that I have more abundantly unto you.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:4 For I wrote to you with many tears out of an extremely troubled and anguished heart--not that you should be hurt, but that you should know the abundant love I have for you.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much anguish and heaviness of heart I wrote to you through many tears, not with the intent of causing you sorrow, but that you might know my overflowing love toward you.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:4 For I wrote you out of much distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain, but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears, not that you might be pained but that you might know the abundant love I have for you.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:4 I wrote to you in agony of mind, not meaning to cause you distress but to show you how very much love I have for you.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:4 I was deeply troubled and anguished. In fact, I had tears in my eyes when I wrote to you. I didn't write to make you uncomfortable but to let you know how much I love you.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much trouble and pain of heart and much weeping I sent my letter to you; not to give you sorrow, but so that you might see how great is the love which I have to you.

- **out:** Lev 19:17,18 Ps 119:136 Pr 27:5,6 Jer 13:15-17 Lu 19:41-44 Ro 9:2,3 Php 3:18
- **not:** 2Co 7:8,9,12 12:15, that you might, 2Co 11:2
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **CONFRONTATION WITH LETTER WRITTEN WITH A PEN "DIPPED IN TEARS!"**

**For out of much affliction** ([thlipsis](#)) **and anguish** ([sunoche](#) - dismay, distress) **of heart** ([kardia](#)) **I wrote to you with many tears** ([dakruon](#)) - Paul opens his heart to us and the Corinthians in this passage expressing his great emotional pain, presumably related to his painful visit. **With...tears** is literally "through tears" which **Robertson** says means "accompanied by tears." Paul did not write this letter lightly but out of great sorrow and deep distress, writing with a pen not dipped in ink, but in tears! In a word we might say it "broke his heart" to write this letter. The scalpel has to cut before it can remove the cancer and healing occurs.

**Robertson** has a picturesque comment on **anguish of heart** - (**Anguish** is [sunoche](#) which is...) Old word from **sunechō**, to hold together. So *contraction* of heart (Cicero, *contractio animi*), a "*spiritual angina pectoris*."

**Wiersbe** - Tears are an important part of a spiritual ministry. Jesus wept; Paul ministered with tears (Acts 20:19 and Acts 20:31); and Ps. 126:5-6 states that there will be no harvest apart from tears....In chapter 1, Paul's theme was abundant comfort; here it is abundant love. "Love never fails" (1 Cor. 13:8). Where there is love, there is always the burden to see others enjoy the very best. How many times pastors weep over wayward Christians. Yet God honored Paul's tears and worked in the church so that sin was put away. (Borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#))

Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting.  
He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed,  
Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.  
-- Psalm 126:5-6

**Spurgeon** makes an interesting comment on Paul's approach which was not defensive and offensive but afflicted and anguished - "Where I have known that there existed a measure of disaffection to myself, I have not recognised it, unless it has been forced upon me, but have, on the contrary, acted towards the opposing person with all the more courtesy and friendliness, and I have never heard any more of the matter. If I had treated the good man as an opponent, he would have done his best to take the part assigned him, and carry it out to his own credit." (See the full quote entitled "[Suspicion in Ministry](#)" from [Spurgeon's "Lectures to My Students"](#))

[- online\)](#)

**McGee** - A great many people today fall out with the preacher when he preaches a message that is rather severe. Sometimes correction from the Word of God will really bear down on the congregation. Some people think that a pastor should not do that. May I say to you, my friend, that a faithful pastor must do that. The command is: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:1–2+). Any man who stands in the pulpit today has a tremendous responsibility to rebuke what is wrong. Many of the saints don't like this. Paul tells them here that his rebuke was not because he was opposed to them, but because he loved them. A faithful pastor shows his love by preaching the Word of God as it is rather than "buttering up" the congregation. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**Gromacki** - This epistle was not a logical treatise (cf. Romans), but, rather, an emotional plea. As Jesus wept over the unbelief of loved ones (Luke 19:41), so the apostle wept often. He warned the Ephesian church about false teachers "night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31) and informed the Philippian church in the same way (Phil. 3:18). He characterized his life as "serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears, and temptations" (Acts 20:19). ([2 Corinthians - Stand Firm in the Faith](#))

**Robertson** agrees that "Paul was a man of heart. He writes to the Philippians with weeping (klaïōn) over the enemies of the Cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18). He twice mentions his tears in his speech at Miletus (Acts 20:19–31+) ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**Not so that** ([hina](#) - term of purpose) **you would be made sorrowful** (see [lupeo](#)), **but that** ([hina](#) - term of purpose) **you might know the** (Spirit energized [agape](#)) **love which I** (present tense - continually) **have especially** (abundantly - beyond what is ordinary or expected) **for you** - Note the contrast **made sorrowful** versus **know love**. **Amp** = "not to cause you pain but in order to make you realize the overflowing love that I continue increasingly to have for you." Paul expresses first the negative purpose which was not to stir up emotional pain, and then the positive purpose which was to show how much he truly loved the Corinthians.

**Warren Wiersbe** - He did not think of his own feelings, but of the feelings of others. In Christian ministry, those who bring us great joy can also create for us great sorrow; and this was what Paul was experiencing. He wrote them a stern letter, born out of the anguish of his own heart, and bathed in Christian love. His great desire was that the church might obey the Word, discipline the offender, and bring purity and peace to the congregation. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Prov. 27:6). Paul knew that his words would wound those he loved, and this brought pain to his heart. But he also knew (as every loving parent knows) that there is a big difference between hurting someone and harming him. Sometimes those who love us must hurt us in order to keep us from harming ourselves. Paul could have exercised his apostolic authority and commanded the people to respect him and obey him; but he preferred to minister with patience and love. God knew that Paul's change in plans had as its motive the sparing of the church from further pain (2 Cor. 1:23–24). Love always considers the feelings of others and seeks to put their good ahead of everything else. (Borrow [Be encouraged : God can turn your trials into triumphs](#))

**Utley** - Paul uses two SUBJUNCTIVE VERBS in this sentence because sometimes people do not respond well to correction. God had created all humans with free will, which is both a precious and a dangerous thing. It holds the potential of joy and restoration or embitterment and continuing rebellion.

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**Affliction** ([2347](#)) **thlipsis** from **thlibo** = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn derived from **thláo** = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. Thlipsis may be either external or internal in origin. With the exception of Mark 3:9 the sense is always metaphoric. **Thlipsis** is a strong term which does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships. Medically **thlipsis** was used of the pulse (pressure). It is a pressing together as of grapes. It conveys the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure or crushed beneath a weight. **Thlipsis** refers not to mild discomfort but to great difficulty. In the Old Testament there are accounts of the lives of many pious men who endured great tribulation. Joseph was sold as a slave and spent much of his youth in prison (Genesis 39,40). Moses suffered affliction along with the people of God (cf. Hebrews 11:25). Old Testament speaks also of the tribulation which will always be the lot of God's people in the world because of the hatred of Satan and the cruelty of the world. Trials confront the corporate people of God as well as the individual believer. Numerous Psalms lament the suffering which the faithful must endure. **Keyword** in 2 Corinthians - 2 Co. 1:4; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 2:4; 2 Co. 4:17; 2 Co. 6:4; 2 Co. 7:4; 2 Co. 8:2; 2 Co. 8:13.

**Anguish** ([4928](#)) (**sunoche** from **sun** = with, together + **echo** = to hold) literally means a "holding together" (compression, prison) but is used only figuratively in the two NT uses, Lk 21:25+ and 2 Cor 2:4, both times to refer to one who is held or gripped by a severe emotional stress. Sunoche describes a state of mental distress which includes acute anxiety. In Lk 21:25+ Jesus prophesied "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth **dismay** (sunoche) among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves,."

**Vincent** - Only here and Luke 21:25+. Lit., a holding together, constraining, or compressing. See on taken, Luke 4:38. So anguish, from the Latin, angere to choke: anger, which, in earlier English, means affliction, mental torture: anxious: the Latin

anguis a snake, marking the serpent by his throttling. In Sanscrit, anhas, from the same root, was the name for sin, the throttler. It reappears obscurely in our medical term quinsy, which was originally quinancy, Greek κυνάγκη dog-throttling, med., cynanche.

**Tears** (1144) (**dakruon**) describes the salty watery fluid from the eyes. Gilbrant - This term has many references in classical and Koine Greek and is found 35 times in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew word dim'ah. In the New Testament Paul used this word to describe how he ministered to those he disciplined (i.e., "with many tears"; cf. Acts 20:19, 31; 2 Corinthians 2:4). This was in a manner similar to Jesus' description of the woman who ministered to Him with her "tears" (Luke 7:38, 44). Revelation 7:17 and 21:4 both use words from Isaiah 25:8 to say that God will wipe away "every tear" from His people's faces." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))  
Secular use - that which drops like tears, gum, sap, τ ῆς κώνθης Hdt.2.96.

**Dakruon** - 10v - tear(2), tears(8) - Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:44; Acts 20:19; Acts 20:31; 2 Co. 2:4; 2 Tim. 1:4; Heb. 5:7; Heb. 12:17; Rev. 7:17; Rev. 21:4

**Dakruon** in **Septuagint** - 2 Ki. 20:5; Ps. 6:6; Ps. 39:12; Ps. 42:3; Ps. 56:8; Ps. 80:5; Ps. 116:8; Ps. 126:5; Eccl. 4:1; Isa. 25:8; Isa. 38:5; Jer. 9:1; Jer. 9:18; Jer. 13:17; Jer. 14:17; Jer. 31:16; Lam. 1:2; Lam. 2:11; Lam. 2:18; Mic. 2:6; Mal. 2:13;

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## THE PATIENT CHRISTIAN 2 Corinthians 2:1–17

### I. THE PURPOSE—vv. 1–4

1. Sorrow—vv. 1–2. Paul, writing to Christians, has sorrow in his heart because the way the Christians were living and acting.
2. Shame—v. 3. While Paul was away, the people went back into sin. Paul warns them to straighten out their lives and live according to God's Word.
3. Showing—v. 4. Though he was very strict, Paul always spoke with love and compassion. You may be bold and yet do it in love.

### II. THE PATIENCE—vv. 5–11

1. Punishment—vv. 5–6. Those who encouraged sinning (1 Cor. 5:1–13), were punished. The people join with Paul in his disapproval of these people.
2. Plan—v. 7. Forgive those who were wrong, but have seen their wrong and have repented. Regardless of the past, forgive and forget!
3. Patience—v. 8. Forgiving shows maturity and understanding. It shows God's love within you.
4. Purpose—vv. 9–10. Paul is seeing how much the people will forgive. An unforgiving spirit is sinful.
5. Problem—v. 11. Never retain bitterness within you.

### III. THE POWER—vv. 12–17

1. Preaching—v. 12. Paul visits Troas on his second and perhaps third Missionary journey.
2. Problem—v. 13. Paul could not find Titus.
3. Power—v. 14. God using man to accomplish His work.
4. Prospect—vv. 15–16. Death to the Christian means the start of everlasting life.
5. Purpose—v. 17. The purpose of Paul, and all other ministers giving God's Word, is a DIVINE CALL UPON THEIR LIVES.

**2 Corinthians 2:5 But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but in some degree--in order not to say too much--to all of you.**

Kistemaker - But if someone has caused you grief, he has not grieved me, but to some extent—that I may not be too severe—all of you.

Barclay - If anyone has caused grief, it is not I whom he has grieved, but to some extent—not to overstress the situation—all of you.

AMP But if someone [the one among you who committed incest] has caused [all this] grief and pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure, not to put it too severely, [he has distressed] all of you.

TLB - Remember that the man I wrote about, who caused all the trouble, has not caused sorrow to me as

much as to all the rest of you—though I certainly have my share in it too.

CJB Now if someone has been a cause of pain, it is not I whom he has pained, but, in some measure—I don't want to overstate it—all of you.

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:5 But if anyone has caused sadness, he has not saddened me alone, but to some extent (not to exaggerate) he has saddened all of you as well.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:5 Ε ὁ τις λελήκεν, ὁ κ μ λελήκεν, ἀλλ π μ ρους, νὰ μ πιβαρ , π ντας μ ς.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:5 I am not overstating it when I say that the man who caused all the trouble hurt all of you more than he hurt me.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:5 Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure-- not to put it too severely-- to all of you.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:5 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent--not to put it too severely.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:5 Ε ὁ τις λελήκεν, ὁ κ μ λελήκεν, ἀλλ π μ ρους, νὰ μ πιβαρ , π ντας μ ς.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:5 And if any one hath caused sorrow, he hath not caused sorrow to me, but in part, that I may not burden you all;

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:5 But if any hath caused sorrow, he hath caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:5 If anyone has caused pain, he has caused pain not so much to me but to some degree-- not to exaggerate-- to all of you.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:5 If anyone has offended someone, it is not me he offended, except partially, for I do not want to be too severe on all of you.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:5 But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent-- not to be too severe.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:5 But if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but to some extent-- not to exaggerate it-- to all of you.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:5 If anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure (not to exaggerate) to all of you.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:5 If anyone did cause distress, he caused it not to me, but -- not to exaggerate -- in some degree to all of you.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:5 If someone caused distress, I'm not the one really affected. To some extent-although I don't want to emphasize this too much-it has affected all of you.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:5 But if anyone has been a cause of sorrow, he has been so, not to me only, but in some measure to all of you (I say this that I may not be over-hard on you).

- **any:** Pr 17:25 1Co 5:1-5,12,13 Ga 5:10
- **caused sorrow:** Ga 4:12
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## IMMORAL MAN OF FIRST LETTER

In 2Co 2:5-11 Paul gives two reasons the Corinthians need to forgive the offender. The first reason is so the offender is not overwhelmed and discouraged by the church's discipline. The second reason is so that the church would not be taken advantage of by the schemes of Satan.

This next section (vv 5-11) is about the treatment of the offender and the result of the severe letter, a plea for reconciliation and forgiveness.

**MacArthur** - This passage (vv5ff) is one of the best texts in all of Scripture on the godly motivation and rationale for forgiveness. ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - This epistle is teaching us wonderful truths about God's comfort. In the first chapter we saw God's comfort for life's plans. Now we see God's comfort in restoring a sinning saint. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**Garland** introduces this confusing passage writing that "Paul's tact leads him to speak about a specific situation in ambiguous generalities as he avoids naming the person or describing the nature of the indignity. The anonymous person had repented, and now Paul only identifies the transgression euphemistically, "if anyone has caused grief," and identifies the person in a veiled way as "the one who did the wrong" (2Co 7:12). Naming names and specifying the crimes and punishment would only unleash more grief by bringing more shame on the one who has now repented and has been sufficiently punished. ([NAC-2Cor](#))

**Ray Stedman** introduces 2Co 2:5-11 - Clearly this is a case of some kind of judicial discipline going on within the congregation in Corinth. There is a great deal of doubt among scholars as to whom the person in question is: Traditionally this has been linked with that incident in First Corinthians, where a certain individual was living in a form of incest with his father's wife. Paul had written about that, rebuking them for not doing anything about it, and urging them to take action. Some scholars feel that this was the follow-up on that, that we are dealing now with the case of a man who had repented; and that Paul is urging that love and forgiveness be extended to him. But other Bible scholars feel that this is another incident, that this man is more likely involved in some kind of rebellion, leading a schism against the apostle's authority, perhaps, and that this had created trouble in the church. I doubt that this is the case of the incestuous man, because Paul had not only written First Corinthians about that and urged the church to act, but he himself had been there since then. (He had also written a very severe letter to them about matters in the church, so it seems unlikely to me that this matter was hanging fire all that time.) I personally feel, too, that this is a reference to some other situation in the church. But, whatever, that is not important. The point is that some form of discipline had been exercised; and now Paul is urging that, since the man had repented, it is time for a change of attitude toward him. **So this is a very helpful study on what a church ought to do when someone responds to discipline.** ([When Discipline Ends](#))

**Uteley** - This verse is very difficult to translate! I believe the sense of the RSV and Phillips translation are probably best: "but if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure (not to put it too severely) to you all." There is no object mentioned in this sentence; therefore, some relate it to (1) the entire church (cf. NKJV, NJB, RSV, Phillips, NIV, NEB) or (2) the offending person (cf. KNOX translation).

**But if any has caused sorrow** ([lupeo](#) - pain, grief), **he has caused sorrow** ([lupeo](#)), **not to me** - The "IF" introduces a [first class conditional statement](#) which assumes this is a true statement, that is that there was a specific offense in the past ([see note below](#)). The first **caused sorrow** is in the perfect tense which indicates action in past time with results (pain, grief, sorrow) that continue into the present. Paul states that the offender did not cause him sorrow, but that he did cause sorrow to the church at Corinth (**to all of you**). In short, while there seems to have been something in the offense that did offend or potentially could have offended Paul, he chose to "[lay down arms](#)," and not to retaliate or seek revenge. Note that in 2Cor 2:10 Paul says "*one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also*." This also would imply Paul had in some way been offended, but he is clearly choosing forgiveness over vindictiveness. Paul is (in my opinion) exemplifying the response of a Spirit filled man, a man who was depending on the Spirit's enablement to do supernaturally what he could not do naturally. This recalls Paul's instruction to "Be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ." (1Cor 11:1+).

**THOUGHT** - Do you need to lay down arms in regard to some personal or church conflict? If so, don't try to do it depending on your natural strength, ability or resolve, but instead resolve to rely wholly on the supernatural enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

**MacArthur** adds "Paul had nothing but love and forgiveness in his heart toward the person who had wronged him. He was not about to let that individual steal his joy, impair his usefulness, or become the dominating issue in the Corinthian church. Paul exemplified the forgiveness Jesus commanded. Responding to Peter's question, " 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' (Mt 18:21) Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven' " (Mt 18:22). ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

As alluded to above this section can be very confusing because Paul does not identify the offense or the offender that needs forgiveness. In 2Co 2:5 he refers to him by the term "**any**" (if any has caused sorrow) and in 2Cor 2:6 he refers to him as "**such a one**." As discussed more below ([see notes](#)) there are two possibilities of this offender. Some hold that the offender was the incestuous man of 1Cor 5:1-11. Others like **John MacArthur** hold that this is a man who "had apparently verbally and publicly assaulted Paul during the apostle's "painful visit" to Corinth (see 2Co 2:1). Following Paul's instructions, the Corinthian church disciplined the sinning member and put him out of the fellowship. He had since repented, and now not only did Paul forgive him, but he also instructed the Corinthians to do so too." ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

**Utley** - Who is this "he" who caused trouble? There have been several suggestions: (1) it refers to 1 Cor. 5:9 and the man who married his father's wife; (2) it refers to a ringleader of one of the factions or house churches; or (2) it refers to the spokesperson for the group of supposed "leaders" from Palestine who confronted Paul on his return to Corinth and apparently the church did not defend Paul as it should have.

**Garland** agrees with MacArthur concluding (after his lengthy discussion of the possibilities - Garland has almost 9 pages of discussion from page 116-125 in his commentary [NAC-2Cor](#)) that "The majority of commentators assume that the guilty party was some unknown person who led a revolt against Paul." ([NAC-2Cor](#))

**But** - (but in some degree) Term of contrast. Paul now contrasts his emotional response (no sorrow) to that of the Corinthian church (sorrow).

**In some degree** (in part, more or less, in some measure)--**in order not to say too much** (see [epibareo](#) - NAS Marginal note = "Lit so that I not be burdensome")--**to all of you - Not to say too much** has the sense of "in order not to heap up too great a burden of words", not to exaggerate, not to be too hard, not to overstate it. Paul does not want to burden them by belaboring the offensive incident or elaborate in detail about the offense. "He does not wish to give pain by too severe language" (ATR) He certainly did not want to exaggerate the sorrow producing situation or as we might say today "blow it out of proportion." **To all of you** indicates that the whole church had suffered because of the one who had **caused sorrow**. As Paul goes on to say later, since the offender had repented, the incident did not need to be [rehashed](#) but needed to be closed. It was time for the church to move on to forgiveness and restoration of the offender.

**Stedman** comments on to **all of you** - This is the problem with actions that are wrong -- they are always hurtful, not only to a few people, but to everyone. There is nothing more deceiving than the attitude that many people take today of, "Well, this is only between me and another person. No one else is being hurt by it." That is never true in a church. As John Donne has well reminded us, "No man is an island." That is true of all humanity, but in a church we are in a family. It is impossible for there to be strife and hurt and grievance between any two individuals that does not begin to spread and touch others as well. I have been in churches where feuds had developed where one family group would not speak to another. As a result of that, the whole church had been paralyzed spiritually; nothing was happening out in the community, no testimony of love and restoration was going on, and the church in its effectiveness had ground to a halt. That happens many, many times, and that is why discipline must be carried out on a wider basis. In this case in Corinth, the majority of the congregation had been involved in trying to reach the individual referred to here. But the point, of course, is that it had already happened; it had already worked; this man had repented. He had admitted that what he did was wrong; and that is what repentance is. It is coming to a conclusion about yourself that what you have done is hurtful and wrong. This man had reached that place and had demonstrated it by what I like to call, "the mark of repentance." It is mentioned here in Verse 7. Paul urges them to comfort him that he may not be "overwhelmed by excessive sorrow." ([When Discipline Ends](#))

**Say too much** (be a burden) ([1912](#)) [epibareo](#) from **epí** = upon or an intensifier + **baréo** = to burden) means to weigh down, to place a weight upon someone, to put a burden on or to be burdensome to. To press too heavily on or be too severe with. 3v in NT - 2 Co. 2:5; 1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:8

## 2 Corinthians 2:6 Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority,

AMP For such a one this censure by the majority [which he has received is] sufficient [punishment].

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:6 This punishment on such an individual by the majority is enough for him,

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:6 καθ' ὅσον τὸ τοιοῦτο πῖπτον αὐτῇ π τ ν πλει νων,

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:6 Most of you opposed him, and that was punishment enough.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:6 For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough,

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:6 The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:6 καθ' ὅσον τὸ τοιοῦτο πῖπτον αὐτῇ π τ ν πλει νων,

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:6 sufficient to such a one is this punishment, that is by the more part,

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:6 Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many;

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:6 The punishment inflicted by the majority is sufficient for that person.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:6 That penalty imposed by the group was enough for such a one.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:6 This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man,

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:6 This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person;

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:6 This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person,

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:6 The punishment already imposed by the majority was quite enough for such a person;

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:6 The majority of you have imposed a severe enough punishment on that person.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:6 Let it be enough for such a man to have undergone the punishment which the church put on him;

- **which:** 2Co 13:10 1Co 5:4,5 1Ti 5:20
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Matthew 18:15-17 "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. 17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

### SUFFICIENT DISCIPLINE

**Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority-** The punishment was severe enough. To say "sufficient" implies that some may have wanted to get a few more "lashes" (so to speak). Paul says as the saying goes [Enough is enough!](#)" As noted below the Greek word for **punishment** ([epitimia](#)) conveys the sense of causing **such a one** to suffer what they deserve. The specific action taken by the church is not stated and could have been anything from rebuke to removal from participation in body life (e.g, excommunication or disfellowshipping such as exclusion from partaking the Lord's Supper, cf 1Cor 11:27). For more on what this punishment may have looked like see Jesus' instructions on disciplining sinning believers (Mt 18:15-17 ). Whatever the **punishment**, the **majority** of the church concurred (it was not unanimous). The fact that the **majority** of the church presented a united front would have been sufficient to show the offender the seriousness of his offense and would have helped motivate repentance.

#### Related Resource:

- [What does the Bible say about church discipline? | GotQuestions.org](#)

The identity of **such a one** is debated - some favor this as the man sinning in an incestuous affair as Paul . It is interesting that the same phrase "**such a one**" is used by Paul in 1 Cor 5:5 and 1 Cor 5:11 and twice in this letter - 2 Cor 2:6 and 2 Cor 2:7.

**Murray Harris** on **such a one** - Many older commentators (ED: Lenski,) found in vv. 5–11 a further reference to the man guilty of incest (1 Cor 5:1-8+). But most modern writers rightly reject this identification for a variety of reasons **ED:** Furnish in Anchor Bible Commentary, C K Barrett, Alfred Plummer, Paul Barnett, Ralph Martin, John MacArthur's [note above](#)) Evidently, after Paul's painful visit an insult of some description had been directed against him or one of his representatives either by a visitor to Corinth (so C.K. Barrett) or by a Corinthian, who perhaps at that time headed the opposition to the apostle at Corinth and objected in particular to Paul's disciplinary methods such as those outlined in 1 Cor 5. Paul here discounts the sorrow caused him by the unfortunate episode. ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Guzik** asks who is **such a one**? -- He is probably the same one that Paul told the Corinthian Christians to confront in 1 Corinthians 5. The phrase such a man is used in both books to describe the man sinning in an incestuous affair. He lived immorally with his stepmother...Some commentators disagree and think Paul speaks of another man all together. They believe this man sinned by insulting Paul to his face during his "*painful visit*." But 2 Corinthians 2:10 says that Paul expected the Corinthian Christians to forgive the brother first, then he would forgive. If the offense had been something personal towards Paul, we would expect it to be the other way around. In fact, Paul plainly says he has not grieved me. His first offense was not against Paul. So, it is likely that such a man was the one Paul said must be confronted in 1 Corinthians 5." ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**William Barclay** favors **such a one** to be one different than the incestuous man in 1 Corinthians 5 writing "again we have a passage which is an echo of trouble and of unhappiness. When Paul had visited Corinth there had been a ring-leader to the opposition. This

man had clearly personally insulted Paul who had insisted that discipline must be exercised upon him. The majority of the Corinthians had come to see that his conduct had not only hurt Paul, but had injured the good name of the whole Corinthian Church. Discipline had been exercised, but there were some who felt that it had not been sufficiently severe and who desired to impose a still greater punishment. It is now that the supreme greatness of Paul emerges. His plea is that enough has been done; the man is now penitent and to exercise still further discipline would do far more harm than good. It might simply drive the man to despair, and to do that is not to serve Christ and the Church, but to offer an opportunity to Satan to lay hold upon the man. Had Paul been actuated by merely human motives he would have gloated over the hard fate of his former enemy. Nowhere does the majesty of his character better emerge than on this occasion, when, in the graciousness of his heart, he pleads for mercy on the man who had hurt him so much. Here is a supreme example of Christian conduct in face of injury and insult. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**Gromacki** - The church responded to Paul's directives set forth in his letter and through his representative, Titus. They disciplined the offender. If he was the infamous fornicator, he was excommunicated (1 Co 5:5, 13). If he was a critic of the apostle, then he was also publicly rebuked and/or severed from ecclesiastical fellowship (cf. 1Ti 5:19–20). ([2 Corinthians - Stand Firm in the Faith](#))

**Bernard on the majority** - That it was inflicted only by "the majority" (for so we must translate τὸ πλεῖον; see reff.) is sufficiently accounted for by remembering the presence of an anti-Pauline party at Corinth, who would not be likely to follow the Apostle's instructions.

**Murray Harris on the majority** - What was the view of the implied minority? In light of v. 7a, it seems likely that they were a pro-Pauline clique, the "ultra-Paulinists," who regarded the penalty as insufficient. ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Utley** has an interesting note on **the majority** - The mention of "the majority" shows how Paul viewed church polity. He felt himself called as an Apostle to the Gentiles, but this did not remove the congregational aspect of responsibility to lead. Paul has a great balance in his letters between authoritative commands (Galatians and 1 Cor. 5), and the need for local leadership. The NT has all three forms of polity: apostolic (Episcopal); local leaders (Presbyterian); and congregational (every believer). Acts 15 has all three levels involved in the ecclesiastical process. It is not an issue of which one is biblical; they all are. It is an issue of godly believers leading within biblical priorities, not personal agendas!

**Warren Wiersbe** - It is worth noting that Paul did not mention the name of the man who had opposed him and divided the church family. However, Paul did tell the church to discipline this man for his own good. If the person referred to is the fornicator mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5, then these verses indicate that the church did hold a meeting and discipline the man, and that he repented of his sins and was restored. True discipline is an evidence of love (see Heb. 12). Some young parents with "modern views" of how to raise children refuse to discipline their disobedient offspring because these parents claim they love their children too much. But if they really loved their children, they would chasten them. Church discipline is not a popular subject or a widespread practice. Too many churches sweep such things "under the rug" instead of obeying the Scriptures and confronting the situation boldly by "speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). "Peace at any price" is not a biblical principle, for there cannot be true spiritual peace without purity (James 3:13–18). Problems that are "swept under the rug" have a way of multiplying and creating even worse problems later on. The man whom Paul confronted, and whom the church disciplined, was helped by this kind of loving attention. When I was a child, I didn't always appreciate the discipline that my parents gave me, though I must confess that I deserved far more than I received. But now that I look back, I can thank God that they loved me enough to hurt me and hinder me from harming myself. Now I understand what they really meant when they said, "This hurts us more than it hurts you." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Sufficient** (2425) (**hikanos** from the root **hik-** = "to reach [with the hand]," "to attain", "reaching to", "attaining to"; hence, "adequate") refers to that which reaches or arrives at a certain standard. **Hikanos** has been variously used from the time of the Greek tragic dramatists in the basic sense of **adequate** (sufficient for a specific requirement), **sufficient** (enough to meet the needs of a situation or a proposed end), **enough** (in or to a degree or quantity that satisfies or that is sufficient or necessary for satisfaction). Uses in the Corinthian letters - 1Co. 11:30; 1Co. 15:9 ("not **fit** to be called an apostle"); 2Co. 2:6; 2Co. 2:16 ("who is **adequate** for these things?"); 2Co. 3:5 ("Not that we are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves")

**Punishment** (2009) (**epitimia** from **epitimaō** = to rebuke, punish) with the implication of causing people to suffer what they deserve. It is used only in 2Co 2:6 as a technical term in congregational discipline for the censure of the church in the case of the member who had been involved in incest (1Co 5:1f+) the penalty being expulsion from the fellowship of the church. "Classical writers used **epitimia** primarily in two ways: to refer to "citizenship," with all its civil rights and privileges, and to refer to "punishment" or "penalty." The Septuagint adopted the second sense of the term, namely, "punishment," in Wisdom of Solomon 3:10. The term carries the implication of causing an offender to suffer the deserved consequences of his sin, whether simply a rebuke or a more substantial penalty." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**2 Corinthians 2:7 so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:7 so that now instead you should rather forgive and comfort him. This will keep him from being overwhelmed by excessive grief to the point of despair.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:7 στε το ναντ ον μ λλον μ ς χαρ σασθαι κα παρακαλ σαι, μ πως τ περισσοτ ρ λ π καταποθ τοιο τοϲ.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:7 Now, however, it is time to forgive and comfort him. Otherwise he may be overcome by discouragement.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:7 so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:7 Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:7 στε το ναντ ον μ λλον μ ς χαρ σασθαι κα παρακαλ σαι, μ πως τ περισσοτ ρ λ π καταποθ τοιο τοϲ.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:7 so that, on the contrary, it is rather for you to forgive and to comfort, lest by over abundant sorrow such a one may be swallowed up;

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:7 so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:7 As a result, you should instead forgive and comfort him. Otherwise, this one may be overwhelmed by excessive grief.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:7 To balance things, your resultant action should consist of being gracious and encouraging to him, so as to avoid his being engulfed in greater grief.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:7 so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:7 so now instead you should forgive and console him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:7 so that on the contrary you should forgive and encourage him instead, or else the person may be overwhelmed by excessive pain.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:7 and now by contrast you should forgive and encourage him all the more, or he may be overwhelmed by the extent of his distress.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:7 So now forgive and comfort him. Such distress could overwhelm someone like that if he's not forgiven and comforted.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:7 So that now, on the other hand, it is right for him to have forgiveness and comfort from you, for fear that his sorrow may be over-great.

- **you should rather forgive and comfort him:** Ga 6:1-2 Eph 4:32 Col 3:13 2Th 3:6,14,15 Heb 12:12-15
- **might be overwhelmed.:** 2Co 5:4 2Sa 20:19,20 Ps 21:9 56:1,2 57:3 124:3 Pr 1:12 Isa 28:7 1Co 15:54
- **by excessive sorrow:** 2Co 7:10 Pr 17:22 Php 2:27 1Th 4:13
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Ephesians 4:32+ **Be** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) kind to one another, tender-hearted, **forgiving** ([charizomai](#) in present tense - continually which necessitates continual [dependence on the Holy Spirit](#)) **each other**, (HERE IS OUR MODEL) just as God in Christ also has **forgiven** ([charizomai](#)) **you**.

Colossians 3:13+ bearing with (present tense) one another, and **forgiving** ([charizomai](#) in present tense - continually which necessitates continual [dependence on the Holy Spirit](#)) **each other**, whoever has a complaint against anyone; (NOTE THE "STANDARD" OF OUR FORGIVENESS!) just as the Lord **forgave** (Col 2:13+ - [charizomai](#)) **you**, so also should you.

## THE ROAD TO RESTORATION: CORPORATE FORGIVENESS & COMFORT

Paul continues his comment on the fact that the punishment that has been inflicted is enough. The implication is that the offender had repented of his offense but that some of the church felt that the offender needed more punishment before he could be restored to the fellowship but Paul clearly disagreed as shown by his words **so that on the contrary**.

**So that on the contrary** - This is a term of contrast. Paul uses this **tounantion** to draw a contrast as **Barclay** renders it "so far from inflicting severer punishment, (HERE IS THE CONTRAST) you must forgive him and comfort him."

**Tounantiou** is used only 3x (2Co 2:7, Gal 2:7, 1Pe 3:9) being a contraction of **the** (article = *to*) and **opposite** or **contrary** (*enantios*) which serves as an adversative adverb drawing a contrast between what has just been written and what is about to be written.

Church discipline is never vindictive, but always redemptive.

Sin must be exposed, but it also must be covered (forgiven by God, forgiven by church) after it is exposed.

--Bob Utley

**You should rather forgive and comfort him** - To **forgive and comfort** would be evidence of the Spirit's working in the Corinthian fellowship (see A Spirit Filled Church), for it is not usually natural to forgive an offense. For followers of Jesus it is supernaturally possible to forgive one who has offended, just as Jesus did (cf Lk 23:34+). Even the verb Paul chooses for **forgive** ([charizomai](#) - used in 1 Cor 2:12+, 2Co 2:10, 2Co 12:13) is derived from the word for grace ([charis](#)) implying that to forgive necessitates reliance on the grace of God and also is a manifestation of the unmerited favor the person freely bestows on the offender. Forgiveness by the whole church, the local Body of Christ, would serve to assure the offender that Christ Himself had in fact forgiven him.

**Utley** on **you should forgive** - Paul asks the majority to **forgive** in 2Co 2:7 (aorist middle infinitive); in 2Co 2:10 he repeats the ongoing request (present middle indicative); in 2Co 2:10 he assures them of his (personal pronoun, egō) gracious and ongoing forgiveness of the offender (two perfect middle indicatives) ("I have **forgiven**, if [since] I have **forgiven**")

Paul says they also are to **comfort** the repentant offender which is the verb [parakaleo](#) which means one called alongside or who comes alongside. In short, they are not to treat this man like an outcaste or a "spiritual leper" but as a brother in Christ, one who has been reconciled with God and with whom they also experience reconciliation and fellowship.

**MacArthur** - For the Corinthians not to forgive the repentant person would be sin and steal their joy. It would, in fact, bring God's chastening on them (cf. Matt. 6:14–15; 18:35). Unforgiveness would also render them unfit for worship (Matt. 5:23–24). ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

**Garland** - Forgiveness, however, does not require that the church reinstate the person into a position of authority again but does require his reinstatement into their fellowship....**Comfort** is not unrelated to spurring others to live worthily of the gospel. It does not mean making others feel comfortable about their past sin but leading them to godly sorrow where they find God's forgiveness....Christians are to live triumphantly, knowing that their sins have been forgiven by God; and living under an excessive, all-consuming guilt can only destroy life, not bring life. The past disgrace may continue to burden the offender, but now he will not need to carry the load alone but will have his fellow Christians to bear him up (cf Galatians 6:1-2+)....The issue of church discipline is a difficult one, and the danger is that we will go to one extreme or the other. On the one hand, we may not want to do anything when someone is guilty of an offense that brings disgrace upon or disrupts the community. We will bury our heads in the sand and hope that all the unpleasantness will soon go away. Or we may try to substitute cheap grace for real grace by letting bygones be bygones without signs of genuine repentance. On the other hand, we may be tempted to go too far in discipline so that it becomes destructive rather than constructive. We may try to turn the one who is condemned into a scapegoat and inappropriately cover up our own hidden sins by taking out our anger on this victim. Hughes correctly recognizes that it is "no less a scandal" to ban a penitent sinner forever from the redeemed and reconciled community as it is to wink at flagrant wickedness....Sinners must pass through a period of despair, but the danger comes when they become permanently mired in gloom and lose all hope of forgiveness. Feeling that there is no way out can present an even worse danger to the soul. Along these lines, John Chrysostom cites the grief of Judas, which resulted in his suicide (Matt 27:3–5) ([NAC-2Cor](#))

Otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed ([katapino](#) - overcome, "gulped down") by excessive ([perissos](#)) sorrow ([lupe](#)) - Failure to forgive this repentant man's offense might overwhelm him or as the **KJV** says might cause him to "be swallowed up!" **Barclay's** says "lest such a one be engulfed by excess of grief." The same verb [katapino](#) is used in a positive sense in 2 Cor. 5:4 (swallowed-up by life)

The goal of **sorrow** was not to overwhelm the man but to bring to repentance "For the **sorrow** that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the **sorrow** of the world produces death." (2 Cor. 7:10+)

John Calvin gives good advice regarding church discipline - Calvin gives sage advice: "Severity is required in order that wicked men may not be made more bold by being allowed to go unpunished—for this is rightly said to be an enticement to sin. But on the other hand there is a danger that a man who is disciplined will fall into despair so that the Church must practice moderation and be ready to pardon anyone as soon as it is sure that he has sincerely repented.

As **Barton** says "The Greek verb for "overwhelmed" ([katapino](#)) was used in Greek writings to describe engulfing waves. Thus Paul's image here was of the disciplined person drowning in sadness. Paul wasn't concerned for his own vindication in this distressing incident but instead for the offender's spiritual welfare." ([Life Application Commentary](#))

We all agree that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it.

-- C. S. Lewis

**Forgive** (grant, freely give, bestow) ([5483](#)) [charizomai](#) from [charis](#) = grace, undeserved merit or favor) has the basic meaning of to give, but goes on to mean to give or grant as a favor, gratuitously, generously, graciously and in kindness, bestowing as a gift of grace or out of grace (i.e., undeserved forgiveness), release, pardon, remit. Half of the NT uses of [charizomai](#) (12/23) convey the sense of granting forgiveness, both Divine and human. To forgive out of grace, means it is done freely and without the recipient necessarily meriting the forgiveness. In Luke 7:42 this meaning overlaps with the forgiving or canceling of a debt, which in a sense is what one does when they forgive another individual. **Vine** adds [charizomai](#) means "to bestow a favor unconditionally... then to remit a debt, and hence to forgive... **Charizomai** primarily denotes to show a favor ([charis](#))... In each case the idea of a free, unconditioned act is involved, and in all save one or two cases this is the dominant thought, cp. Acts 27:24; Philemon 22 ([Collected writings of W. E. Vine](#))

**Comfort** ([3870](#)) [parakaleo](#) from [para](#) = beside + [kaleo](#) = call) conveys the basic idea of calling one alongside to help or give aid as in a judicial sense of an advocate who renders legal aid and comfort. Because a person can be called alongside for many purposes, [parakaleo](#) has a wide range of meanings including to entreat, appeal to, summon, comfort, exhort, or encourage. **Parakaleo** came to mean exhorting, admonishing, encouraging, call to one's side, call to one's aid. English "[encourage](#)" means "with heart." To comfort or encourage in a sense is to give them new heart. Shallow sympathy makes people feel worse but true spiritual encouragement makes them feel better and brings out the best in people. The English word **paraclete** ([parakletos](#)) is from [parakaleo](#). Webster's 1828 dictionary defines [paraclete](#) as "an advocate; one called to aid or support; hence, the consoler, comforter or intercessor, a term applied to the Holy Spirit."

**Parakaleo** is a [keyword](#) in 2 Corinthians (18x in 15v out of a total of 107x in NT) 2 Co. 1:4; 2 Co. 1:6; 2 Co. 2:7; 2 Co. 2:8; 2 Co. 5:20; 2 Co. 6:1; 2 Co. 7:6; 2 Co. 7:7; 2 Co. 7:13; 2 Co. 8:6; 2 Co. 9:5; 2 Co. 10:1; 2 Co. 12:8; 2 Co. 12:18; 2 Co. 13:11;

**Overwhelmed** (devoured, swallowed up) ([2666](#)) [katapino](#) from [katá](#) = down + [pínō](#) = to drink) means literally to drink or gulp down, and so to swallow and to swallow up completely. "**Devour**" means to cause something to pass through the mouth and into the stomach--to gulp down. Figuratively [katapino](#) means to cause the complete even sudden destruction of someone or something. Negatively it could mean to destroy (cf. 1 Cor. 15:54; 2 Cor. 2:7; Heb. 11:29; 1 Pet. 5:8). Paul uses [katapino](#) again in 2 Cor 5:4 writing "so that what is mortal will be **swallowed up** by life." Peter uses [katapino](#) in 1 Peter 5:8+ commanding saints to "**Be of sober spirit, be on the alert.** Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to **devour.**" Our enemy is seeking to bring us to spiritual ruin, to demoralize us so that we are on the "sidelines" so to speak, to weaken our faith and replace it with fear (See [Fear, How to Handle It](#))

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**Utley** on **excessive** ([perissos](#)) - Literally "lest by more abundant grief such a one should be swallowed up." The first term is perissos. Paul uses it and its related forms often in his letters to Corinth.

1. perissos/perissoteros

- a. exceedingly (cf. 1 Cor. 12:23, 24; 15:10)
- b. excessive (cf. 2 Cor. 2:7; 10:8)

c. superfluous (cf. 2 Cor. 9:1)

2. perissoterōs, more abundantly (cf. 2 Cor 1:12; 2:4; 7:13, 15; 11:23; 12:15)

3. perisseuō

a. to abound (cf. 2 Cor. 1:5; 3:9; 9:8, 12)

b. abundantly gifted (cf. 1 Cor. 14:12; 2 Cor. 8:7)

c. to abound in performance (cf. 1 Cor. 15:58)

d. abound in food (cf. 1 Cor. 8:8)

e. cause to be abundant (cf. 2 Cor. 4:14; 9:8)

4. perisseuma, superabundance (cf. 2 Cor. 8:13, 14)

5. perisseia, superabundance (cf. 2 Cor. 8:2; 10:15)

These usages show how Paul often used this term to express positive spiritual abundance. When he uses it negatively, it shows the depth of his concern for the sinning person. Paul's sorrow and pain were extreme. Paul feared how Satan could take advantage of a spiritually "crushed" person (possibly from personal experience).

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## Welcome Home!

Forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. —2 Corinthians 2:7

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:1-11

For many teenagers who run away, returning home isn't always all they had hoped for. More than a few 15-year-olds have been confronted by a father who has snarled, "I don't know if I can ever forgive you. It's bad enough that you've given your mother migraines ever since you outgrew the backyard. But now you've done it. Coming home doesn't change the fact that you're just a dirty little delinquent."

Our attitude toward the delinquent in the family of God should be quite different. In 2 Corinthians 2, Paul told how to receive a repentant Christian back into the fellowship of the church (vv.6-8).

From what he said, we can draw this conclusion: When a Christian returns after falling into sin and being separated from the fellowship of God's people, we must avoid a well-you've-really-done-it-this-time attitude. Instead, we should convey love, acceptance, and a desire to see him fully restored (Galatians 6:1). That's not to say we're to take his disobedience lightly. We should long for his spiritual health just as parents want to see their child avoid the consequences of delinquent behavior. But when a person sincerely repents and comes back to the Lord, the best way to help him is to give him a warm "Welcome home!" By: Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak  
In living echoes of Thy tone;  
As Thou has sought, so let me seek  
Thy erring children lost and lone. —Havergal

The backslider who turns back to the Lord needs the backing of the church.

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## Related Resources: Forgive/Forgiveness

- [Freedom Through Forgiveness](#) - Life Action Ministries worksheet
- Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Ephesians 4:32
- Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Colossians 3:13
- Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Matthew 6:12 and Matthew 6:14-15.
- Illustrations and quotes on forgiveness

## John MacArthur discusses 10 Biblical reasons for forgiving others

- [2 Corinthians 2:5-6 The Blessings of Forgiveness, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [2 Corinthians 2:7-11 The Blessings of Forgiveness, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [2 Corinthians 2:5-11 The Blessings of Forgiveness, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

NT words for forgive/forgiveness:

- Forgiveness ([859](#)) aphasis
- Forgive (send away from, cancel the debt, release, let go) ([863](#)) aphiemi
- Forgive (grant, freely give, bestow) ([5483](#)) charizomai

**Excellent 5 Part Sermon Series on Forgiveness by Dr Ray Pritchard:** following messages are also in his book -**The Healing Power of Forgiveness** ([see reviews by readers](#))

- [1\) Forgiveness Healing the Hurt We Never Deserved](#)
- [2\) Forgiveness and the Lord's Prayer](#)
- [3\) Judge Not!](#)
- [4\) Is Total Forgiveness Realistic](#)
- [5\) The Final Step-Blessing Your Enemies](#)

#### Other Resources on Forgiveness

- [Father, Forgive Them by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Forgiving the Unforgivable by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [How Can I Learn to Forgive? by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Unless You Forgive by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Forgiving the Unforgivable article by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Forgiveness of Injuries \(Mt 18:21-22\) by John Angell James](#)
- [Forgiveness of Sins by Henry Law - 17 Chapter Treatise!](#)

#### 2 Corinthians 2:8 Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:8 δι παρκαλ μ ς κυρσαι ε ς α τ ν γ πην·

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:8 So I urge you now to reaffirm your love for him.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:8 So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:8 I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:8 δι παρκαλ μ ς κυρσαι ε ς α τ ν γ πην·

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:8 wherefore, I call upon you to confirm love to him,

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:8 Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love toward him.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:8 Therefore, I call on you to affirm him with love.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:8 So I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:8 Therefore, I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:8 That is why I urge you to give your love towards him definite expression.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:8 That is why I urge you to assure him that you love him.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:8 For which cause my desire is that you will make your love to him clear by your acts.

- **to reaffirm your love:** Ga 5:13 6:1,2,10 Jude 1:22,23
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passage:**

Galatians 5:13+ For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve (present tense - as your lifestyle. Only way to do this is [to learn to depend on the Holy Spirit](#)) one another.

Galatians 6:1-2+ Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, **restore** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) - **restore** is [katartizo](#)- used of mending nets as in Mt 4:19+, setting broken bones) such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

## REFORMATION & RESTORATION BY PUBLIC REAFFIRMATION

Public rebuke resulting in repentance now called for public reaffirmation and restoration.

**Wherefore I** (present tense - continually) **urge** (exhort, ESV = beg) **you to reaffirm your love** ([agape](#)) **for him** - **Barclay** - "So then, I urge you, let your decision in regard to him be a decision of love." They were to "conclude" or "decide in favor of" **love** since punishment to the offender had resulted in sincere repentance. Paul is calling for the saints to reinstate the repentant man and not by just letting him into the congregation but by demonstrating genuine "agape" (God-like) unconditional **love for him**. As Paul wrote in his first letter love "does not take into account ([logizomai](#) - bookkeeping term) a wrong suffered." (1 Cor 13:5b+). In other words [agape](#) love does not "**keep score**." **Agape** is a choice of the will (energized by the Spirit) and may involve emotion, but it **must** always involve **action** as Paul calls for in this case. Remember that the manifesting of this quality of **love** is only possible by the Spirit's enablement (Gal 5:22+). Reaffirming their **love** would be shown by allowing him to return to fellowship in the church.

At its core, unforgiveness is a lack of love.

The greatest demonstration of love,

both by individual believers and the church collectively,

is forgiving others.

-- John MacArthur

**Barton on reaffirm our love** - The Greek word for "**reaffirm**" here suggests a legal act, such as a ratification of an appointment. The fact that Paul used here a legal term with the Greek word *agape*, a word that means "selfless love," is remarkable. Paul was asking the Corinthian church to confirm the membership of this man in the community of love—that is, the church—in a public and official manner. Paul doesn't quote Jesus on this matter, but he was, in effect, following Jesus' own instructions: "If another believer sins, rebuke him; then if he repents, forgive him" (Luke 17:3NLT+). ([Life Application Commentary](#))

**Hodge** - "When the offender is made to feel that, while his sin is punished, he himself is loved; and that the end aimed at is not his suffering but his good, he is more likely to be brought to repentance." ([2 Corinthians Commentary Pdf](#))

[Complete Biblical Library](#) - Paul desires a decision whose content is love. Right is to be replaced by right as pardoning love dictates and crowns the final legal decision.

As **Garland** says (referring to Colossians passage) "The reaffirmation of love requires some public, concrete expression rather than just mouthing expressions of love." ([NAC-2Cor](#))

As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity (Col 3:12–14).

**Reaffirm** ([2964](#))(**kuroo** from **kuros** = authority, confirmation) means to confirm, ratify, validate (in classic Greek used in legal transactions like peace treaties, contracts involving sales, decrees, and bidding at auctions). It means to "cause someone to recognize the reality of something" (LN) In the only other NT use in "Galatians 3:15+ **kuroō** is used as legal terminology meaning to "confirm," "ratify," or "validate" (cf. Gal 3:17). Namely, once a man's will is given "authoritative confirmation" it can in no way be changed or voided. Hence, **kuroō** here refers to the execution itself which brings the will into force." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Love** ([26](#))([agape](#)) is unconditional, sacrificial love and Biblically refers to a love that God is (1Jn 4:8,16), that God shows (Jn 3:16, 1Jn 4:9) and that God enables in His children (fruit of the Spirit - Gal 5:22+). **Agape** love does not depend on the world's criteria for love, such as attractiveness, emotions, or sentimentality.

I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. —2 Corinthians 2:8

Today's Scripture: 2 John 1:1-6

The story is told of a king who had a silver bell placed in a high tower of his palace early in his reign. He announced that he would ring the bell whenever he was happy so that his subjects would know of his joy.

The people listened for the sound of that silver bell, but it remained silent. Days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, and months into years. But no sound of the bell rang out to indicate that the king was happy.

The king grew old and gray, and eventually he lay on his deathbed in the palace. As some of his weeping subjects gathered around him, he discovered that he had really been loved by his people all through the years. At last the king was happy. Just before he died, he reached up and pulled the rope that rang the silver bell.

Think of it—a lifetime of unhappiness because he didn't know that he was warmly loved and accepted by his loyal subjects.

Like that monarch, many lonely souls live out their days without the joy of knowing they are loved and appreciated by others. Do you know people who need an encouraging word? If so, tell them how much they mean to you. It may be just what's needed to bring joy into their lives. By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Someone gave me a cheering word  
Of which I was in need,  
And faith was bolstered once again  
By just that tiny deed. —Sheldon

The human spirit rings with hope at the sound of an encouraging word.

**2 Corinthians 2:9 For to this end also I wrote, so that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.**

AMP For this was my purpose in writing you, to test your attitude and see if you would stand the test, whether you are obedient and altogether agreeable [to following my orders] in everything.

The Living Bible I wrote to you as I did so that I could find out how far you would go in obeying me.

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:9 For this reason also I wrote you: to test you to see if you are obedient in everything.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:9 ες το το γρ κα γραψα, να γν τ ν δοκιμ ν μ ν, ε ες π ντα π κοο στε.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:9 I wrote to you as I did to test you and see if you would fully comply with my instructions.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:9 For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:9 The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:9 ες το το γρ κα γραψα, να γν τ ν δοκιμ ν μ ν, ε ες π ντα π κοο στε.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:9 for, for this also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether in regard to all things ye are obedient.

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye are obedient in all things.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:9 I wrote for this purpose: to test your character to see if you are obedient in everything.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:9 For also I wrote to you with this purpose in mind that I might know whether in every matter you pass the test of obedience.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:9 I wrote for this reason: to test you and to know whether you are obedient in everything.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:9 For this is why I wrote, to know your proven character, whether you were obedient in everything.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:9 This was in fact my reason for writing, to test your quality and whether you are completely obedient.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:9 I had also written to you to test you. I wanted to see if you would be obedient in every way.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:9 And for the same reason I sent you a letter so that I might be certain of your desire to do my orders in all things.

- **that:** 2Co 7:12-15 8:24 Ex 16:4 De 8:2,16 13:3 Php 2:22
- **whether:** 2Co 7:15 10:6 Php 2:12 2Th 3:14 Philemon 1:21
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL'S PROOF BY TESTING THE CORINTHIANS

Paul now shifts his focus from the offender to those offended, the Corinthian church.

**Kruse** - It is true that the 'severe' letter's purpose (ED: THIS LETTER IS LOST TO US) was to demand disciplinary action against the offender, but this demand was intended also to **test** the Corinthians' obedience. What Paul expected was not obedience to him personally, but obedience to the gospel and its implications ([TNTC-2Cor](#))

**For ([gar](#)) to this end also I wrote** - Explains why he charged them to reaffirm the repentant man with supernatural love. He wrote them rather than coming in person and exacting discipline himself because he wanted the Corinthians to accept corporate responsibility and carry out the discipline and restoration themselves.

**John MacArthur** sees the letter he wrote as the severe letter between 1 and 2 Corinthians (described in 2 Cor 2:4). ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

**Broomall** notes that "Paul indicates three reasons why he wrote: (1) to prepare them for his visit (2Co 2:3); (2) to manifest to them his love (2Co 2:4); (3) to test their obedience (2Co 2:9)." ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**So that ([hina](#) - purpose clause) I might put you to the test whether you are obedient** ("give ear") **in all things** - More literally it reads "*that I might know the proof of you*" (2Co 2:9<sup>YLT</sup>), that is, to know if the Corinthians' obedience to Paul was genuine. **Test ([dokime](#))** was used to test metal coins to make sure they were genuine and Paul had the same goal, to make sure they were genuine believers. **In all things** indicates partial obedience is disobedience! They had obeyed by disciplining the offender but now needed to obey by loving the offender. They had obeyed the first part of Jesus' instruction in Lk 17:3+ ("rebuke him") but now needed to obey the last part ("forgive him"). Their willingness to forgive the repentant offender would be the real **test** of whether their hearts were right before God. To the praise of the glory of God's grace, the Corinthian church passed the **test** on both accounts!

**Barton** - Paul reiterated his reason for writing the "severe letter" to the Corinthians. First of all, he hoped the letter would rectify the troublesome situation before he arrived (see 2Co 2:3). When he visited them, he wanted to encourage them in their faith instead of correcting them. Second, he wanted to test their obedience. ([Life Application Commentary](#))

**Murray Harris** - A positive Corinthian response to this plea would afford Paul further evidence of the church's willingness to acknowledge his divinely given authority. By reproofing the offender after hearing the "severe letter," they had stood the test and proved their obedience in all respects (cf. 2Co 7:11, 12). Now by ending the punishment, they would be doing the same. ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Test** (prove your character)([1382](#))([dokime](#) related to [dokimazo](#)) can refer to a trial, test or ordeal and commonly describes the quality of having stood the test. **BDAG** says that "enduring something amounts to a test that promotes and validates the character of the one undergoing it." **Dokime** in secular Greek was used to describe metals that had been tested and been determined to be pure. The idea of **dokime** is that when you put the metal through a fiery test and if it comes out on the other side "persevering and enduring", you call the metal proven, authentic or genuine. The less abstract concept of dokimē as "a test," "authentication," or "proof of genuineness" occurs in 2Co 13:3. Paul advised the agitators in Corinth that he would indeed give them "proof" of his authority as spokesman for Christ. The "proof" they would receive, however, would not be what they wanted, for Paul promised to prove his authority by "not (sparing) those who sinned earlier or any of the

others" (2 Cor 13:2NIV). See Utley's topic [Testing \(peirazo and dokimazo\)](#)

**All 6 uses are by Paul** -keyword in 2 Cor **4/6** in 2 Cor - Ro 5:4 = "**proven character**"; 2Co. 2:9; 2Co 8:2 "great **ordeal**"; 2Co 9:13 "because of **the proof**"; 2Co 13:3 "since you are seeking for **proof** of the Christ who speaks in me"; Phil. 2:22 = "you know of his **proven worth**."

**Obedient** (5255) **hupekoo** from **hupo** = under, frequently meant not simply to be beneath but totally under power, authority, control of + **akouo** = hear and apprehend with mind, English = acoustic) is an adjective which means giving ear to, hearkening, attentively listening and thus describes one who is obedient. **Obedient** describes a person who obeys based on the fact that they have paid attention to what was commanded or instructed. In other words, what they heard did not just (as the saying goes) "**go in one ear and out the other**!" We have all seen the child who, when they are being instructed by their parents, responds by putting their hands over their ears so as to not hear their parent's words! That is a picture of not "giving ear to" (i.e., they are disobedient - I'm sure this doesn't describe your child dear reader!).

**2 Corinthians 2:10 But one 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,**

Kistemaker - The one you forgive, I forgive. For what I have forgiven, if indeed I had to forgive something, I did on account of you in the presence of Christ,

Barclay - Whatever you have forgiven anyone, I too forgive. For what I have forgiven, if I had anything to forgive, I forgave for your sakes, in the presence of Christ,

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

NET 2 Corinthians 2:10 If you forgive anyone for anything, I also forgive him-- for indeed what I have forgiven (if I have forgiven anything) I did so for you in the presence of Christ,

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:10 ὁ τι χαρ ξεσθε, κ γ · κα γ ρ γ κεχ ρισμαι, ε τι κεχ ρισμαι, δι μ ς ν προσ π Χριστο ,

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:10 When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too. And when I forgive whatever needs to be forgiven, I do so with Christ's authority for your benefit,

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:10 Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ,

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:10 If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven--if there was anything to forgive--I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake,

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:10 ὁ τι χαρ ξεσθε, κ γ · κα γ ρ γ κεχ ρισμαι, ε τι κεχ ρισμαι, δι μ ς ν προσ π Χριστο ,

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:10 And to whom ye forgive anything -- I also; for I also, if I have forgiven anything, to whom I have forgiven it, because of you -- in the person of Christ -- I forgive it,

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:10 But to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes have I forgiven it in the presence of Christ;

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:10 If you forgive anyone, I do too. For what I have forgiven-- if I have forgiven anything-- it is for you in the presence of Christ.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:10 To one whom you graciously forgive anything, so do I. For indeed, with reference to that matter, I have graciously forgiven. If I have so forgiven, it is because of you in Christ's presence I have done so,

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:10 Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ,

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:10 Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:10 Whomever you forgive anything, so do I. For indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for you in the presence of Christ,

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:10 But if you forgive anybody, then I too forgive that person; and whatever I have forgiven, if there is anything I have forgiven, I have done it for your sake in Christ's presence,

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:10 If you forgive someone, so do I. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did in the presence of Christ for your benefit.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:10 But if you give forgiveness to anyone, I do the same: for if I have given forgiveness for anything, I have done it because of you, in the person of Christ;

- **whom:** 2Co 5:20 Mt 18:18 Joh 20:23 1Co 5:4
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL'S EXAMPLE OF FORGIVENESS

**But one whom you forgive** ([charizomai](#) in present tense) **anything, I forgive also** - Note the "keyword" in this verse (3x) is [charizomai](#)! NLT - "When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too." Paul had called for the church to forgive in 2Co 2:7 and here we see he assumed they would forgive the person. Paul the apostle takes the lead in expressing forgiveness. Assuming the offender had personally offended Paul, here he downplays any offense against himself.

**Murray Harris** - The Corinthians had concurred with Paul's decision that the guilty man be punished; now he offers to concur with their decision that this repentant person be forgiven (Tasker 54–55). "Anyone who has your forgiveness has mine too" (NEB, REB). In 2Co 2:7 Paul has said, in essence, "You should forgive this man." Now he says, in effect, "When you do so, rest assured that my forgiveness is included in yours." ([NIGNT-2 Cor](#))

**Harris** in another commentary notes that "Verse 10 affords perhaps the clearest evidence that the offense was basically a personal act of effrontery against Paul or possibly his acknowledged or delegated representative. There was need for Paul's personal forgiveness, although, in deference to the penitent offender's feelings, he discounts the personal pain he himself experienced (v. 5) and deliberately understates the seriousness of the offense (v. 10) lest anyone imagine that he considered himself virtuous in granting forgiveness so readily. All this would be inappropriate if he were describing a sin of incest (1 Cor 5). ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Kruse** - Paul calls upon his readers to forgive the offender (vv. 6–7) and here assures them: 'to whom you forgive anything, I also [forgive that]' (this is the literal rendering). Perhaps the apostle says this to allay any fears that he might not approve the reinstatement of one who had hurt him so badly. ([TNTC-2Cor](#))

**For indeed what I have forgiven** ([charizomai](#) in perfect tense), **if I have forgiven** ([charizomai](#) in perfect tense) **anything, I did it for your sakes** - NIV = "And what I have forgiven--if there was anything to forgive--I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake," When Paul says **what I have forgiven** ([charizomai](#)), **if I have forgiven** we know from the context that Paul had something to forgive (even if we do not know the exact offense). The point is that Paul is downplaying the offense.

What does Paul mean that he did it (forgave) **for your sakes**? - This is a difficult phrase but it suggests that he forgave first so that they would see his free forgiveness and would then feel free to forgive the offender and carry out reconciliation and restoration into the fellowship. In other words **For your sakes** would imply that their knowledge that Paul had **forgiven** (and the effect endured), the saints at Corinth should be motivated to do likewise. In the "Disciple's Prayer" in Matthew 6, Jesus emphasizes the importance of personal forgiveness so that we have full and free fellowship with the Father instructing them "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." (Mt 6:12+) Note the little word "as" which is critical! If we don't forgive our debtors, we are in essence saying to God "forgive" our debts in the same way. In other words we blunt or quench His forgiveness and the result is that our fellowship with the Father is hindered. So back to the present verse -- since Paul's forgiveness should serve to motivate/stimulate their forgiveness (for he was their spiritual "father"), it would be **for their sakes** in the sense that they could forgive the offender and would experience freedom of their fellowship with their heavenly Father. Another reason in addition to maintaining (or restoring) "vertical fellowship" (with the Father), Paul's forgiveness and their forgiveness would restore "horizontal fellowship" (Paul and the Corinthians). Corporate forgiveness would keep Satan from gaining a foothold in lives of saints who held on to unforgiveness (and possibly bitterness) and the effect would be to disturb the unity and sap the spiritual strength of the church.

**MacArthur** - "His primary concern was for the fellowship to be restored and for there to be unity in the Corinthian church. Thus, he forgave the individual primarily for the Corinthians' **sakes**." ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

**Garland on for your sakes** - Since the punishment was for their sake, the forgiveness also is for their sake. Paul's concern is always for the whole group and not for himself or even the offender. The forgiveness mends the differences between Paul and the individual, the individual and the church, and, most important, between Paul and the church. ([NAC-2Cor](#))

**Utley on forgive** - Paul asks the majority to **forgive** in 2Co 2:7 (aorist middle infinitive); in 2Co 2:10 he repeats the ongoing request (present middle indicative); in 2Co 2:10 he assures them of his (personal pronoun, egō) gracious and ongoing forgiveness of the offender (two perfect middle indicatives) ("I have **forgiven**, if [since] I have **forgiven**")

**Derek Brown, et al** on the Relationship between Paul's and the Corinthians' Forgiveness - There are two interpretations of what Paul says here, respectively reflected in the ESV and NIV. The first interpretation is that Paul says he forgives the offender because the Corinthians do: "Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive" (ESV; compare LEB, NASB, KJV). The second interpretation is that Paul's forgiveness was conditional on the Corinthians' forgiveness of the offender: "If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him" (NIV; compare NET). This translation requires understanding a conditional sense that is **not** explicit in the Greek. ([Lexham Research Commentary - 2 Corinthians](#))

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:10 Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ,

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:10 If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake,

**Charles Hodge** - The apostle had exhorted the Corinthians to forgive their repentant brother, and now says he was ready to join in that forgiveness. If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. Although this is stated generally, as though he meant to say that he would forgive anyone whom they were ready to forgive, yet it is obvious from the context that he intended to be understood as referring to that particular case. He was satisfied with their course and also with the evidence of the repentance of the offender, and therefore he was ready to sanction his restoration to their communion. His reason for this is stated in what follows: he did it for their sake. His forgiving, however, was dependent on theirs. He would not interfere to restore the person in question unless they were satisfied to receive him. He therefore says, what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—that is, if the forgiveness mentioned in the previous clause is to take effect and to be considered as already done, I have forgiven ... for your sake. He was influenced by no personal consideration either in his original censure or in his present course, but solely by a desire to promote their best interests. ([2 Corinthians Commentary on one Pdf](#))

**In the presence of Christ** - Literally "in the face of Christ." [Coram Deo](#), before the face of God, the way Paul always lived his Christian life which is a good model for all Christ followers to imitate (cf 1Cor 11:11+)! We see Paul's frequent allusion to his awareness of God's omnipresence and presence - as in 2Co 2:17 and 2Co 4:2 (cf 2Ti 4:1). He was also ever aware of Christ's full forgiveness, a truth which motivated his forgiveness. Some writer's see this as a description of Christ looking on as a "Witness" (so to speak) approving of the forgiveness by Paul and the Corinthians.

**Hodge** - "He means that in this matter he acted as though Christ were looking on....are to act as in his presence, for nothing is more likely to incline us to mercy." No one can be severe in his judgment if he feels that the mild eyes of Christ are fixed on him." ([2 Corinthians Commentary on one Pdf](#))

**Barclay** has a good word on Paul's example of forgiving the offender - (i) Paul did not take the matter personally at all. It was not the injury done to his personal feelings which was important. What he was anxious about was the good discipline and the peace of the Church. There are some people who take everything personally. Criticism, even when it is kindly meant and kindly given, they take as a personal insult. Such people do more than any other kind of people to disturb the peace of a fellowship. It would be well to remember that criticism and advice are usually offered, not to hurt us, but to help us. (ii) Paul's motive in the exercise of discipline was not vengeance but correction; he did not aim to knock a man down, but to help him to get up. His aim was to judge a man, not by the standards of abstract justice, but of Christian love. The fact is that quite often sins are good qualities gone wrong. The man who can plan a successful burglary has initiative and organizing power; pride is a kind of intensification of the independent spirit; meanness is thrift run to seed. Paul's aim in discipline was, not to eradicate such qualities as a man might have, but rather to harness them to higher purposes. The Christian duty is not to render the sinner harmless by battering him into submission, but to inspire him to goodness. (iii) Paul's insistence was that punishment must never drive to despair and must never take the heart out of a man. The wrong kind of treatment often gives a man the last push into the arms of Satan. Over-severity may well drive him from the Church and its fellowship, while sympathetic amendment might well bring him in. Mary Lamb, who had terrible periods of insanity, was harshly treated by her mother. She used to sigh, "Why is it that I never seem able to do anything to please my mother?" Luther could scarcely bear to pray the Lord's Prayer because his own father had been so stern that the word father painted a picture of grim terror to him. He used to say, "Spare the rod and spoil the child—yes; but, beside the rod keep an apple, to give the child when he has done well." Punishment should encourage and not discourage. In the last analysis, this can happen only when we make it clear that, even when we are punishing a person, we still believe in him. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

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[Ray Stedman](#) on Paul's forgiveness **one whom you forgive ([charizomai](#)) anything, I forgive also** - There are no hard feelings expressed, no recriminations, no "well, I-can-forgive, but-I-can't-forget" attitude. You often hear that, don't you? That reveals a lack of understanding of what forgiveness is. Forgiveness, basically, is a promise that you make; it is a promise you make to three different individuals. This is true always, in every case of forgiveness:

**First, it is a promise that you make to the individual who has offended you and now has repented, in which you are saying to him or her, "I will not let my attitude toward you be governed any longer by this offense.** It has been put aside. My treatment of you from here on will be as though this had never happened." It is a promise you make never to bring it up again. In marriage many problems go on for years and years because we tend to go back and dig up all the past, which is an indication that it has never been forgiven. Some mates don't get hysterical, they get historical! That is the problem, and that creates a problem.

**Second, it is a promise not to pass it on to anybody else.** When a matter is forgiven it is to be forgotten. Now it may be that everyone knows it, because, as in this case in Corinth, it had been told to the whole church. But what it means is that nobody throws it at him again, or holds it over his head, or reminds him of it every time any further difficulty occurs. It is a promise to drop the matter, leave it in the past, and never bring it up to anybody again.

**Third, and probably most important of all, it is a promise to yourself that, when your memory goes back to it, as it will occasionally, you are not going to allow it to seize hold of your heart and make you angry all over again.** The minute it comes back to mind, you put it aside as something that belongs to the past, you are not going to dwell on it. It is a promise, therefore, to repeat your act of forgiveness, no matter how often the memory comes up. That is what forgiveness is; and Paul is so ready to do this.

The reason, of course, is because he himself had been forgiven. People tell me sometimes, "Well, I just can't forgive in this case. The person said it was wrong, and has asked me to forgive him, but I just can't do it. It hurt me too much." Well, that is a revelation to me that that person has never realized how much he has been forgiven already. The basis for Christian forgiveness is always, "Forgive, because you have been forgiven." If you cannot forgive it is because you have forgotten that you were forgiven. Paul says this to the Ephesians:

...be tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32 KJV)

That means we are not to be self-righteous and condemning, and assume the attitude, "Well, I could never do a thing like that." In the eyes of God you have already done worse, and been forgiven for it. That is the basis, therefore, for extending forgiveness to others: "Freely you have received, freely give," (Matthew 10:8 KJV).

**2 Corinthians 2:11 so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:11 so that we may not be exploited by Satan (for we are not ignorant of his schemes).

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:11 να μ πλεονεκτηθ μεν π το σαταν · ο γ ρ α το τ νο ματα γνοο μεν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:11 so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:11 so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:11 να μ πλεονεκτηθ μεν π το Σαταν · ο γ ρ α το τ νο ματα γνοο μεν.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:11 that we may not be over-reached by the Adversary, for of his devices we are not ignorant.

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:11 that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:11 I have done this so that we may not be taken advantage of by Satan. For we are not ignorant of his schemes.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:11 lest we be exploited by the opponent; we are not unaware of his machinations.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:11 lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:11 And we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:11 so that we might not be taken advantage of by Satan, for we are not unaware of his purposes.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:11 to avoid being outwitted by Satan, whose scheming we know only too well.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:11 I don't want Satan to outwit us. After all, we are not ignorant about Satan's scheming.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:11 So that Satan may not get the better of us: for we are not without knowledge of his designs.

- 2Co 11:3,14, 2Co 12:7 1Ch 21:1,2 Job 1:11 2:3,5,9 Zec 3:1-4 Lu 22:31 Joh 13:2 Acts 1:25 1Co 7:5 Eph 6:11,12 2Ti 2:25 1Pe 5:8 Rev 2:24 Rev 12:9-11 13:8
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

2 Corinthians 11:3+ But I am afraid that, as the **serpent** deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.....11:14 No wonder, for even **Satan** disguises himself as an angel of light.

2 Corinthians 12:7+ Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of **Satan** to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!

Ephesians 4:26-27+ **BE ANGRY** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)), AND yet **DO NOT SIN** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)); **do not let** the sun **go down** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) on your anger, 27 and **do not give** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the devil an opportunity (TO GET A "TOEHOLD," AN ADVANTAGE).

Ephesians 6:11+ **Put on** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the full armor of God, so that you will be able (SUPERNATURALLY ENABLED BY THE SPIRIT) to stand firm against the schemes (SEE THE GREEK WORD = [methodeia](#)) of the devil ([diabolos](#)).

## SATAN WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF UNFORGIVENESS

**Barclay** renders v10-11 - "For what I have forgiven, if I had anything to forgive, I forgave for your sakes, in the presence of Christ, so that we might not be over-reached by Satan, for we well know his intentions." ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**So that** ([hina](#) - term of purpose) **no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not**(present tense) **ignorant of his schemes** (designs, devices)(Schemes of the Devil) - **Advantage...taken** is passive voice indicating force acting on us from outside source (Satan). **Satan** (and his minions) seek for places to gain a toehold in individual believer's lives and in churches. In Mt 6:13- Jesus had instructed the disciples to pray that God would "**deliver** us from (the) evil (ho [poneros](#))," which the NLT and NIV render "*the evil one*," that is, from **Satan**. **Satan** is deadly serious and is not playing games but "out for blood" so to speak and the Greek word for "evil" ([poneros](#)) indicates seeks to cause active harm or hurt.

**THOUGHT** - What are the implications for saints who are ignorant of Satan's schemes? In a word they are a "softball" for Satan to "swing at" and are vulnerable to being spiritually defeated. If someone throws a pie at your face and you see it coming, you can take a defensive position. Sadly Satan does not throw pies but fiery missiles at our mind. If we harbor unforgiveness, bitterness, etc, we are a set up for spiritual defeat. So what is the best defense? Paul's statement here indicates that knowledge of our enemies schemes is crucial for us to experience victory in warfare. General George Patton's success against the Nazi general Rommel ("the desert fox") was aided by the fact that Patton had read Rommel's book "Infantry Attacks," so he was **not ignorant of his enemy's schemes!** Take some time to study Satan's **schemes** -- see the topic Schemes of the Devil. Ignorance in spiritual warfare is not bliss, but is bad.

**ESV Study Bible** says that "Satan's designs are to destroy the mutual forgiveness, love, and unity that is to characterize God's

people as those who have been reconciled to God through Christ (2Co 5:16-6:2). In this way, Satan aims to dishonor God's own glory revealed in Jesus as the Son of God (1:19-20)." ([ESV Study Bible](#))

**Utley** on **Satan** - Paul calls him by several titles in II Corinthians: (1) Satan in 2:11; 11:14; 12:7; (2) "the god of this age" in 4:4; (3) "Belial" in 6:15; and (4) "the serpent" in 11:3. The "us" could refer to Paul himself, or to Paul and the Corinthian church. It is interesting to know that Satan tempts both by inclination to evil and by the perversion of the good. An inappropriate, unforgiving, angry, or prideful attitude on the part of the church could open the door for Satan to disrupt the fellowship....Human thinking and language skills are part of the image of God. These wonderful gifts can be used for good or evil. Believers must guard their thoughts and words. Our mind can be tricked, blinded, and manipulated by Satan. They can also be wonderfully energized by God to His glory and for His Kingdom. We are stewards of our thoughts, plans, and motives!

**John MacArthur** - An unforgiving spirit plays right into the devil's hands and gives him the leverage he needs to split a church apart. Believers dare not be ignorant of Satan's schemes but must "stand firm against the schemes of the devil" (Eph. 6:11) and "not give the devil an opportunity" (Eph. 4:27). Two vitally important ways of doing that are dealing with sin and forgiving sinners. Forgiveness affects the one who forgives (2 Cor. 2:5), the one forgiven (2:6-8), and the entire church (2:9-11). The hard work of disciplining sinners and restoring those who repent is a true test of a church's love for the Lord. ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

**Pratt** - Paul knew that Satan was clever, but he acknowledged that Satan could be resisted and outwitted by careful believers. He suspected that Satan would find opportunity in prolonged discipline to discourage the disciplined man and to harden the congregation's heart....Paul probably intended his forgiveness of the man to encourage the Corinthians to forgive the man, and thus to thwart Satan. ([Holman NTC - 2Co](#))

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

**Kruse** comments on **advantage...taken** refers to "a taking advantage of people in the sense of defrauding them of something which belongs to them. It seems most likely, therefore, that what Paul has in mind in this verse is the possibility that Satan might take advantage of the situation and defraud the congregation of one of its members permanently. So, being not ignorant of his designs, Paul urges the Corinthians to reaffirm their love for the offender to forestall such a possibility. ([TNTC-2Cor](#))

**J Vernon McGee** on **no advantage would be taken of us by Satan** - Satan gets the advantage of a great many Christians because they are unforgiving. There are two things that we don't hear very often even in our conservative churches: we don't hear folk admitting their sins and asking for forgiveness nor do we hear folk forgiving those who confess. There is an unforgiving spirit in many of our churches. We need to remember that we are all capable of any sin. Whatever the other man has done, we are also capable of doing. When such a man repents from his sin, he is to be restored in the spirit of meekness. He is to be brought back into fellowship. This is part of the ministry. It is a glorious ministry, isn't it? ([2 Corinthians 1 Commentary](#))

**Harris** on **no advantage would be taken of us by Satan** - This was to avoid being outwitted by the master strategist, Satan, who was bent on creating discord within the church at Corinth, either between the church at large and a dissident minority or between the repentant wrongdoer and his fellow Christians. To withhold forgiveness when the man was repentant was to play into the hands of Satan, who already had gained one advantage when the man sinned. There is a point at which punishment can become purely vindictive (cf. v. 6) and suffering a penalty can drive one to despair (v. 7; Col 3:21). Christian discipline certainly includes punishment administered in love, but it is not simply retributive or punitive; it is also remedial or reformatory (cf. 1 Cor 5:5; 11:32; 2 Cor 7:9, 10; 13:10). It aims at reinstatement after repentance, through forgiveness and reconciliation. ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Garland** has an interesting note on the verb **take advantage** - It could also mean "rob." Satan will rob the community of a member of their group. If Paul refers to the man in 1 Corinthians 5, they may have turned him over to Satan, but Satan cannot keep him if he repents. If the community does not forgive and accept the contrite offender, however, Satan may cheat them of another soul....This passage and 1 Cor 5:1-5 reveal how important it is for the Christian community to balance the exercise of firm discipline with compassionate charity toward those who repent. Failure to do either plays into the hands of Satan. In this passage Paul reveals that showing forgiveness is one way for the church to close the door on Satan's evil designs to destroy it....See Eph 6:11, the "methods" of Satan; and 2 Cor 11:14; 2Cor 12:7. Satan also seeks to devour people (1 Pet 5:8) and frequently allows them to stew in the juices of their own spitefulness and bitterness.....A situation that requires forgiveness is the time when Satan can work his worst and is the most dangerous. Satan fans the flames of hurt into an inferno of hostility.....Paul's concluding greetings in Ro 16:20, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet," may seem ironic—a God of peace crushing an enemy. But Satan is the enemy of peace. He is defeated by reconciliation. Christian love and charity neutralize all of Satan's powers over us and serves as an invisible, protective shield. ([NAC-2Cor](#))

**Henry Blackaby** - When you meet opposition to your faith, your first reaction may be anger toward your antagonist. This may divert your attention from the deeper, spiritual dimensions of your conflict. Your adversary may be hopelessly in bondage to sin. Rather than retaliating, you should immediately and earnestly intercede for that person. Your opponent's hostility is your invitation to become

involved in God's redemptive work to free him or her from spiritual bondage. Be alert to the spiritual warfare around you.

**Satan** (4567) **satanas** transliterated from Hebrew **Satan** - see 07854 and Aramaic *sātānā*) literally means **Adversary**, the evil antagonist who offers opposition, hostility, resentment, etc. An enemy who that contends with, opposes, resists. An **adversary** is one who hates or opposes another person and tries to harm them or stop them from doing something because of hatred and malice. **Satan** is the **inveterate, implacable**, relentless, ruthless, remorseless, merciless, heartless, pitiless, cruel, hard, harsh, hardened, incorrigible, dedicated enemy of God and man. **Satan** is not a myth or a fable, but a created, fallen angel who is a real, supernatural evil being (Mt 16:23; 1 Th 2:18+). **Satan** is not divine but is subject to the divine Creator Jesus (John 1:3, Col 1:16+). He was the tempter of Jesus and sifter of men like Peter (Mt 4:1, Lk 4:2+, Mk 1:13+, Lk 22:31+).

Believers have been rescued from Satan's "**domain** (right and the might) of darkness, and **transferred** to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col 1:13+), The Gospel supernaturally enables men "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the **dominion of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in" Christ (Acts 26:18+) There are **ONLY TWO spiritual kingdoms on earth**, the **kingdom of darkness** headed by Satan and the **kingdom of God** headed by Jesus Christ. All unregenerate people belong the Satan's kingdom (cf Jn 8:44) and all believers are blessed to belong to Christ's kingdom. John speaking for believers says "We know that we are of God, and that the **whole** (unregenerate) **world** (from politics to entertainment to religion, etc) lies in the power of **the evil one**" (1 Jn 5:19+) who is "**the prince of the power of the air**" (Eph 2:2+), "**the ruler of this world**" (Jn 14:30). Because this passing world (1 Jn 2:17+) is completely under Satan's influence, believers must avoid being contaminated by the influences of the world, "for whoever wishes to be a **friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God**." (James 4:4+) John commands believers "**Do not love the world nor the things in the world**. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever." (1 John 2:15-17+); **James** tells us that "Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to **keep oneself unstained by the world**." (James 1:27+).

**Take advantage** (defraud) (4122) **pleonekteo** from **pleíon** = more + **écho** = have <> **pleonektes** = one who wants more, covetous of something that others have as in 1Cor 5:10ff+, a defrauder for gain) literally means to have more than another and then to take advantage of any one. To claim more. To covet. To have more than one's due. To selfishly attempt to gain more at all costs and by all means disregarding others and their rights. Defraud means to selfishly and greedily take something at someone else's expense.

**Pleonekteo** - 5x in NT - 2Co. 2:11; 2Co. 7:2 = we **took advantage** of no one; 2Co. 12:17 = I have not **taken advantage** of you; 2Co. 12:18 = Titus did not **take any advantage** of you; 1Th 4:6 **defraud** his brother

**Lexham Research Commentary - 2 Corinthians** - **Pleonekteo**, "To Defraud" or "To Outwit." In its usual sense, the term *pleonekteō* refers to material gain or greediness. In a more abstract sense, the term refers to overreaching or taking too much. In 2 Cor 9:5b, the related word *pleonexia* (literally "greed") demonstrates this focus on material gain (literally "a generous gift and not as greed"). The term *pleonekteō* occurs three times in 2 Corinthians with this focus, as Paul denies using the gospel as a means to personal material gain. He is adamant that he has "taken advantage of (*pleonekteō*) no one" (2 Cor 7:2), that none of his emissaries have taken advantage of anyone (2 Cor 12:17), and that Titus in particular has not taken advantage of anyone (2 Cor 12:18).

**Schemes** (3540) **noema** from **noéo** = perceive in turn from **noús** = mind) is literally the result of the activity of the "**nous**" or mind, that part of man which thinks. **Noema** means that which is thought (a thought), perceived with the mind (a mental perception), understood, pondered, or considered. **Noema** refers to the content of thinking and reasoning, to what is thought, conceived or perceived. Stated another way **noema** is the psychological faculty of understanding, reasoning, thinking, and deciding. It can also convey the negative idea (all NT uses except here in Php 4:7 are in a bad sense) of plot, method or scheme and is so used in describing Satan, Paul writing "in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his **schemes** (wiles, evil plans, purposes, intentions, enterprises, devices, designs, sly ways or cunning, the great number of stratagems which he is constantly using to injure us and to destroy the souls of people) (**noema**)." (2Cor 2:11) In this same letter Paul explains that although we walk in the flesh, we do not war

according to the flesh but instead, with the aid of divinely powerful "weapons... are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every **thought (noema)** captive to the obedience of Christ" (2Cor 10:3, 4, 5<sup>±</sup>)

**Utley** adds that the Greek word **noema** "is used by Paul five times in II Corinthians and only one other time in Phil. 4:7. It is from the root nous, which means mind or thoughts. Paul develops this in two ways. (A) evil or destructive thinking - (1) schemes of Satan, 2 Cor. 2:11, (2) minds hardened and veiled in unbelief, 2 Cor. 3:14, (3) minds blinded by Satan (the god of this world), 2 Cor. 4:4, (4) minds deceived by Satan (like Eve) and led astray, 2 Cor. 11:3. (B) godly thinking - (1) taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10:5 (2) the peace of God which passes all comprehension (nous) will guard your hearts and your minds (noemata) - Php 4:7.

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He hides the hook!

(Brooks "Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices")

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." 2 Corinthians 2:11

Satan has his several devices to deceive, entangle, and undo the souls of men. Satan has . . .

- snares for the wise, and snares for the simple;
- snares for hypocrites, and snares for the upright;
- snares for brave, and snares for the timorous;
- snares for the rich, and snares for the poor;
- snares for the aged, and snares for youth.

Happy are those souls which are not captured and held in the snares that he has laid!

Satan's first device to draw the soul into sin is,

- to present the bait—and hide the hook;
- to present the golden cup—and hide the poison;
- to present the sweet, the pleasure, and the profit

that may flow in upon the soul by yielding to sin— and to hide from the soul the wrath and misery that will certainly follow the committing of sin!

By this device he deceived our first parents, "And the serpent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die—for God knows, that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and you shall be as gods." Your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods! Here is the bait, the sweet, the pleasure, the profit. Oh—but he hides the hook—the shame, the wrath, and the loss that would certainly follow! So Satan cheats them—giving them an apple in exchange for a paradise!

Satan with ease pawns falsehoods upon us, by his golden baits, and then he leads us and leaves us in a fool's paradise. He promises the soul honor, pleasure, profit—but pays the soul with the greatest contempt, shame, and loss that can be!

Alas! Many have fallen forever by this vile strumpet, the world, who, by showing forth her two fair breasts of PROFIT and PLEASURE, has wounded their souls, and cast them down into utter perdition! She has, by the glistening of her pomp and preferment, slain millions!

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## Enemy Tactics

We are not ignorant of [Satan's] devices. —2 Corinthians 2:11

Today's Scripture: Acts 6:1-15

Satan uses many methods to hinder the work of the Lord. Chapters 6 through 8 of Acts contain three illustrations of how he does his evil work through people and circumstances.

1. Satan creates dissension within the church. "In those days . . . there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists" (Acts 6:1). When a church becomes known for its bickering and backbiting, its witness in the

community will be damaged.

2. The enemy tries to divert ministers and teachers from their main purpose of preaching the gospel. The apostles were feeling pressured to "leave the Word of God and serve tables" (6:2). Satan employs a similar tactic today by getting a pastor so involved in church programs that he has little time for prayer and the study of the Word.

3. In every age Satan seeks to destroy God's people. In Acts 7 and 8 we read that Stephen was martyred, and that Saul "made havoc of the church" (8:3).

We need to be aware of Satan's tactics and be on guard against his attacks. We don't want to be a cause of dissension and diversion in the church. Instead, let's prayerfully focus on Christ's purpose for our lives. By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

I want to live above the world,  
Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;  
For faith has caught the joyful sound,  
The song of saints on higher ground. —Oatman

Know satan's strategy to avoid sin's tragedy.

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**Ray Stedman** - It is Satan who keeps bringing back to your mind the hurts of the past; he keeps interjecting them back into a situation. He is trying to get hold of you through the situation and wreak havoc with you and your loved ones by taking advantage of it. It is Satan who makes the leadership of a church quail at confronting some situation, makes them say, "Oh, let's not get involved; let's forget it." That is Satan. He is seeking to gain an advantage over that whole congregation so he can dilute their testimony and render them powerless in their effect upon the community....When an arsonist is loose, you can expect fires; they are going to break out all over the place. We have an enemy who is like that, and when you have an enemy you can expect casualties. When you are engaged in warfare, you never can decide on your own terms that you are not going to have any more casualties, because the enemy is there; he is the one who keeps it going. We often say in American history, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." That is true in the spiritual realm as well. It is only as we are aware that we are in a battle, and an enemy is constantly trying to take advantage of the situation, that we must realize that the thing that defeats him is to extend ready and full forgiveness when there are broken relationships within us. That is what keeps Satan from gaining an advantage over you.

Paul said that in Ephesians: "Do not let the sun go down on your wrath," Ephesians 4:26-27). Settle this matter before nightfall, before you go to bed. Don't carry it over to the next day and thus give opportunity to the devil. When you let it go on and on and on, unresolved, you are giving the devil an opportunity to get hold of everybody involved, to create more problems and spread it widely and turn the whole church upside down eventually. Therefore, one of the elements that restoration always involves is that spiritual awareness that we are in a battle, that we live in a crazy world under the control of a madman, basically, so we cannot expect to settle it all once and for all.

As an old movie once described it, *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* -- I saw that title in Spanish on a marquee down in Latin America: *Todo El Mundo es Loco, Loco, Loco, Loco!*

We are to deal with these problems then in our own hearts. That is the way you turn off the attack of the enemy. Some years ago I read about a mental hospital that had devised a very effective test to know whether the patients were ready to go back into life again. The patients would be brought into a room where a water tap was flowing out on the floor and handed a mop and told to mop up the water. If they took the mop and just started mopping away, with the water still flowing, they would be put back in the hospital. But if they had the sense to go and turn off the tap first, and then mop up the water, they knew they were ready to go back into life.

There is no sense in trying to clear up a situation until we have turned off the devil's tap by forgiving that which has been acknowledged as wrong. If we persist in bringing it up, over and over again, we are trying to mop up a situation where the water is still flowing. That is foolish; it cannot be done. That is why in many marriages, in many family relationships, and in a church, these kinds of hurtful things go on and on and on for decades. Nobody has turned off the tap; nobody has forgiven one another and let it rest in the past, realizing that we all are in need of forgiveness continually. When forgiveness happens, then marvelous healing begins to take place.

I could tell you story after story of how I have seen this happen. Whole congregations have been restored, whole family groups have been opened up by two people who were mad at one another deciding that they would forgive; and when there was any degree of acknowledgment at all that there was injury done, extending forgiveness.

Is there any more beautiful picture in all the Scriptures than the story Jesus told of the Prodigal Son? The story of the old father

waiting at home, watching the horizon and knowing that, when that boy had reached the end and was ready to admit his wrongdoing, he would show up at the house again? At the first glimpse of his son on the horizon, the old man is running down the road to meet him, his arms wide open. Before the boy can utter a syllable of his memorized statement that he has been repeating to himself all the way home -- "I am no longer worthy to be called your son" (Luke 15:19 RSV) -- the old man has his arms around him and he is calling out for a celebration, to kill the fatted calf. (I remember the little story of the Sunday School boy when the class was asked, "Who was sorry when the Prodigal Son came home?" The expected answer was, "The elder brother," but one little boy said, "The fatted calf!") Well, there was one who was not sorry, and that was the father. He was overjoyed, because he knew that his son would never have been back if he had not acknowledged that he was wrong. And he did not wait for the boy to say that. He had already forgiven him. The very appearance of the lad on the horizon was enough to tell the father that his son was home again, sorry for what he had done. And, "lest he be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow," the father forgave him from a full and free heart. Now that is God's picture of what he does with us. ([When Discipline Ends](#))

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**Not Ignorant** - General George Patton of World War II fame was seldom at a loss for words. What he said during a battle in North Africa may be legend, but it typifies the man. Patton's troops and tanks were engaged in a successful counterattack of German forces under General Erwin Rommel. Patton is reported to have shouted in the thick of the battle, "I read your book, Rommel! I read your book!" And that he did. In Rommel's book *Infantry Attacks*, the famed "Desert Fox" carefully detailed his military strategy. And Patton, having read it and knowing what to expect, planned his moves accordingly.

Satan has authored no book. **God, however, has exposed our enemy's tactics in His Holy Word.**

Here are but a few of his subtle strategies:

- Quote Scripture to lead us astray (Mt 4:6+) (ED: ACTUALLY MISQUOTES Ps 91:11-12!)
- Afflict the body (2Cor. 12:7+).
- Pluck away the seed of the Word (Mark 4:15+).
- Tempt by impure thoughts (1Cor 7:5+).
- Tempt by pride (1Ti 3:6).
- Hinder through circumstances (1Th 2:18+).
- Seduce by pleasure (1Ti 5:11,15).
- Severely buffet in a crisis (Luke 22:31+).
- Tempt to hypocrisy and lying (Acts 5:3+).
- The name Satan means adversary. He is also described as "the accuser of our brethren" (Rev 12:10<sup>+</sup>) and "a murderer from the beginning" and a liar (John 8:44).

Study these passages and plan your defense. Be always on the alert. Submit to God and resist the devil. Victory can be yours, but first you must know your enemy so you can recognize his strategy. - D J DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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#### **Shrike System Ephesians 6:10-18 April 4, 2006**

The ancient sport of falconry used trained hawks or falcons in the pursuit of wild game. When the "educated predator" was allowed to fly, however, it often rose too high for human eyes to see. So a hunter often carried a small caged bird called a shrike. By watching the antics of the little bird, the man could always tell where his hawk was, for the shrike instinctively feared the predator and cocked its head to keep it in view.

Christians desperately need an alert perception similar to that of the shrike to detect their spiritual enemy. Our adversary, Satan, "walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Our responsibility, according to the apostle Peter, is to be sober and vigilant. In other words, we're to be always on the alert.

It would be nice if God had giant sirens to warn us of an attack by the devil. But He doesn't operate that way. Instead, we must read the Bible regularly, meditate on its truths, maintain a prayerful attitude throughout the day, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Only then will we be sensitive to an imminent assault by the evil one, and be armed by grace to meet it. —Mart De Haan

The devil is clever, deceiving us all,  
He cunningly causes the strongest to fall;  
But we his sly methods are sure to discern

By making God's warnings our daily concern. —D. De Haan

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. —1John 4:4

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### **The Angel Of Music Ephesians 6:10-18 May 28, 2006**

In Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *The Phantom of the Opera*, a young chorus girl named Christine Daae receives voice training from a mysterious musician she calls the "Angel of Music." Christine believes this is the angel her dying father had promised to send to complete her musical training.

As the plot thickens, we find that her mysterious mentor is really a demented man who wants to carry her away into a bizarre underworld beneath the opera house. What the girl thinks is a supernatural agent sent by her beloved father is really a madman who wants to possess her for his own ends. The "Angel of Music" is evil masquerading as good.

The believer in Christ also faces an evil one who masquerades. One of Satan's key strategies is to look like someone who is good. Paul told us, "Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light" (2Corinthians 11:14). The Greek word translated as "transforms" means "to change appearance, masquerade, or disguise oneself."

In preparing us to face the evil strategies of the devil, God has provided all the equipment we need to stand our ground. Protecting ourselves with the armor of God unmasks the evil that opposes us and stabilizes our spiritual walk (Ephesians 6:10-18). —Dennis Fisher

When you're making a decision,  
Evil sometimes wears a mask;  
Trust the Lord for true discernment—  
He'll give wisdom if you ask. —Hess

God's armor is tailor-made for us, but we must put it on.

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### **Blackbeard March 22, 2006 Ephesians 6:10-18**

As a young man in the late 1600s, Edward Teach joined the crew of a British ship that was headed to the Caribbean. Much later in his nautical career, he managed to capture a merchant vessel and turn it into a 40-gun warship. Teach soon became known as Blackbeard—the most feared pirate in the hemisphere.

Blackbeard had some success as a pirate, but his "career" abruptly ended when he encountered a contingent of the British Royal Navy. In a desperate battle, he and his fellow pirates were killed, putting an end to their terrorizing exploits.

Long ago in the heavenly places, an angel fell into spiritual piracy. Lucifer was a cherub who stood in the radiant glory of God (Ezekiel 28:11, 12, 13, 14, 15). But his own self-love replaced love for his Creator. Desiring to be like the Most High, he led a rebellion and was cast out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12, 13, 14, 15). Today he and his henchmen are doing whatever they can to commandeer the lives of human beings (Luke 8:12; 2Cor 4:4).

Even so, we don't need to be afraid. Satan is a dangerous enemy, but Jesus sealed his ultimate fate when He rose from the dead. And He has given us everything we need to withstand the devil's attacks (Ephesians 6:10-18). —Dennis Fisher

And though this world with devils filled  
Should threaten to undo us;  
We will not fear, for God has willed  
His truth to triumph through us. —Luther

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. —1John 4:4

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### **My Achilles Heel Ephesians 6:10-18 July 17, 2001**

Nobody is temptation-proof. Even mature Christians have weaknesses in their spiritual armor that make them vulnerable to a wounding attack by the enemy of their souls. Our pride can provide the very opening needed for the sharp thrust of a satanic dart. So can the love of money, a quick temper, a critical tongue, or chronic impatience.

What, after all, is temptation? It's any enticement to think, say, or do something contrary to God's holy will. It may be a weak impulse

or a powerful urge. It's anything that's against what God approves or desires for us.

The ancient Greeks told a story of a warrior named Achilles. His mother had been warned that he would die of a wound, so she dipped him as an infant in the river Styx. That was supposed to make him invincible. But she held him by one heel which the protective waters didn't cover. And it was through that heel that he received his fatal wound.

Each of us must ask: What is my Achilles heel? We need to know our weaknesses, where we could easily be wounded spiritually. Then, as we rely on the Lord for His help, we will be protected from "the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Ephesians 6:16). —V C Grounds

Leave no unguarded place,  
No weakness of the soul;  
Take every virtue, every grace,  
And fortify the whole. —Wesley

Our greatest weakness may be our failure to ask for God's strength.

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One of the Devil's most effective schemes or stratagems is to instill **doubts** about God's goodness. These seeds of "**doubt**" can grow into an ungrateful spirit that refuses to thank God at all times for all things. Doubts about God was one of Satan's greatest tools against Martin Luther. After the frightful Anfechtung (Contestation) of 1527 Luther wrote that "For more than a week I was close to the gates of death and hell." It is therefore no surprise that Luther's great hymn A Mighty Fortress Is Our God has such great stanzas on "spiritual warfare. Roland Bainton, Luther's biographer, writes: "The content of his depressions was always the same, the loss of faith that God is good and that He is good to me."

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God  
by Martin Luther

A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing;  
Our helper he, amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing:  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right Man on our side,  
The Man of God's own choosing:  
Dost ask who that might be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he;  
Lord Sabaoth, his name,  
From age to age the same,  
And he must win the battle.

And tho this world, with devils filled,  
Should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God hath willed  
His truth to triumph thro' us:  
The Prince of Darkness grim,  
We tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure.  
For lo, his doom is sure,  
One little word will fail him.

That word above all earthly pow'rs,  
No thanks to them, abideth;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours

Thro' him who with us sideth:  
Let goods and kindreds go,  
This mortal life also;  
The body they may kill:  
God's truth abidest still,  
His kingdom is forever.

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**Question:** [What are the wiles of the devil in Ephesians 6:11? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Answer:** Wiles are tricks or manipulations designed to deceive someone. The tongue-in-cheek phrase *a woman's wiles* refers to the seductiveness of *femme fatales* in using charm or sex appeal to elicit a desired response from men. Wiles of the devil are those clever schemes used by [Satan](#) to ensnare us through temptation, threat, or intimidation. Ephesians 6:11 warns us to "put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (KJV). Other Bible versions speak of the "devil's schemes," "strategies," or "evil tricks" rather than "wiles." Scripture gives us insight into our enemy's tactics: "We are not unaware of his schemes" (2 Corinthians 2:11), and we are wise to heed its warnings.

Here are some of the devil's wiles we see in Scripture:

### 1. Challenging God's Word.

Genesis 3 gives us a detailed look into this tactic of our enemy. It led to the first human sin, and Satan still uses it because it works so well. The first recorded words of the devil, through the serpent, were these: "Did God really say?" (Genesis 3:1). With those words, the devil invited the woman to reconsider what she understood God to have said. By adding her human interpretation, she convinced herself that God's Word was far too restrictive.

By suggesting that we should reexamine the clear teaching of God's Word, Satan invites us to add our own interpretation and thereby nullify God's stated will. Entire church denominations are falling prey to these wiles of the devil. "Did God really say that homosexuality is wrong?" he hisses, and churches crumble. "Did God really say there are only two genders?" he suggests, inviting us to put our own spin on reality, making ourselves gods in place of the Lord. Ephesians 6:11 says that we need to be clothed in the [whole armor of God](#) to withstand such wiles.

### 2. Challenging our identity.

Luke 4:1–13 gives insight into several of the devil's wiles. Satan came against Jesus to tempt Him in the wilderness. On two different occasions, Satan began his temptations with these words: "If you are the Son of God." Satan knew exactly who Jesus was (Mark 1:34). Jesus was there when Satan fell "like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). Significantly, the devil chose a time when Jesus was physically weak and hungry to attack His identity.

Satan does the same with us. To make his wiles more effective, he hits us during a crisis or a spiritual struggle and suggests, "If you were a child of God, this wouldn't happen. If you were actually a Christian, God would help you right now." Again, we need the "helmet of salvation" firmly in place to withstand such attacks against our identity and God's character (Ephesians 6:17).

### 3. Twisting Scripture.

Another of the wiles the devil used against Jesus was to quote Scripture, but with a twist. In Luke 4:10–11, Satan quotes Psalm 91:11–12 in an effort to persuade Jesus to act in the flesh rather than follow the Spirit (see Galatians 5:16, 25). But Satan failed to complete the thought of the psalm. The next verse, Psalm 91:13, says, "You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent." Those animal references are metaphors for fierce and dangerous enemies—and the devil is likened to both a lion and a serpent in Scripture (Genesis 3:15; Revelation 20:2; 1 Peter 5:8; cf. Romans 16:20). The true meaning of the passage in Psalm 91 is that God will protect and empower His servants as they overcome the enemy, Satan. One of the wiles of the devil is to leave out key parts of Scripture in order to twist its meaning to fit his agenda.

We see these wiles of the devil in action today, as [prosperity teachers](#) and [false prophets](#) quote Scripture in selfish and misleading ways. They use enough of God's Word to sound authoritative, but they twist it to fit their personal agendas. Cherry-picking the Bible for verses that affirm whatever we want to believe or do is a widespread problem, and most participants have no idea they have fallen victim to one of the wiles of the devil.

### 4. Offering a tempting alternative to obedience.

Another scheme or wile of the devil used in the temptation of Jesus was to suggest another path, avoiding strict obedience to God's will. Cunningly, Satan knew better than to suggest that Jesus forget the whole salvation plan and go back to heaven. Instead, he

offered an alternative. In Luke 4:5–7, “the devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, ‘I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.’” This temptation was aimed at the humanity of the Son of Man. Jesus now knew what it felt like to be in the flesh. He knew what spikes would feel like in His hands and feet. He knew what rejection and mockery would feel like when He was stripped naked and paraded before the crowds. Satan was offering Him a compromise. What if Jesus could “save the world” without having to suffer crucifixion? What if He could take a shortcut and possess all the world’s kingdoms now?

One of the most sinister wiles of the devil involves his ability to offer a religiously tainted compromise. He knows he can’t come at mature believers with a frontal attack on their values and convictions. So he slides in the back door, posing as a friend with a reasonable alternative: “Well, yes, technically it might be wrong for someone to move in with a boyfriend, but you can witness to him better as he watches you live out your faith.” Or this: “You don’t need to go to church to be spiritual. You connect better with God alone in the woods. Those people are all hypocrites anyway, and you are too righteous to associate with them.” We must beware of the devil’s wiles when he offers something other than total obedience to God’s will.

The New Testament writers often pointed out the wiles of the devil to those in the church who were falling for them, and we should take note. The presence of false prophets (1 Timothy 6:3–5), busybodies (1 Peter 4:15), adulterers (1 Timothy 1:9–10), and seducers (Revelation 2:20) are all part of Satan’s masterplan to undermine the church from within.

To combat the wiles of the devil, followers of Christ must stay clothed in the armor of God. We must stay immersed in His Word so that we recognize deception. And when we realize we have been caught in the wiles of the devil, we must quickly repent and seek godly accountability. Psalm 37:23–24 encourages those who desire to live godly lives: “The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way; though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand.” When the Lord holds our hand, the devil’s wiles cannot harm us.

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**Ray Pritchard** - Satan does not observe the traditional rules of warfare. He uses anything and everything that he can to bring us down. This is part of what Paul meant when he spoke about the “**schemes of the devil**” in Ephesians 6:11. The word “**schemes**” might also be translated as “traps” or “tricks” or “tactics.” I am reminded of a certain Texas politician who was asked by a certain candidate had lost an election. “It happened because he forgot the first rule of knife fighting. There are no rules.” Satan doesn’t fight fair. He’s not going to give you an even break. He is a liar, a deceiver, a diabolical “angel of light” who comes to you in a thousand guises, tempting you to disobey the Lord. And he’s a lot smarter than you are. He knows your weak points better than you do. And because he is invisible, he can attack you any time of the day or night. (Read the full sermon [Asymmetric Spiritual Warfare](#))

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**Ray Pritchard - Satan Doesn’t Fight Fair.** In thinking about spiritual warfare from this perspective, keep two things in mind:

- 1) Satan’s goal is to discourage you so that you feel like giving up.
- 2) Satan doesn’t fight fair.

He does not observe the traditional rules of warfare. He uses anything and everything that he can to bring us down. This is part of what Paul meant when he spoke about the “schemes of the devil” in Ephesians 6:11. The word “schemes” might also be translated as “traps” or “tricks” or “tactics.” I am reminded of a Texas politician who was asked why a certain candidate had lost an election. “It happened because he forgot the first rule of knife fighting. There are no rules.” Satan doesn’t fight fair. He’s not going to give you an even break. He is a liar, a deceiver, a diabolical “angel of light” who comes to you in a thousand guises, tempting you to disobey the Lord. And he’s a lot smarter than you are. He knows your weak points better than you do. And he can attack you any time of the day or night.

Satan doesn’t fight fair. What is the mark of his diabolical work? We face opposition from the devil when there are . . .

1. Unusual or repeated temptations,
2. Attacks from an unexpected quarter,
3. Delays that hinder us from obeying God,
4. Inducements to doubt God’s Word,
5. Circumstances that produce unusual pressure upon us,
6. Temptations to sin in areas that never troubled us before,
7. Prolonged bouts of discouragement,
8. Worries that seem to consume us,
9. Seductive appeals to sinful compromise,
10. Bitterness toward others,
11. Desires to give up on the Christian life,
12. Enticements to turn away from the means of grace,

13. Excuses made for lack of spiritual growth,
14. Critical comments about other believers,
15. Attempts to hide your behavior from others

From his message [How to Meet the Enemy](#)

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**Brian Harbour** - In Ephesians 6:11, Paul made reference to the “**schemes of the devil**.” Think of some of his schemes by which he tempts us to succumb to evil.

Scheme # 1: The devil searches out our basic character flaws and comes with a design to ruin us at the point of our weakness.

- To the sensual, he comes in skirts.
- To the bold, he bids us live by nerve and sensation.
- To the timid, he speaks about quietly withdrawing and playing it safe.
- To the intelligent, he tantalizes with the prospect of knowing good and evil.
- To the ambitious, he offers power.
- To the lazy, he whispers, “Why don’t you do that tomorrow!”

Satan attacks us at the point of our weakness.

Scheme #2: The devil points us to acceptable goals and then he tempts us to reach those goals in unacceptable ways.

A prime example of this was Satan’s approach to Jesus in the wilderness temptations recorded in Matthew 4. Satan held out before Jesus the very things Jesus had come to the earth to accomplish, but Satan tempted Jesus to accomplish these things in the wrong way. The conception that “the ends justifies the means” has been one of Satan’s most effective ploys since the beginning of our history.

Scheme # 3: The devil tempts us to be satisfied with less than our best. One man described this as “the lure of a lesser loyalty.”

“Don’t be a fanatic,” the devil whispers in our ear.

It’s okay to be religious; just don’t get too carried away with it.

It’s okay to be a Christian; just don’t make it your life.

Do just enough to get by but not enough to interfere with your own plans. Sometimes that is the devil’s approach.

Scheme #4: The devil urges us to make an exception.

“I know what you believe,” he says. “I know you have strong convictions, and that’s all right. I respect you for that. But just this one time-what can one little exception possibly hurt?” C. S. Lewis in the Screwtape Letters captured the essence of what I am saying when he wrote: “The greatest evil is not now done in those sordid ‘dens of crime’ that Dickens loved to paint. It is not done even in concentration camps and labour camps. In those we see its final result. But it is conceived and ordered (moved, seconded, carried, and minuted) in clean, carpeted, warmed, and well-lighted offices, by quiet men with white collars and cut fingernails and smooth-shaven cheeks who do not need to raise their voice.” Many through the centuries have been deceived by the work of Satan and have been persuaded to identify themselves with evil. Evil is present in our world, and it is deceptive. (Harbour Verse by Verse)

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#### Related Resources:

- Schemes of the Devil
- SATAN'S DEVICES TO DRAW THE SOUL TO SIN Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices Thomas Brooks, (1608-1680)
- Holman Bible Dictionary - [Satan](#)
- American Tract Society [Satan](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Satan](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Satan](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Satan](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Satan](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Satan](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Satan \(2\)](#) [Satan](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Satan](#)
- [Was Satan an angel?](#)

- [How, why, and when did Satan fall from heaven?](#)
- [Does Satan exist?](#)
- [Who is Satan? Who is the devil?](#)
- [How much power does Satan possess?](#)
- [What does it mean that Satan is the accuser?](#)
- [Why did Satan think he could defeat God?](#)
- [Is Lucifer Satan? Does the fall of Lucifer describe Satan?](#)
- [Is Satan the master of hell? Do Satan and his demons punish people in hell?](#)
- [God vs. Satan - if God is all-powerful, why does He not just kill Satan?](#)
- [Does Satan have to get God's permission before he can attack us?](#)
- [What does Satan look like? What do demons look like?](#)
- [Did God create Satan?](#)
- [What did Jesus mean when He said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven"?](#)
- [Why are both Jesus and Satan referred to as the morning star?](#)
- [Does Satan still have access to Heaven? Why does God allow Satan to enter Heaven, as recorded in the Bible?](#)
- [Is Satan in hell? Where is Satan?](#)
- [Are Jesus and Satan brothers?](#)
- [Does a believer have authority over Satan?](#)
- [Why does God allow Satan to attack us?](#)
- [Is the devil / Satan a person or a force / personification of evil?](#)
- [What does it mean that Satan is prince of the power of the air \(Ephesians 2:2\)?](#)
- [How is Satan god of this world \(2 Corinthians 4:4\)?](#)
- [Does Satan have the power to control the weather?](#)
- [Can Satan read our minds or know our thoughts?](#)
- [If God knew that Satan would rebel, why did He create him?](#)
- [What does it mean that Satan is the father of lies \(John 8:44\)?](#)
- [Why did God allow Satan and the demons to sin?](#)
- [Was Satan in charge of music in Heaven?](#)
- [Why is God going to release Satan after the 1000 years?](#)
- [Why were Michael and Satan disputing over the body of Moses \(Jude 9\)?](#)
- [Is the king of Tyre prophecy in Ezekiel 28 referring to Satan?](#)
- [Questions about Angels & Demons](#)
- [Was Satan the serpent in Genesis chapter 3?](#)
- [Why did Jesus say to Peter, "Get behind me Satan"?](#)
- [What does it mean that Satan masquerades as an angel of light?](#)
- [Did Jesus fight Satan for the keys to the kingdom?](#)
- [Is it possible to make a deal with the devil?](#)
- [What is the unholy trinity in the end times?](#)
- [What is Satanism?](#)
- [What are the various theories on the atonement?](#)
- [Did one third of the angels fall with Lucifer?](#)
- [What is Luciferianism?](#)
- [Is the war in heaven in Revelation 12 describing Satan's original fall or an end times angelic battle?](#)
- [Are demons fallen angels?](#)

**2 Corinthians 2:12 Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ and when a door was opened for me in the Lord,**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

NET 2 Corinthians 2:12 Now when I arrived in Troas to proclaim the gospel of Christ, even though the Lord had opened a door of opportunity for me,

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:12 λθ ν δ ε ς τ ν Τρ δα ε ς τ ε αγγ λιον το Χριστο κα θ ρας μοι νε γμ νης ν κυρ ,

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to the city of Troas to preach the Good News of Christ, the Lord opened a door of opportunity for me.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord,

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:12 Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me,

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:12 λθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν Τροάδα εἰς τὴν εὐαγγελίαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θύρας μοι νεγμνῆς ἐν κυρίῳ,

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:12 And having come to Troas for the good news of the Christ, and a door to me having been opened in the Lord,

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:12 Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and when a door was opened unto me in the Lord,

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, the Lord opened a door for me.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to Troas with the gospel of Christ, a door was opened for me in the Lord.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord,

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to Troas to proclaim the good news of Christ, a door was opened for me in the Lord;

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I went to Troas for the gospel of Christ, although a door was opened for me in the Lord,

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to Troas for the sake of the gospel of Christ and a door was opened for me there in the Lord,

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I went to the city of Troas, the Lord gave me an opportunity to spread the Good News about Christ.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:12 Now when I came to Troas for the good news of Christ, and there was an open door for me in the Lord,

- **when:** Ac 16:8 20:1-6,8
- **when a door was opened:** Ac 14:27 1Co 16:9 Col 4:3 Rev 3:7,8
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Acts 14:27+ When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they (PAUL AND BARNABAS) began to report all things that God had done with them (DURING THEIR FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY) and how He had **opened** ([anoigo](#)) a door of faith to the Gentiles.

1Cor 16:8-9+ But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; 9 for a wide door for effective ([energes](#)) service **has opened** ([anoigo](#) in the perfect tense = opened and still remains open) to me (HE IS REFERRING TO AN OPEN DOOR IN EPHESUS), and there are many adversaries.

Col 4:2-3+ - (PAUL COMMANDED THE SAINTS AT COLOSSAE TO PRAY FOR EVANGELISTIC SUCCESS FOR HIS MINISTRY) **Devote** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves to prayer, keeping alert (present tense) in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; 3 praying (present tense) at the same time for us as well, that God will open up ([anoigo](#)) to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;



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## DIVINELY OPENED DOOR OF DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY

The next section 2Co 2:12-13 deals with Paul's trip to Macedonia, his restlessness in Troas because of his concern for the church at Corinth the failure to receive a report from Titus.

**Context** - Most likely the riot at Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41+) prompted Paul to leave and head north for [Troas](#). While Paul says he went to [Troas for the gospel](#), he clearly was hoping to meet Titus and hear an update on the spiritual condition of the church at Corinth. Paul had sent Titus to Corinth to assess their response to his "severe letter."

**Robertson** points out that "Luke does not mention this stop at **Troas** on the way from Ephesus to Macedonia (Acts 20:1f.), though he does mention two other visits there (Acts 16:8; 20:6)."

**Kruse** offers this context - it was some time after Paul returned to Ephesus, following the 'painful' visit to Corinth and after he had written the 'severe' letter, that he made his way north to Troas. ([TNTC-2Cor](#))

**Murray Harris** gives us this background - Titus was dispatched to Corinth with this "letter of tears" while Paul continued work in and around Ephesus (cf. Acts 19:22b, "he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer"), the city to which he had returned after his brief "painful visit" to Corinth. Paul's departure for Troas, mentioned in v. 12 (by a coasting vessel? cf. Acts 20:13-15), probably was precipitated by the Demetrius riot (Acts 19:23-41). Evidently he had already planned to leave the city, for when he sent Titus to Corinth, he arranged to meet him at Troas, or, failing that, probably at Philippi. ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**P E Hughes** - Paul now returns to the theme of his itinerary and sets before the Corinthians further proof that his change of plan is in no way attributable to lack of love for them (cf. 1:15ff., 23ff.). On the contrary, at the very time when it was being whispered that his attitude was one of irresponsibility and unconcern they occupied the main horizon of his thought and his heart was tormented with anxiety for news of them....Calvin remarks, "the fact that he was so anxious about them that he had no rest anywhere, even when a large prospect of usefulness presented itself, until he had learned how things stood with them, argues a singular degree of attachment to the Corinthians" ([NICNT-2Cor](#))

**Broomall** - From here to the end of the chapter Paul tells us how his changed plan was consummated in trial (vv. 12, 13), in triumph (vv. 14-16), and in testimony (v. 17). ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**Now (de)** - Marks a change of topic from 2Co 2:5-11, marking the beginning of a new section.

**Garland** - These next two verses serve as a transition from his defense for failing to come as planned and his defense of his boldness and afflictions as an apostle of Christ. Paul does not complete the story of the relief he felt when he finally saw Titus in

Macedonia and received the good news about their godly sorrow and renewed zeal for him (2Co 7:5–16). Instead, he returns to the theme of the grief he suffered from his visit (2Co 2:3). On the one hand, harking back to his aborted mission to Troas reinforces his point that his failure to visit them as planned was not because he did not care for them but because he was overwhelmed with sorrow regarding them. It also makes clear that he does not make changes in his plans lightly; he was weighed down by anguish. On the other hand, it provides a transition for the discussion of his many afflictions which have caused some in Corinthians to question his suitability and qualifications as an apostle. ([NAC-2Cor](#))

**When I came to Troas** (see map above > NE corner of Asia) **for** (eis = purpose = thus to proclaim or preach is implicit) **the gospel** (NET - "to proclaim the gospel") **of Christ and when a door was opened for me in the Lord**- Troas was the main exit port on the northern coast of western Asia, from which to travel to Macedonia. Note that Paul was a single minded man (cf Php 3:13+, Ps 86:11b). He did not go to Troas for a vacation on the coast, but for proclamation of **the gospel of Christ**, the good news about Jesus (objective genitive = "about Christ") which Paul summarized in 1Co 15:1-9+.

Note the phrase **in the Lord** is interpreted two ways - one is **in the Lord** speaks of agency, that is, that the door for evangelizing was opened by the Lord. The other interpretation is that **in the Lord** indicates the sphere within which the opportunity for service lay. Either way any success Paul might experience in evangelizing was due to the Lord, especially the Spirit of Jesus. As **Victor Furnish** says "in the Lord, might designate both the means by which the door was opened and the sphere wherein Paul's opportunity lay." ([Anchor Bible Commentary-2Cor](#))

The time sensitive word **when** implies that he **came to Troas** but then waited on the Spirit to open a **door**. The verb **opened** ([anoigo](#) - [see similar uses above](#)) is in the perfect tense meaning that at some time in the past it was **opened** and remained open. This reminds me of the saying an **"open door of opportunity"**. It is in the passive voice in this context signifying the divine passive (the work of the Spirit). To open a door means to make possible an opportunity. Contrast the **opened door** in Troas with the situation in Acts 16:6-7+ where Paul was trying to "go into Bithynia and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit him." (Corollary - the Spirit opened and closed doors for the proclamation of the gospel). And so where did Paul go from there (that is when the Spirit shut the door in Acts 16:6-7+) He passed by Mysia ([see map above](#)) and "came down to Troas" (Acts 16:8+) where he had the Macedonian vision (Acts 16:9-11+ see ["Macedonian Call"](#)). Whether he preached the gospel in Troas on this first visit in Acts 16 is not stated in the text. But in 2Co 2:12 Paul reports that the door was **opened** (presumably opened by the Spirit) **for the gospel** and it is possible that he planted the church in Troas at this time for in Acts 20:6-12 it is clear that there is an established church. Not everyone agrees he proclaimed the Gospel in Troas at this time, but left for Macedonia because he was distraught at Titus not coming to Troas.

I agree with **Murray Harris'** comment that **"We may safely assume that Paul actually preached in Troas, though v. 12 speaks only of his intent. He would recognize that the "door" of opportunity was "open" (note Acts 16:6–10+) only after he had grasped the evangelistic opportunities initially afforded by the Lord.** But evangelism was curtailed (remarkable, in the light of 1 Co 9:16+!) owing to Paul's restless spirit (perhaps seen as a device used by Satan, cf. 2Co 2:11. This disquiet (2Co 7:5, 6+) was caused by several factors: (1) the disheartening opposition at Ephesus, which had caused his premature departure; (2) persistent uncertainty and fears concerning the situation at Corinth (2Co 7:5b+), because of Titus's non-arrival; and (3) concern for the safety of Titus in travel (note 2Co 7:6b, 7a+), particularly if he was carrying the completed Corinthian collection. ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#)) (Bold added)

**Ralph Martin** on **I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ**- There must have been more to the phrase, and we should see here a measure of success in preaching and church formation at Troas. When Paul came to leave Troas (prematurely?) he did so with reluctance: ποτόξαμενος α το ς, lit., "having said farewell to them" (v 13). Héring notes the "solemn character" of this farewell. And Rissi (Studien, 16) sees in this decision to leave a successful mission enterprise in its early days an "ultimate sign of his love" for the Corinthian church, about whose welfare Paul was deeply concerned. He was eager to rendezvous with Titus in order to learn from him how matters fared at Corinth....When pastoral concerns weighed heavily upon him he could not put his heart in evangelistic opportunity. In the event, it was better for him to quit Troas and press on to meet his colleague on his return from Corinth. No good purpose is served, we learn, in any Christian's attempting a piece of service when his or her real interests lie elsewhere; and pastoral responsibility stood high on Paul's agenda at this time. ([WBC-2Cor](#))

**Lenski** - Combining Acts 16:8, etc., with what Paul now states, we cannot agree that a church had already been established in Troas but conclude that a good opportunity was now offering itself. This occurred in the fall. Acts 20:6, etc., shows that **a church had been founded in Troas before the next spring.** ([Interpretation of Second Corinthians](#))

**Broomall** - What an opportunity—a **door**! What a privilege—for **me**! What a responsibility—**opened**! What a relationship—in **the Lord**! Paul's travels were always purposive and evangelistic—for **the gospel of Christ** (ASV). ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**Barnett** comments on why Troas was such a strategic open door of opportunity - Being near the mouth of **the Dardanelles** with considerable human traffic passing through, the apostle would not have been slow to notice the strategic possibilities for ministry

that Troas presented. Paul intended to come to Troas “for the gospel of Christ,” or, in effect, to establish a church in that city. It is reasonable to suppose that in the midst of his distress Paul saw the Corinthian crisis as providential, giving him the occasion to establish a church, or perhaps to strengthen an existing church, in the important entrepôt, Troas. (ED: IN OTHER WORDS BARNETT ALSO FAVORS THAT PAUL PREACHED THE GOSPEL IN TROAS - I AGREE) ([NICNT-2Cor](#))

**P E Hughes** on **when a door was opened for me** - This door of opportunity was apparently still open on his return to Troas the following spring, as the incident recounted in Acts 20:6–12 (ED: ALTHOUGH AT THAT TIME THERE IS CLEARLY AN ASSEMBLY OF CHRISTIANS) indicates. The metaphor of the door is both natural and graphic, and one for which Paul seems to have had some partiality. He had already used it in an earlier letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:9) with reference to the work at Ephesus, and it occurs again in the Epistle to the Colossians (Col 4:3) where he asks his readers to pray that God may open to him “a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ”. **The opening of a door has a twofold effect** it enables the evangelist to enter with the message of the Gospel, and it also makes possible the entry of that message into the minds and hearts of his hearers. Thus Paul and Barnabas explained to the church at Antioch how God had “**opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles**” (Acts 14:27). In each case, it will be observed, it is God, not man, who opens the door (This may be explicitly stated, as in Col. 4:3 and Acts 14:27, or implied by the use of the passive voice, as in verse 12 here and in 1 Cor. 16:9.); and when God opens the door it is not for the sake of the preacher only, but for the sake also of his hearers. Again, the door that God opens no man can shut: “Behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut” (Rev. 3:8; cf. Isa. 45:1f.). Augustine points to the opening of the door for Paul at Troas as “a most manifest demonstration that even the very beginning of faith is the gift of God.” ([NICNT-2Cor](#)) (Bolding added)

**Garland** on Paul at **Troas** - Paul may have traveled to Troas to wait for Titus and, as in Athens, could not resist the urge to proclaim the gospel (Acts 17:16–17+). Troas was one of the few Roman colonies in Asia Minor and therefore had the status of a Roman city, as did Corinth, Ephesus, and Philippi. Its strategic location at the entrance of the Dardanelles would fit Paul’s policy of working in strategic centers. It is more likely, then, that he went there, as he says, to preach the gospel of Christ. The gospel of Christ is the catalyst that controls all that Paul does as an apostle. His purpose was to take the gospel to places where Christ has not been named (Ro 15:20), and he reports that “a door was opened in the Lord.” “In the Lord” may express both the means by which the door was opened and the sphere in which the opportunity presented itself. He stormed through it to seize the opportunity but then quickly exited. ([NAC-2Cor](#))

**Gospel** (2098) **euaggelion** from **eú** = good + **aggéllo** = proclaim, tell) is literally good news or glad tidings. In the NT **euaggelion** is used only of God’s message of salvation in three senses (1) act of proclamation (preaching the gospel) (1Cor 4:15), (2) the work of evangelization (spread of the gospel) (Phil 4:3), (3) the content of the message as an offer of salvation (good news) (Ro 1:16) (Adapted from Friberg - Analytical Lexicon).

**Euaggelion in Corinthian letters** - 1 Co. 4:15; 1 Co. 9:12; 1 Co. 9:14; 1 Co. 9:18; 1 Co. 9:23; 1 Co. 15:1; 2 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:4; 2 Co. 8:18; 2 Co. 9:13; 2 Co. 10:14; 2 Co. 11:4; 2 Co. 11:7

**Opened** (455) **anoigo** from **ana** = again + **oigo** = to open) means to open, to open up, to open again, to give access to. Anaigo is used literally of opening doors (Acts 16:26-27), but also figuratively of opening doors for the gospel (Acts 14:27, 1Cor 16:9, 2Cor 2:12, cf prayer for opened doors for gospel - Col 4:3) and then opening eyes spiritually to receive the gospel (Acts 26:18). John uses it for Jesus opening eyes of a blind man to see (Jn 9:10, 14, 17, 21, 26, 30, 32), something demons could not accomplish (Jn 10:21).

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The writers of the New Testament adapted the term Gospel as God’s glorious message of salvation for lost otherwise hopeless, helpless sinners. **Euaggelion** is found in several combination phrases, each describing the gospel like a multifaceted jewel in various terms from a different viewpoint (from the NASB, 1977):

1. the gospel of the kingdom (Mt 4:23+, Mt 9:35+, Mt 24:14+)
2. the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk 1:1+) because it centers in Christ
3. the gospel of God (Mk 1:14+, Ro 15:16+, 2Co 11:7+, 1Th 2:2+, 1Th 2:8,9+, 1Pe 4:17+) because it originates with God and was not invented by man
4. the gospel of the kingdom of God (Lu 16:16+)
5. the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24+, Ro 1:1+),
6. the gospel of His Son (Ro 1:9+)
7. the gospel of Christ (Ro 15:19+, 2Co 2:12+, 2Co 9:13+, 2Co 10:14+, Gal 1:7+, Phil 1:27+, 1Th 3:2+)
8. the gospel of the glory of Christ (2Co 4:4+)
9. the gospel of your salvation (Eph 1:14+)
10. the gospel of peace (Eph 6:15+)
11. the gospel of our Lord Jesus (2Th 1:8+)

12. the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1Ti 1:11+)
13. In Ro 16:25, 26+ Paul called it **"my Gospel"** indicating that the special emphasis he gave the gospel in his ministry.
14. **An eternal gospel** - Rev 14:6+ (Some writers such as C I Scofield interpret this as a "different gospel" than the other "gospels" mentioned above but I think such a distinction is incorrect and is poorly substantiated).

For a rewarding study, study the preceding references in context making notation of the truth you observe about the gospel. If you would like a special blessing, take an afternoon to go through all 76 uses of **euaggelion** in context making a list of what you learn about the gospel. The Spirit of God will enlighten your heart and encourage your spirit in a very special way...and you'll want to share the "good news" with someone because of your "discoveries"!

**Euaggelion** - Matt. 4:23; Matt. 9:35; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 26:13; Mk. 1:1; Mk. 1:14; Mk. 1:15; Mk. 8:35; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 13:10; Mk. 14:9; Mk. 16:15; Acts 15:7; Acts 20:24; Rom. 1:1; Rom. 1:9; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 2:16; Rom. 10:16; Rom. 11:28; Rom. 15:16; Rom. 15:19; Rom. 16:25; 1 Co. 4:15; 1 Co. 9:12; 1 Co. 9:14; 1 Co. 9:18; 1 Co. 9:23; 1 Co. 15:1; 2 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:4; 2 Co. 8:18; 2 Co. 9:13; 2 Co. 10:14; 2 Co. 11:4; 2 Co. 11:7; Gal. 1:6; Gal. 1:7; Gal. 1:11; Gal. 2:2; Gal. 2:5; Gal. 2:7; Gal. 2:14; Eph. 1:13; Eph. 3:6; Eph. 6:15; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:5; Phil. 1:7; Phil. 1:12; Phil. 1:16; Phil. 1:27; Phil. 2:22; Phil. 4:3; Phil. 4:15; Col. 1:5; Col. 1:23; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:2; 1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Thess. 2:8; 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Thess. 3:2; 2 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:8; Phlm. 1:13; 1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 14:6

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#### **Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible - TROAS** (Gk. Trōás)

A principal seaport on the Aegean Sea located in northwest Asia Minor ca. 20 km. (12 mi.) SSW of ancient Troy (Ilium). The city was founded as Antigonía ca. 310 by Antigonos, the successor of Alexander the Great. After defeating Antigonos, Lysimachus renamed it Alexandria Troas after Alexander the Great (301). One of the more important cities of the Roman Empire, Troas came into Roman possession in 133 and became a Roman colony under Augustus.

**Luke places Paul in Troas twice.** From Troas Paul sailed to Macedonia in response to a vision (Acts 16:8–11). The first **we** passage occurs here, suggesting that Luke joined Paul at Troas. Paul also spent a week at Troas on his way to Jerusalem after his third journey (Acts 20:5–12). There Paul revived Eutychus after he tumbled from a window during Paul's sermon.

Paul mentions one visit to Troas (2 Cor. 2:12–13) which is thought to be a separate visit made between those recorded in Acts. According to 2 Tim. 4:13 Paul left a cloak, books, and parchments at Troas. Neither Paul nor Luke discuss the founding of the church at Troas.

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#### **Related Resources:**

- American Tract Society [Troas](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Troas](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Troas](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Troas](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Troas](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Troas](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Troas](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Troas](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Troas](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Troas](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Troas](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Troas](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Troas](#)

**2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no relief in my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and set out for Macedonia.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:13 ο κ σχηκα νεσιν τ πνεματ μου τ μ ερεν με Ττον τν δελφν μου, λλ ποταξμενος α το ς ξλθον ε ς Μακεδον αν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:13 But I had no peace of mind because my dear brother Titus hadn't yet arrived with a report from you. So I said good-bye and went on to Macedonia to find him.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:13 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.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:13 I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:13 ο κ σχηκα νεσιν τ πνεματ μου τ μ ερεν με Ττον τν δελφν μου, λλ ποταξμενος α το ς ξλθον ε ς Μακεδον αν.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:13 I have not had rest to my spirit, on my not finding Titus my brother, but having taken leave of them, I went forth to Macedonia;

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no relief for my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no rest in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus, but I said good-bye to them and left for Macedonia.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:13 I did not have rest in my spirit due to my not finding Titus, my brother. Rather than staying on, I said good-bye to them and departed for Macedonia.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:13 but my mind could not rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said farewell to them and went on to Macedonia.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no relief in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no relief from anxiety, not finding my brother Titus there, and I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:13 But I didn't have any peace of mind, because I couldn't find Titus, our brother, there. So I said goodbye to the people in Troas and went to the province of Macedonia.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no rest in my spirit because Titus my brother was not there: so I went away from them, and came into Macedonia.

The Living Bible But Titus, my dear brother, wasn't there to meet me and I couldn't rest, wondering where he was and what had happened to him. So I said good-bye and went right on to Macedonia to try to find him.

- **no rest:** 2Co 7:5,6
- **Titus:** 2Co 8:6,16,23 12:18 Ga 2:1,3 2Ti 4:10 Tit 1:4
- **I went:** Ac 20:1-2
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Acts 20:1-2 After the uproar had ceased (AT EPHESUS), Paul sent for the disciples (OF THE EPHESIAN CHURCH), and when he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to **Macedonia**. 2 When he had gone through those districts and had given them much exhortation, he came to Greece.

### PAUL'S RESTLESS SPIRIT

**Barnett** gives some background on Titus - By an arrangement made at the time of his dispatch to Corinth bearing the "Severe Letter," Titus was to come to Troas ahead of, or within the same time frame as, Paul and report on the Corinthians' response. ([NICNT-2Cor](#))

**I had no rest for my spirit** - **Had** is in the perfect tense indicating his mental unrest began at a time in the past and was still his mental state! Paul had no peace of mind but was inwardly troubled. Paul mentions **no rest** again in 2Co 7:5+ writing "For even when we came into **Macedonia** our **flesh had no rest**, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within." Note in this context "spirit" and "flesh" are interchangeable synonyms. At that time God comforted Paul who wrote "But God, Who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus." (2 Cor 7:6+).

**MacArthur on no rest in my spirit** - His intense concern for the Corinthian church raised troubling questions in his mind. Would they affirm their love for him? Or would they follow the false apostles? Would they deal with the specific issues he had rebuked them for: divisions, strife, incest, marriage, singleness, divorce, the role of women, idolatry, spiritual pride, the abuse of the Lord's Supper, misuse of spiritual gifts? Paul's heart ached because he did not know the answer to those questions, and as a result he had no freedom to minister. ([MNTC-2 Cor](#))

**Rest** (freedom, ease)([425](#)) **anesis** from **aniemi** = loose, let up, hold back ~ relaxing or release) refers to relaxing of custodial control and thus giving one some liberty as in the present passage. Anesis can also refer to relief from something onerous or troublesome. Anesis in classical literature. (1) It denotes the "loosening" or "releasing" of something (like strings); (2) metaphorically it means "a releasing" from guilt, "a remission"; (3) it refers to "relaxation" or even "recreation"

**Anesis** - 5v in NT - ease(1), freedom(1), relief(1), rest(2). - Acts 24:23 = "have some freedom"; 2 Co. 2:13; 2Co 7:5; 8:13; 2 Th 1:7 = "to give relief to you who are afflicted."

**Not finding Titus my brother but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia**([click map](#)) - Don't be confused because at this point Paul gives what amounts to a "parenthesis" (2Co 2:14-2Co 7:4) picking back up on his discussion of Titus in 2 Cor 7:5+. **Titus** had not yet returned from taking the "**severe letter**" (2 Co 2:3-4) to Corinth for him. Some think Paul did not even take advantage of the open door and so did not preach the Gospel. I disagree because the next time Paul came to Troas there was a gathering of the saints (Read Acts 20:3-13+) which supports the premise that the Gospel was proclaimed several months earlier on Paul's trip to and through Troas. It is hard to imagine Paul turning down an door opened by God, for that is a picture of the perfect will of God. God wanted sinners in Troas to know Jesus!

Who is **them**? Several of the versions paraphrase it as "said good-bye to them." This strongly suggests there were believers in Troas (possibly some from his first passage through in Acts 16:8), for one could hardly envision him saying "good-bye" to the unsaved Gentiles in Troas.

**Murray Harris on them** (autois) - Α τοις (autois), "[I said good-by] to them" (not in NIV), indicates that some converts were won in Troas (cf. Acts 20:6-12). ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**Taking leave** (say good-bye)([657](#)) **apotasso** from **apo** = from + **tasso** = to place in order) means to assign to different place, to allot. However in the NT it is only found in the middle voice and has the meaning of to part from, to take leave of, to say good-bye as several versions render 2Co 2:13 - NET, NIV, CSB, NJB, GWN,

#### Related Resources:

- Bob Utley's Special Topic - [Titus](#)
- [Who was Titus in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Titus](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Titus](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Titus](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Titus](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Titus](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Titus](#)

**2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.**

Amplified - But thanks be to God, Who in Christ always leads us in triumph [as trophies of Christ's victory] and through us spreads and makes evident the fragrance of the knowledge of God everywhere,

The Living Bible - But thanks be to God! For through what Christ has done, he has triumphed over us so that now wherever we go he uses us to tell others about the Lord and to spread the Gospel like a sweet perfume.

Phillips - Thanks be to God who leads us, wherever we are, on Christ's triumphant way and makes our knowledge of him spread throughout the world like a lovely perfume!

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of him in every place.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:14 Τ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν πάντοτε θριαμβεῖ ὡς ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ διὰ τῶν ἡμῶν τὴν γνῶσιν αὐτοῦ φανεροῦν διὰ τῶν πάντων τῶν τόπων.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:14 But thank God! He has made us his captives and continues to lead us along in Christ's triumphal procession. Now he uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:14 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.

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

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:14 Τ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν πάντοτε θριαμβεῖ ὡς ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ διὰ τῶν ἡμῶν τὴν γνῶσιν αὐτοῦ φανεροῦν διὰ τῶν πάντων τῶν τόπων.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:14 and to God are thanks, who at all times is leading us in triumph in the Christ, and the fragrance of His knowledge He is manifesting through us in every place,

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savor of his knowledge in every place.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always puts us on display in Christ and through us spreads the aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:14 Gratitude arises to God for leading us always in triumphal procession in Christ, and for wafting through us the fragrant knowledge of him in every place,

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ and manifests through us the odor of the knowledge of him in every place.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:14 But, thanks be to God who always gives us in Christ a part in his triumphal procession, and through us is spreading everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of himself.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:14 But I thank God, who always leads us in victory because of Christ. Wherever we go, God uses us to make clear what it means to know Christ. It's like a fragrance that fills the air.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:14 But praise be to God who makes us strong to overcome in Christ, and makes clear through us in every place the value of the knowledge of him.

- **thanks:** 2Co 1:11 2Co 8:16 9:15 Eph 5:20 1Th 3:9 Rev 7:12
- **Who:** Ps 106:47 148:14 Ro 8:37 1Co 15:37
- **sweet aroma:** 2Co 2:15,16 Song 1:3 Ro 15:19 Col 1:6,23
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Romans 8:37+ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him Who loved us.

Colossians 2:15+ When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, **having triumphed** ([thriambeuo](#)) over them through Him.

#### Triumphal Roman Procession

## GRATITUDE TO GOD FOR GLORIOUS GUIDANCE!

**Homer Kent** - At this point in the letter, Paul interrupted the description of his search for Titus, not resuming it until 2Co 7:5. Nevertheless the content of this section is pertinent to the discussion, for it reveals Paul's attitude of confidence in God's leading, even in times of disappointment. Though he had been concerned at not finding Titus in Troas (2:12-13), Paul could still express thanks to God for His unfailing leadership. Disappointment over certain details and events did not cause the apostle to lose sight of the larger aspect of God's program. He was convinced that God was always leading him and his associates in the triumphant accomplishment of his glorious will. ([The Glory of Christian Ministry - An Analysis of 2 Corinthians 2:14-4:18](#)).

**Robertson on but** - Sudden outburst of gratitude in contrast to the previous dejection in Troas. Surely a new paragraph should begin here. In point of fact Paul makes a long digression from here to 6:10 on the subject of the Glory of the Christian Ministry as Bachmann points out in his Kommentar (p. 124), only he runs it from 2:12 to 7:1 (Aus der Tiefe in die Hohe, Out of the Depths to the Heights). We can be grateful for this emotional outburst, Paul's rebound of joy on meeting Titus in Macedonia, for it has given the world the finest exposition of all sides of the Christian ministry in existence, one that reveals the wealth of Paul's nature and his mature grasp of the great things in service for Christ. **The sense of present triumph has blotted out the gloom at Troas**

**But** - Term of contrast. He had just said he had **no rest in his spirit**, but now in contrast chooses to focus on an invigorating, reviving spiritual truth. Paul had been focusing on his earthly problems ("horizontal vision") and it disturbed his mind. Now he chooses to lift his eyes and focus on God, so-called Vertical Vision. It is amazing how Vertical Vision is triumphant over horizontal vision! Notice how he begins with a Spirit enabled attitude of gratitude instead of falling into the miry clay trap of groaning and grumbling (which he did not do). It is amazing (and supernatural) how putting on the garment of praise can lift a spirit of heaviness (Isaiah 61:3+)! Try it, you'll like it! Be imitators of Paul (1Cor 11:1+).

**Wiersbe** - It appeared in Asia that Paul's plans had completely fallen apart. Where was Titus? What was going on at Corinth? Paul had open doors of ministry at Troas, but he had no peace in his heart to walk through those doors. Humanly speaking, it looked like the end of the battle, with Satan as the victor. Except for one thing: Paul had a conquering faith! He was able to break out in praise and write, "Thanks be unto God!" (2 Cor. 2:14) This song of praise was born out of the assurances Paul had because he trusted the Lord. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Thanks** (*charis*) **be to God, Who always leads us in triumph** (present tense - continually) **in Christ, and** (present tense - continually) **manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place**- **Always** is a great word. But notice the next word **leads us in triumph**. What is the implication? We need to always follow in order to always be led by God. We need to learn to be continually led by His Spirit (Gal 5:18+, cf Ro 8:14+ - for explains "by the Spirit putting to death the deeds of the body" in Ro 8:13+). **In Christ** is locative of sphere, in the "atmosphere" of Christ, in His power, in the power of His Spirit. The verb **manifests** means clearly displayed and made known. **Through** (*dia*) indicates believers function like "conduits" through which flows **the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Jesus**. As Paul says in his last letter "therefore if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a **vessel for honor**, sanctified (set apart - perfect tense), useful to the Master (WE ARE NOT OUR OWN), prepared (perfect tense) for every good ("GOD"/"Jn 15:5") work (IN THIS VERSE PREPARED FOR PRESENTING THE SWEET AROMA OF JESUS) (2Ti 2:21+) **The sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him** is "longhand" for the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed by Paul, et al. Contrast this with Paul's mention of **fragrance of Christ** in 2Co 2:15, where it refers not to the message proclaimed but to the messengers that proclaim the message.

Paul writes a very similar statement in 1Co 15:57 "**but thanks be to God**, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Compare similar expressions of praise to God - Ro 6:17; Ro 7:25; 2Co 8:16; 2Co 9:15.

**Uttley** on "**of the knowledge of Him in every place**" - The Corinthian church was proud of its intellectual heritage. Paul was proud of his knowledge of God through Christ. Knowledge was not for personal glory, but for evangelism. As we are "always" (*pantote*) led in triumph in Christ, we also are expected to clearly reveal (*manifest*) the message of Christ "in every place" (*panti*). The universal gospel of Christ is to be shared by His victorious followers in every place (cf. Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

**Robertson** - In a Roman triumph garlands of flowers scattered sweet odour and incense bearers dispensed perfumes. The knowledge of God is here the aroma which Paul had scattered like an incense bearer

**Richards** - When the issue is God's relationship with us, "**always**" reminds us powerfully that God is present at every moment in time and thus is with us constantly. ([Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

The wonderful truth **in Christ** occurs 8x in 8v in 2 Corinthians - 2Co 1:21 2Co 2:14 2Co 2:17 2Co 3:14 2Co 5:17 2Co 5:19 2Co 12:2 2Co 12:19

**J Vernon McGee** gives some interesting background on the phrase **But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ** - In this dramatic picture, Paul is saying that preaching the gospel is like leading a triumphal entry. The background is a Roman triumphal entry. One of the great Roman generals would go out to the frontier—to Europe where my ancestors were at that time, or down into Africa—where he would have victory after victory, for Rome was victorious in most campaigns. The conqueror would then return to Rome, and there would be a big, triumphal entry into the city. It is said that sometimes the triumphal entry would begin in the morning and go on far into the night. The Roman conqueror would be bringing in animals and other booty which he had captured. **In the front of the procession would be the people who were going to be released. They had been captured but would be freed and would become Roman citizens. In the back of the procession would be the captive people who were to be executed.** In these triumphal entries there was always the **burning of incense**. They would be burning the incense to their gods to whom they gave credit for the victory. All the way through the procession would be clouds of smoke from the incense, sometimes even obscuring the procession as it passed by. With this as a background, Paul is saying, “Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” This is wonderful, friend. You can’t lose when you are in Christ. You cannot lose! Paul says that God always causeth us to triumph. Wait a minute, Paul. Always? In every place? We know you had wonderful success in Ephesus, but you didn’t do so well in Athens. Do you feel that you triumphed in both places? “Yes,” Paul says, “He always causes us to triumph in Christ!” “And maketh manifest the savour [the sweet incense] of his knowledge by us in every place.” Are you having a victory when no one turns to Christ? “Oh, yes,” Paul says. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**Furnish** - A few of the older commentators followed the Vulgate (triumphant nos) in translating “triumphs over us” (e.g., Meyer, 452; cf. Denney, 86–89; Schlatter, 495), often with reference to Christian conversion as a being “conquered” by God, whereupon one is brought into God’s triumphal procession. However, there is nothing in the context of 2 Cor 2:14 to support this meaning, it would be difficult to know what the adverb always could mean as applied to conversion, and the generalized meaning “triumph over” is not attested as early as Paul (Williamson 1968:322; Egan 1977:37). ([Anchor Bible Commentary-2Cor](#))

**John MacArthur** notes that **triumph** “is a technical term, and it had some very significant meaning in the Roman world. The Romans had what they called, “a triumph.” It was the highest honor that could ever be paid to a victorious Roman general. When the Roman government gave a general a triumph, that was the ultimate. Before any Roman general could be granted a triumph, he must have achieved certain things. He must have been the actual commander-in-chief in the field, and not a secondary leader; the campaign that he engaged in must have been completely finished; the region which was conquered completely pacified, and the victorious troops brought home. Furthermore, according to Roman history, 5,000 of the enemy, at least, must have fallen in one engagement so that it fell into the category of a slaughter. Furthermore, as a result of this campaign, a positive extension of Roman territory must have been gained, and not merely a disaster retrieved or an attack repelled. And the victory must have been won over a foreign foe, and not in a civil war. Triumphs didn’t happen very often. But in an actual triumph, the procession of the victorious general marched through the streets of Rome all the way to the capitol. And you can even read about the sequence of that march and the order of the people in the parade itself. First, there came the state officials and the Senate-- always the politicians. Then there came the trumpeters, who were heralding what was coming. Then came the spoils taken from the conquered land, carted along. For example, when Titus conquered Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the seven-branched candlesticks, the golden table of shewbread, the golden trumpets were carried through the streets of Rome in his triumph. Then there came some painted pictures of the conquered land and some models (can you believe it?) of conquered citadels and conquered ships. Then there followed the white bull, which was going to be offered as a sacrifice to the gods. Then there came the wretched captives, the enemy princes, leaders, and generals in chains, shortly to be flung into prison and, in all probability, to be executed. Then there came the, what were called lictors, or punishers, who were beating these people with rods. And then there came the musicians. And then there came the priests swinging their censers with the sweet-smelling incense burning. And then came the general himself after all of this huge entourage. He was in a chariot drawn by four horses, he was clad in a purple tunic embroidered with gold and palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked out with golden stars. In his hand he had an ivory scepter with a Roman eagle on the top of it, and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter. And after him rode his family. And finally, at the very end, came the army wearing all their decorations and shouting, “Triumph! Triumph! Triumph!” I mean, it’s a pretty impressive scene. And all this massive procession moves through the streets of the city, all decorated and garlanded with flowers all shouting and, along the edge of the road of course are these mobs of people cheering. It was a tremendous day -- a day which probably happened once in a lifetime. That is the picture in Paul’s mind. (See the full sermon [Triumphing Over Discouragement in the Ministry](#))

**THOUGHT** - Paul was a man like Job who in a time of testing turned to trusting in God. Job was a man who knew affliction and yet experienced the comfort of the LORD. He passed that comfort on to Paul and to us with his wonderful words of testimony and trust in Job 13:15 “Though He slay me, I will hope (trust) in Him.” If you are in need of comfort in the midst of your affliction take a moment and play Job’s “Anthem” **[THOUGH YOU SLAY ME](#)** sung by Shane and Shane and allow the Spirit, the Comforter (Jn 14:16KJV), to take Job’s simple Word of Life (Php 2:16+, a Person, Jesus = 1Jn 1:1+) and minister to the deepest needs of your soul (He will!) So in the midst of deep unrest of his spirit which Paul had and you may be experiencing pay special attention to the line “Though You slay me, Yet I will praise You.” Paul did just that declaring “Thanks be to God.”

I come, God, I come  
I return to the Lord  
The one who's broken  
The one who's torn me apart  
You struck down to bind me up  
You say You do it all in love  
That I might know You in Your suffering (Php 3:10)

Though You slay me  
Yet I will praise You  
Though You take from me  
I will bless Your name  
Though You ruin me  
Still I will worship  
Sing a song to the one who's all I need

My heart and flesh may fail  
The earth below give way  
But with my eyes, with my eyes I'll see the Lord  
Lifted high on that day  
Behold, the Lamb that was slain  
And I'll know every tear was worth it all

Though You slay me  
Yet I will praise You  
Though You take from me  
I will bless Your name  
Though You ruin me  
Still I will worship  
Sing a song to the one who's all I need

Though tonight I'm crying out  
Let this cup pass from me now  
You're still all that I need  
You're enough for me  
You're enough for me

Though You slay me  
Yet I will praise You  
Though You take from me  
I will bless Your name  
Though You ruin me  
Still I will worship  
Sing a song to the one who's all I need  
Sing a song to the one who's all I need

**Always** (3842) **pantote** from **pás** = all, every + **tóte** = when, then) an adverb which literally is "every when" means always, at all times, ever (more), on all occasions. In **English always** is defined - invariably, forever, perpetually, on every occasion, throughout all time, without variation. Continually, regularly, repeatedly or constantly during a certain period, or regularly at stated intervals

**Leads us in triumph** (present tense - continually) (2358) **thriambeuo** from **thríambos** = triumph) means to lead prisoners of war (and spoils) in a victory procession demonstrating one's successful conquest of the opposition. To lead in triumph. The picture is that of the triumph of a Roman general returning home from the wars, parading his defeated captives through the streets of Rome. In Colossians 2:15 **thriambeuo** conveys the idea of the completeness of the victory accomplished by Christ. **Rienecker** writes that thriambeuo presents "The picture is the triumphal entry of a military hero into the city of Rome. The victorious Roman general marched into the city in a long procession preceded by the city magistrates. They were followed by trumpeters, then the spoils taken from the enemy, followed by the king of the conquered country, then officials

of the victorious army and musicians dancing and playing; and at last the general himself, in whose honor the whole wonderful pageant was taking place ( [New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament](#))

**Manifests** (reveals) (present tense - continually)(5319) **phaneroo** from **phanerós** = manifest, visible, conspicuous in turn from **phaino** = give light; become visible in turn from **phos** = light) is literally "to bring to light" and primarily means "to make visible" or to cause to become visible. The basic meaning of **phaneroo** is to make known, to clearly reveal, to manifest (see Vine's below), to cause to be seen or to make something clear. The idea of **phaneroo** is that there has been an external manifestation to the senses which is open to all primarily referring to what is visible to sensory perception. **Thayer** says **phaneroo** means "to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown, to manifest, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way. In classic Greek in some contexts conveyed a religious meaning describing the intervention by or the personal appearance of a deity.

**Phaneroo** in 1-2 Cor - 1 Co. 4:5; 2 Co. 2:14; 2 Co. 3:3; 2 Co. 4:10; 2 Co. 4:11; 2 Co. 5:10; 2 Co. 5:11; 2 Co. 7:12; 2 Co. 11:6;

**Sweet aroma** (3744) **osme** from **ózo** = to emit an odor whether good or bad) refers to a smell, scent or odor of any kind. **BDAG** says **osme** is "the quality of something that affects the mind as with an odor" and is used "of an unpleasant odor stench (Tob 6:17 S; 8:3; Job 6:7)." **Osme** is used literally of the pleasant aroma of "the costly perfume" Mary used to anoint Jesus' feet in (Jn 12:3). **Friberg** writes that **osme** is used "figuratively; from the Middle Eastern concept that an odor from something is communicating its power sweet smell, fragrance (2Cor 2:14, 16)."

**Osme** - 5v in NT - Jn. 12:3; 2 Co. 2:14; 2 Co. 2:16; Eph. 5:2; Phil. 4:18

**Knowledge** (1108) (**gnosis** from **ginosko** = to know especially experientially) in simple terms is the possession of information of what is known. **Gnosis** describes the comprehension or intellectual grasp of something. **Gnosis** refers to knowledge gained by experience in contrast to intuitive knowledge. Stated another way **gnosis** is experientially known, functional ("working") knowledge gleaned from first-hand/personal experience which in turn connects theory to application.

**Gnosis in Corinthian letters** - 1 Co. 1:5; 1 Co. 8:1; 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 8:10; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 12:8; 1 Co. 13:2; 1 Co. 13:8; 1 Co. 14:6; 2 Co. 2:14; 2 Co. 4:6; 2 Co. 6:6; 2 Co. 8:7; 2 Co. 10:5; 2 Co. 11:6;

#### Related Resource:

- [See youtube video on the triumphal entry in Rome](#)

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## THE TRIUMPHANT LIFE 2 CORINTHIANS 2:14–17 - James Smith

"Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (v. 14). The life that has always been led on in triumph should indeed be a thankful one. There are so many seeming failures in one's experience. What are the secrets of a victorious life? In those few verses as above, we note some of them.

**I. A Life in Christ.** "God causeth us to triumph in Christ." There is no possibility of living the victorious life, in God's sight, out of Christ. To be in Christ is to be at one with Him, and so entirely yielded to His will that His will will be done in us. As the apostle put it, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). "We know that we dwell in Him, because He hath given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4:13).

**II. A Life that Reveals Something of the Wisdom of God.** "He maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us" (v. 14). The guiding principle in the Christian life is the truth revealed in His Word (2 Cor. 4:2). Those led by the Spirit of God will surely be witnesses to something higher and nobler than the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God.

**III. A Life that has a Sweet Savour of Christ unto God.** "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ" (v. 15). "Christ gave Himself for us an offering to God for a sweet smelling savour" (Eph. 5:2). Those who have been partakers of that offering are to be partakers also of the same sweet savour unto God. He could say: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," for He knew that all His interests committed to His Son would be safe and successful. Let us so seek to please God.

**IV. A Life that Affects both Saved and Unsaved.** "A savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish" (v. 15). The influence of one Christian's life can be made a confirmation to another who loves the same Lord. The "savour of Christ," like the fragrance of the rose, can be easily detected by those who are saved, but to those who are perishing it smells condemnation, so they don't like it (v. 16).

**V. A Life True to the Word of God.** “We are not as many which corrupt the Word of God” (v. 17). Those who walk in craftiness are sure to handle the Word of God deceitfully (chap. 4:2). If the heart is not true to God, the life will not be true to His Word. It is easy to corrupt God’s message by mingling it with Christ-dishonouring philosophies and the traditions of men. There can be no spiritual victory for those who have gone out of the way (Col. 2:8).

**VI. A Life Lived in the Presence of God.** “In the sight of God speak we in Christ” (v. 17). Abiding in Christ and practising the presence of God in the daily life is the evidence of vanquishing power. This is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith. Faith in Him who is greater than all that can be against us. “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you” (John 15:7). Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God. “Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Handfuls of Purpose)

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Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14).

As British writer Guy King stood on a railroad station platform waiting for a train from London, another train pulled into the station from the opposite direction. Members of a soccer team returning from a game in another city got off. News had not yet reached home as to the outcome of the game, so those awaiting the team didn’t know if they had won or lost. A small boy wiggled his way through the crowd and asked one of the players the score. As soon as he heard it, he ran excitedly up and down the platform shouting, “We won! We won!” That youngster was brimming with joy because he identified himself with the players. In one sense, their victory was his victory.

We too can participate in a great celebration because Jesus won the victory over sin nearly two thousand years ago. He paid sin’s penalty by dying on the cross, and He broke its power by rising from the dead. We share in His victory through faith because “as He is, so are we in this world” (1John 4:17). He is the conquering Savior before whom no foe can stand. We can thank God “who always leads us in triumph in Christ” (2 Cor 2:14).

Victory, not defeat, should be the norm in the Christian life. God sees every believer as being in Christ, whom He raised from the dead and seated “at His right hand ... , far above all principality and power” (Eph 1:20,21). Because He is the Victor and we are “in Him,” we too can be victorious over sin. —P R Van Gorder. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We can be “more than conquerors” when we yield ourselves to the all-conquering Christ.

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## Victory Parade

But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession. 2 Corinthians 2:14

Today’s Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:14–17

In 2016 when the Chicago Cubs baseball team won the World Series for the first time in more than a century, some sources said that five million people lined the parade route and gathered at a downtown rally to celebrate the championship.

Victory parades are not a modern invention. A famous ancient parade was the Roman Triumph, in which victorious generals led a procession of their armies and captives through crowded streets.

Such parade imagery was likely in Paul’s mind when he wrote to the Corinthian church thanking God for leading believers “as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession” (2 Corinthians 2:14). I find it fascinating that in this imagery, followers of Christ are the captives. However, as believers we’re not forced to participate, but are willing “captives,” willingly part of the parade led by the victorious, resurrected Christ. As Christians, we celebrate that through Christ’s victory, He’s building His kingdom and the gates of hell will not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).

When we talk about Jesus’s victory on the cross and the freedom it gives believers, we help spread the “aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere” (2 Corinthians 2:14). And whether people find the aroma to be the pleasing reassurance of salvation or the odor of their defeat, this unseen but powerful fragrance is present everywhere we go.

As we follow Christ, we declare His resurrection victory, the victory that makes salvation available to the world. Lisa M. Samra [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What does Jesus’s victory on the cross mean to you? How are you living out the power of His resurrection?

Jesus is our victorious King.

For further study, see [christianuniversity.org/NT109-06](http://christianuniversity.org/NT109-06).

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## Alan Redpath - 2 Corinthians 2:14

I saw in Him the glory of a life lived in total abandonment to the sovereign will of His Father in heaven. I saw a life lived in utter poverty yet in absolute contentment. I saw a life triumph over every point where I have failed. I have seen Him come so near the poor, to those who are sick, and to those who are in need. I have seen Him holy, separate, harmless, and undefiled; so close to the sinner yet never contaminated. Ah, but most of all I have seen His tears, I have heard His crying, and I have listened to the cry which said, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt 26:39). I have seen the nail prints, the marks in His hands and His side; I have heard the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" (Mt. 27:46). I have seen Him made sin on my behalf, God in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. I have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ and, bless His holy name, I have seen an empty tomb, an ascended Savior.

I have had a clear view of Jesus. I have seen Him, felt Him, and I have known Him in a far deeper way than simply by the outward physical appearance; I have felt the reality of His life begin to burn in my heart. I have seen in Christ the glory of a life that is totally submitted to the sovereignty of God. That glory has begun to take hold of me, and I have begun to see that this is the one life that God expects of any man He made in His own image. I have seen the marks of the cross upon Him, and by His grace the marks of the cross have been put upon me and I am no longer my own; I am bought with a price, redeemed by His precious blood. Yes, I have seen Him--not in the outward physical sense only, but in the inward sense of a deep spiritual reality. I have had a clear view of Jesus and my life will never be the same again. . . .

The man who gazes upon and contemplates day by day the face of the Lord Jesus Christ, and who has caught the glow of the reality that the Lord is not a theory but an indwelling power and force in his life, is as a mirror reflecting the glory of the Lord.

Give up the struggle and the fight; relax in the omnipotence of the Lord Jesus; look up into His lovely face and as you behold Him, He will transform you into His likeness. You do the beholding--He does the transforming. There is no short-cut to holiness.

" . . . Changed into the same image from glory to glory . . . " -- this is a lifelong, glorious experience, and it will be perfected one day in heaven. Paul tells us (Phil. 3:21) that He "shall change our vile body [this body of sin in which dwells no good thing], that it maybe fashioned like unto His glorious body . . . " Yes, He will do that! (Blessings Out of Buffetings, Studies in 2 Corinthians, pp. 44-48).

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place (2 Corinthians 2:14).

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## F B Meyer Our Daily Homily

We are a sweet savor of Christ unto God. (r.v.)

The idea is borrowed from an ancient Roman triumph, which to the eyes of the world of that day was the most glorious spectacle which the imagination could conceive. The apostle compares himself first to one of the prisoners led in long chains behind the conquerors chariot; then to a servant bearing incense; and lastly to the incense itself that rose all along the line of the procession.

Nothing touches the sense more quickly than sweet odors, unless it be noxious ones; and they almost instantly recall some scene of the past with which they were indissolubly associated. For instance, the scent of new-mown hay will carry us off to merry scenes in the far away days of childhood. Thus the apostle wished that his life might be a sweet perfume, floating on the air, reminding men, and above all reminding God, of Christ. It was as though he said, "I desire so to live that I may perpetually remind God of the obedience, sacrifice, and devotion of the Lord Jesus, so that my words and deeds may recall to His heart similar ones in the earthly life of Jesus."

A sweet savor of Christ! It does not consist so much in what we do, but in our manner of doing it; not so much in our words or deeds, as in an indefinable sweetness, tenderness, courtesy, unselfishness, and desire to please others to their edification. It is the breath and fragrance of a life hidden with Christ in God, and deriving its aroma from fellowship with Him. Wrap the habits of your soul in the sweet lavender of your Lord's character.

The secret of abounding joy in self-sacrifice is the happy consciousness, such as Enoch had, that we have pleased God. To have this is to secure deliverance from self-consciousness.

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**Barclay** has an excellent summary of the background for Paul's words in 2 Cor 2:14-16 -

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 are difficult to understand by themselves, but when set against the background which was in Paul's thoughts they become a vivid picture. Paul speaks of being led in the train of the triumph of Christ; and then he goes on to speak of being the sweet scent of Christ to men, to some the perfume of death and to others the perfume of life. In his mind is the picture of a **Roman**

## Triumph ([see depiction](#))

In a **Triumph** the procession of the victorious general marched through the streets of Rome to the Capitol in the following order.

First came the state officials and the senate.

Then came the trumpeters.

Then were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land. For instance, when Titus conquered Jerusalem, the seven-branched candlestick, the golden table of the shewbread and the golden trumpets were carried through the streets of Rome.

Then came pictures of the conquered land and models of conquered citadels and ships.

There followed the white bull for the **sacrifice** which would be made.

Then there walked the captive princes, leaders and generals in chains, shortly to be flung into prison and in all probability almost immediately to be executed.

Then came the [victors](#) bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres; then the priests swinging their censers with the **sweet-smelling incense** burning in them.

After that came the general himself. He stood in a chariot drawn by four horses. He was clad in a purple tunic embroidered with golden palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked out with golden stars. In his hand he held an ivory scepter with the Roman eagle at its top, and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter.

After him rode his family; and finally came the army wearing all their decorations and shouting loud exclamations "Triumph! Triumph! Triumph!," their cries of triumph (over the enemy).

As the procession moved through the streets, all decorated and garlanded, amid the cheering crowds, it made a tremendous day which might happen only once in a lifetime. That is the picture that is in Paul's mind. He sees Christ marching in triumph throughout the world, and himself in that conquering train. It is a triumph which, Paul is certain, nothing can stop. We have seen how in that procession there were the priests swinging the incense-filled censers. To the victors the **perfume** from the censers would be the **perfume of joy and triumph and life**; but to the wretched captives who walked so short a distance ahead it was the perfume of death (2Cor 2:15, 16), standing for the past defeat and their coming execution. So Paul thinks of himself and his fellow apostles preaching the Gospel of the triumphant Christ. To those who will accept it, it is the **perfume of life**, as it was to the victors; to those who refuse it, it is the **perfume of death**, as it was to the vanquished. Of one thing Paul was certain--not all the world could defeat Christ. He lived not in pessimistic fear, but in the glorious optimism which knew the unconquerable majesty of Christ. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

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## Bloom Where You're Planted

Thanks be to God who . . . through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. —2 Corinthians 2:14

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

A friend of mine used to operate a ranch in the Owyhee desert south of Boise, Idaho. Once when I was visiting his old homestead he pointed out a gnarled juniper tree, the only one in sight. You wouldn't travel very far to see it and it wasn't much to look at, but it was doing its job—providing shade for a cow or two. My friend said that it was the best illustration he had ever seen of the principle: "Bloom where you're planted."

His analogy made me think of another rancher I used to know who lived near Lometa, Texas. He knew everyone in town—called them by name and knew what was happening in their lives. He would stop and ask about a sick child or an ailing marriage, and then he would offer a word of encouragement and prayer. He didn't force his faith on anyone, but its influence lingered wherever he had been. He had about him "the fragrance of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:15).

We can have that same fragrance wherever we go, as we quietly manifest Jesus' love. Even if no one acknowledges our efforts, God sees and knows.

So don't be discouraged. Never give up. Bloom where you're planted. What you do has eternal significance in God's eyes. — David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God has placed you here for a purpose,  
Whatever it might be;

Know He has chosen you for it  
And labor faithfully. —Anon.

You are never in the wrong place to serve God.

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## **The God Of Victory**

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. —Romans 12:21

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

In Greek mythology, Nike was the goddess of victory. Nike fought on the side of the Olympian gods, gaining a victory over the mighty Titans. As a result, she became a symbol of winning. But Nike's alleged powers were not just limited to warfare. She also became a favorite goddess of athletes who wanted to win in competitive sports. The Romans adopted her into their worship and gave her the Latin name Victoria.

In the Greco-Roman world where Paul taught, victory was highly valued. So when he expressed Christian truth, he used words his audience could understand. In his letters, he described Christ as the One who leads us in a military procession of triumph (2 Cor. 2:14-17) and compared the Christian life to someone training for the ancient Olympic games (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

Paul also used the word for victory in reference to our struggles with those who intentionally hurt us. "Overcome [be a victor over] evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). This may mean returning kindness for spite or respectfully setting limits on evil behavior. In either case, an attitude of love cannot be generated in our own strength. But in Christ, we have divine power that ancient pagans could only hope for. Jesus Christ is the genuine God of victory. By: Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Through trials we learn to overcome,  
Through Christ our victories are won;  
Come lay your burdens at His feet  
And find this inner peace so sweet. —Halsey

God will give us the victory when we join Him in the fight.

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## **Sweet Fragrance**

We are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. —2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:12-17

Some scents are unforgettable. Recently, my husband mentioned he was running low on shaving cream. "I'll pick some up," I offered. "Can you get this kind?" he asked, showing me the can. "I love the smell—it's the kind my dad always used." I smiled, recalling the time I had been momentarily taken back to my childhood when I got a whiff of the same shampoo my mom used to wash my hair. For both Tom and me, the fragrances had brought an emotional response and pleasant memory of people we loved who were no longer around.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "Memories, imagination, old sentiments, and associations are more readily reached through the sense of smell than through any other channel."

So, what if our lives were a fragrance that attracted people to God? Second Corinthians 2:15 says that "we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing." Our fragrance is pleasing to God, but it also attracts others to Him or repels them. We who understand the sacrifice of Jesus have the opportunity to be the "fragrance of Christ"—a reminder of Him—to others.

The sweet scent of the likeness of Christ can be an irresistible pull toward the Savior. Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Let my hands perform His bidding,  
Let my feet run in His ways,  
Let my eyes see Jesus only,  
Let my lips speak forth His praise. —James

When we walk with God, we leave behind a sweet fragrance that can inspire others to follow.

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## Posies

We are to God the fragrance of Christ. —2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

One morning I was looking at a bouquet of flowers in a vase on an old carpenter's bench in front of our "window on the world." I realized the bouquet was spent; its leaves had wilted and the blossoms were falling.

The same morning I also read George Herbert and quite by "accident" came across his poem titled "Life." In it Herbert talks about a "posy" (a bouquet of flowers) he gathered so that he could smell the fragrance. But, as he put it, "Time did beckon to the flowers, and they by noon most cunningly did steal away, and withered in my hand."

The loss of his flowers caused him at first to see "time's gentle admonition." Herbert wrote that it "[made] my mind to smell my fatal day; yet sugaring the suspicion." Yet even as the wilted flowers reminded him of his own death, he found in the metaphor something that sweetened the thought. Herbert concluded:

Farewell dear flowers, sweetly your time ye spent,  
Fit, while ye lived, for smell or ornament,  
And after death for cures.  
I follow straight without complaints or grief,  
Since if my scent be good, I care not, if  
It be as short as yours.

What wisdom in this poem! Our time, however short, may be spent "sweetly"—a sweet fragrance of Christ to others (2 Cor. 2:14-16). Should not this be our prayer each day as we arise? David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

A godly life is a fragrance that draws others to Christ.

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## Sweet Scent

Thanks be to God, who . . . uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. 2 Corinthians 2:14

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:14–16

Author Rita Snowden tells a delightful story about visiting a small village in Dover, England. Sitting outside a café one afternoon enjoying a cup of tea, she became aware of a beautiful scent. Rita asked a waiter where it was coming from, and was told it was the people she could see passing by. Most of the villagers were employed at a nearby perfume factory. As they walked home, they carried the fragrance that permeated their clothes out into the street.

What a beautiful image of the Christian life! As the apostle Paul says, we are the aroma of Christ, spreading His fragrance everywhere (2 Cor. 2:15). Paul uses the image of a king returning from battle, his soldiers and captives in tow, wafting the smell of celebratory incense in the air, declaring the king's greatness (v. 14).

We spread the aroma of Christ in two ways. First, through our words: telling others about the One who is beautiful. Second, through our lives: doing deeds of Christlike sacrifice (Eph. 5:1–2). While not everyone will appreciate the divine fragrance we share, it will bring life to many.

Rita Snowden caught a scent and was driven to seek its source. As we follow Jesus we too become permeated with His fragrance, and we carry His aroma into the streets through our words and deeds. By: Sheridan Voysey ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord Jesus, make us carriers and communicators of Your beauty to the people in our homes, offices, and neighborhoods.

We are the aroma of Christ to others.

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## Signature Scent

Through us [God] diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. — 2 Corinthians 2:14

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

You can't see it, hear it, or touch it, but scent is powerful. The smell of things like crayons, petunias, and colognes evoke memories that transport me to the past and bring to mind people and places I might not otherwise recall.

Some celebrities have fragrances named after them. Fans can identify with an actress or singer by dabbing on the scent bearing her name. Along those lines, Ladies Home Journal published a quiz to help readers determine the perfect fragrance for them. The idea is that every woman, to be memorable, should have a specific scent associated with her.

The idea of a signature scent is not new. God introduced it as part of worship. In the tabernacle, a certain scent was to be associated with the Lord (Ex. 30:34-35). The people were forbidden to use this fragrance for anything but worship (vv.37-38).

This idea continues under the new covenant, but with a stunning difference. Instead of using incense to make people think of Him, God uses Christians as His "signature scent" to the world (2 Cor. 2:14-15). The fact that God identifies Himself with us in such a powerful way is a truly humbling thought, and causes me to ask, "What do people think about God as a result of being around me?"

By: Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When we've been alone with Jesus,  
There's a difference others know;  
And to them it's like a fragrance  
That we leave where'er we go. —Hess

A life lived for God has a pleasing aroma.

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### What Does Your Life Say?

You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men. —2 Corinthians 3:2

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-3:3

A woman asked an acquaintance whose husband had recently died, "Did he have any last words?"

"No," said the widow. "He slipped away so quickly that we didn't have a chance to talk about anything."

"How sad," the friend replied. "It must break your heart."

The widow graciously responded, "Oh, don't feel sorry for me. I have something better. I recall so well the night he testified in church about his faith in Christ. I also have the wonderful memory of his consistent life that spoke far more effectively of his devotion to God than a few comforting comments in his final moments."

It's wonderful to have that kind of testimony. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul used two word pictures to describe the type of influence we should have on those around us. Our lives are to be a fragrance, sweet to believers but repulsive to the unsaved (2 Cor. 2:14-17). And we are to be like living letters that speak well of our Lord and the gospel (3:2-3).

A deathbed testimony of one's faith can bring comfort to those who sorrow, but a faithful life is even better. That's something to keep in mind as we evaluate how our lives are being viewed by others. At our own death the testimony of our lives will say even more than our final words! By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O help us, Lord, to serve You well  
And live a life so true  
That when we die our friends may say,  
"His life spoke well for You." —DJD

The memory of a faithful life speaks more eloquently than words.

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### Oswald Chambers - The viewpoint

Now thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ. 2 Cor. 2:14.

The viewpoint of a worker for God must not be as near the highest as he can get, it must be the highest. Be careful to maintain strenuously God's point of view, it has to be done every day, bit by bit; don't think on the finite. No outside power can touch the viewpoint.

The viewpoint to maintain is that we are here for one purpose only, viz., to be captives in the train of Christ's triumphs. We are not in God's showroom, we are here to exhibit one thing—the absolute captivity of our lives to Jesus Christ. How small the other points of view are—"I am standing alone battling for Jesus"; 'I have to maintain the cause of Christ and hold this fort for Him.' Paul says—"I am in the train of a conqueror, and it does not matter what the difficulties are, I am always led in triumph." Is this idea being worked out practically in us? Paul's secret joy was that God took him, a red-handed rebel against Jesus Christ, and made him a captive, and now that is all he is here for. Paul's joy was to be a captive of the Lord, he had no other interest in heaven or on earth. It is a shameful thing for a Christian to talk about getting the victory. The Victor ought to have got us so completely that it is His victory all the time, and we are more than conquerors through Him. "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ." We are enwheeled with the odour of Jesus, and wherever we go we are a wonderful refreshment to God.

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### **Robert Morgan - Anywhere**

His contagious Christian influence as missionary, pastor, and college president touched thousands of lives, and his writings on the Victorious Christian Life moved millions more. V. Raymond Edman left a mark behind him—circled, underlined, and highlighted.

Early in his career, Edman nearly died of tropical disease while a missionary in Ecuador. Seeking to regain his strength, he took a Pacific voyage in 1928 aboard a Dutch freighter, the Boskoop. He missed his work terribly, and even though his weakness made it hard to leave his stateroom, he labored intently over the lectures he hoped to give at his Ecuadorian Bible institute.

As he outlined the book of 2 Corinthians, he reached chapter 2, and read the words, "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ. ..." He was staggered. He read the words several times, slowly, prayerfully, phrase-by-phrase.

He suddenly sensed a great contrast between that verse and his condition. Here he was, broken health, unsure future, anxious about his missionary service, not far from death's door. Yet to Paul, life was ongoing, unbroken triumph! Edman walked to the deck and began praying for a triumphant spirit. Quickly and quietly, the Lord seemed to whisper in his ear, "But are you willing to go anywhere for me?"

Slowly, with trembling heart, Edman replied, "Yes, Lord, anywhere in Ecuador Thou mayst send me."

"I did not say in Ecuador."

For a long time, Edman gazed across the Pacific, conscious that the Lord was standing beside him, awaiting an answer. Finally in deepest sincerity, Edman replied, "Yes, Lord, anywhere Thou sayest I will go, only that my life may be always a constant pageant of triumph in Thee." He stood there for a very long time, thinking of the testimony of George Mueller, who once told of the moment when he died to self, to ambition, to the praise or blame of men, only that he might live in Christ. Now he, too, had abandoned all—even his ministry goals—for the sake of Christ.

From that day, God began to use V. Raymond Edman in an unprecedented way. (From This Verse)

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### **Streams in the Desert -**

GOD gets His greatest victories out of apparent defeats. Very often the enemy seems to triumph for a little, and God lets it be so; but then He comes in and upsets all the work of the enemy, overthrows the apparent victory, and as the Bible says, "turns the way of the wicked upside down." Thus He gives a great deal larger victory than we would have known if He had not allowed the enemy, seemingly, to triumph in the first place.

The story of the three Hebrew children being cast into the fiery furnace is a familiar one. Here was an apparent victory for the enemy. It looked as if the servants of the living God were going to have a terrible defeat. We have all been in places where it seemed as though we were defeated, and the enemy rejoiced. We can imagine what a complete defeat this looked to be. They fell down into the flames, and their enemies watched them to see them burn up in that awful fire, but were greatly astonished to see them walking around in the fire enjoying themselves. Nebuchadnezzar told them to "come forth out of the midst of the fire." Not even a hair was singed, nor was the smell of fire on their garments, "because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort."

This apparent defeat resulted in a marvelous victory.

Suppose that these three men had lost their faith and courage, and had complained, saying, "Why did not God keep us out of the furnace!" They would have been burned, and God would not have been glorified. If there is a great trial in your life today, do not own it as a defeat, but continue, by faith, to claim the victory through Him who is able to make you more than conqueror, and a glorious victory will soon be apparent. Let us learn that in all the hard places God brings us into, He is making opportunities for us to exercise such faith in Him as will bring about blessed results and greatly glorify His name.

—Life of Praise.

"Defeat may serve as well as victory

To shake the soul and let the glory out.

When the great oak is straining in the wind,

The boughs drink in new beauty, and the trunk

Sends down a deeper root on the windward side.

Only the soul that knows the mighty grief

Can know the mighty rapture. Sorrows come

To stretch out spaces in the heart for joy.”

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**Leading Us In Triumph** -There are many possibilities that arise out of unjust suffering for Christ's sake. God may use your suffering to lead someone to Christ. He may use it to help you triumph over demonic persecution, or it may enable another who sees your godly response to persecution to respond in the same way.

Whatever the triumph of your suffering, you may be sure of one thing: if you suffer for Christ's sake, God will lift you up and exalt you into His very presence. Christ will always cause us to triumph even though we suffer unjustly. Don't underestimate the potential of unjust suffering for Christ's sake. So endure whatever suffering comes your way in the light of your coming triumph in Christ! (Truth for Today - John MacArthur)

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2 COR. 2:14 (R.V.).

Thanks be unto God which always leadeth us in triumph.

Those whom Jesus leads in triumph share His triumph. They may be a spectacle to angels and to men. Sometimes in the stocks; often accounted the offscouring of all things; yet, in the spiritual realm, they are made to triumph always. Conquered, they conquer; enslaved, they are free; last in this world, but in the front rank of heavenly society. Poor, beaten, vanquished soul, lift up thy head and rejoice; for if thou art conquered by Jesus, thou shalt be always made to triumph! F. B. MEYER.

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2 COR. 2:14.

God ... maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

A holy life is a silent witness for Jesus—an incense cloud from the heart-altar, breathing odors and sweet spices, of which the world cannot fail to take knowledge.... It must and will manifest its living and influential power. The heart, broken at the cross, like Mary's broken box, begins from that hour to give forth the hallowed perfume of faith, and love, and obedience, and every kindred grace. MACDUFF.

**2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing;**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

NET 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are a sweet aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing—

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:15 τι Χριστο εωδα σμ ν τ θε ν το ς σ ζομ νοις κα ν το ς πολλυμ νοις,

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:15 Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing,

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:15 τι Χριστο εωδα σμ ν τ θε ν το ς σ ζομ νοις κα ν το ς πολλυμ νοις,

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:15 because of Christ a sweet fragrance we are to God, in those being saved, and in those being lost;

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved, and in them that perish;

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:15 For to God we are the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:15 because we exude to God an aroma of Christ, sensed among both the saved and the perishing.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing;

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are the aroma of Christ for God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing,

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:15 To God we are the fragrance of Christ, both among those who are being saved and among those who are on the way to destruction;

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:15 To God we are the aroma of Christ among those who are saved and among those who are dying.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are a sweet perfume of Christ to God in those who are getting salvation and in those who are going to destruction;

- **fragrance:** Ge 8:21 Ex 29:18,25 Eze 20:41 Eph 5:2 Php 4:18
- **to those:** 2Co 4:3,4 Isa 49:5,6 1Co 1:18 2Th 2:10
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Corinthians 4:3-4+ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is **veiled to those who are perishing**, 4 in whose case the god of this world (SATAN) has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God.

Ephesians 5:2+ and **walk** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as **a fragrant aroma** ([euodia](#)) .

Philippians 4:18+ But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, **a fragrant aroma** ([euodia](#)) , an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

### PARADOXICAL RESULTS FROM DIFFERENT RESPONSES TO THE GOSPEL

**For we are a fragrance** ([euodia](#)) **of Christ to God among those who are being saved** (present tense - continually) **and among those who are** (present tense - continually) **perishing** - **We are a fragrance** (as alluded to above) refers not to the message proclaimed (**the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him**, the Gospel of Jesus Christ in 2Co 2:14), but to the messengers that proclaimed the Gospel message. In other words, the manifestation of the knowledge of God in v14 is **in** Christ, but it is **through** us. Given the use of **euodia** in the sacrifices in the OT (where it is often translated "soothing aroma") it is fair to say that Paul, et al (including US) serve God as living sacrifices (cf Ro 12:1+)

In spreading the fragrance of Christ the preacher himself becomes fragrant  
-- Plummer

**Being saved** is a description of progressive sanctification (see [Three Tenses of Salvation](#)). **Being saved** is passive voice, clearly a divine passive for only God can save a person dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1+). As Paul says in the next chapter "**the Spirit gives life**," (2Co 3:6+, cf Jesus' words Jn 6:63) and He uses the Word of Life (Php 2:16+) to (continually) save us, daily making us more like Christ (2Co 3:18+).

**THOUGHT** - It follows that if we are not daily (Mt 4:4+) taking in the Bread of Life (Jn 6:35, 48), we are setting ourselves up to become spiritually "malnourished." As Peter says we are to be like "newborn babes who long for the pure milk of the Word, that by it (we) may grow in respect to salvation." (1Pe 2:2+) **DO NOT MISS WHAT PETER IS SAYING! IT IS CRUCIAL!** Peter is saying if we have **NO** intake, we will experience **NO** spiritual growth. It is really that simple. It begs the question "Are you growing in Christlikeness or are you simply going through the motions expected of one who calls themselves a Christian?"

What a striking contrast Paul presents here of some souls (**those who are being saved**) that are daily living more and more a full, free life in Christ and other eternal souls (**those who are perishing**) who are daily dying, daily ruining their lives even in the midst of the deception of incredible worldly wealth and success, for as Jesus said "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Lk 18:25+).

Paul described a similar striking contrast (eternal life versus eternal death) in his first letter explaining that "the word of the cross is foolishness to those who **are** (present tense - continually) **perishing**, but to us who **are** (present tense - continually) **being saved** (progressive sanctification) it is the power of God."

The preaching of the gospel divides humanity eternally.

-- Bob Utley

**Homer Kent** notes that "At the Roman Triumph the aroma of the incense was a token of victory and honor for the conquering legions, but was a sign of sure execution to the captives in the parade." ([Ref](#))

**Broomall** - In the NT, salvation is described as (1) **past** (aorist tense: 2Ti 1:9; Titus 3:5); (2) **present** (present tense: here and in 1 Cor 1:18; 15:2); (3) **future** (future tense; Ro 5:9, 10; 1 Cor 3:5; 2Ti 4:18) ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**McGee** - In that triumphal entry were those who were going to be set free and those who were going to be executed—but all of them were in the triumphal entry. Paul is overwhelmed by this—"who is sufficient for these things?" My friend, the greatest privilege in the world is to give out the Word of God. There is nothing like it. I would never want to run for the presidency of the United States. It is difficult to understand why anyone would want to be president in this day of unsolvable problems. But it is glorious to give out the Word of God! Do you know why? Because He always causes us to triumph! While I was a pastor in Los Angeles, we very seldom had a Sunday when someone didn't turn to Christ, and many times there were a great many folk. When the gospel is preached and the multitudes accept Christ, that is wonderful. We can see the triumph there. We are a "savour of life" unto those who are saved. But now wait a minute—what about the crowd which rejects Christ? We are a "savour of death" to them. I often say to the congregation after I have preached a message, "If you go out of here after rejecting Christ, I am probably the worst enemy you will ever have, because now you cannot go into the presence of God and say that you never heard the gospel." However, all people are now in the triumphal entry. Many will not be set free; they will be judged. But regardless of our destiny, we are in the great triumphal entry of Jesus Christ because He is going to win, my friend! Every knee must bow to him, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Every individual will have to bow to Him someday—regardless of whether He is the person's Savior or Judge. No wonder Paul exclaims, "Who is sufficient for these things?" "To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." Today the incense is ascending; the Word is going out. And we are a savor of life to some and a savor of death to others. This is the entire plan of the Christian ministry. We are not to corrupt the Word of God or distort it or make merchandise of it, but to give it out in sincerity as the Spirit of God reveals its truth to us. ([2 Corinthians 2 Commentary](#))

**Fragrance** ([2175](#)) **euodia** from **euodes** = sweet-smelling; which is from **eú** = well, good + **ózo** = smell) is literally a "good smell" and thus a sweet smell or a sweet savor, a good fragrance. Metaphorically (as in this verse speaking of Christ's sacrifice - in fact all NT uses are metaphorical) it refers to persons or things (gift from the Philippians Php 4:18) well-pleasing to God.

Note that **euodia** is regularly used in descriptions of sacrifice in the Septuagint and in all the following uses is translated in the NAS as "soothing aroma" - Ge. 8:21; Ex. 29:18; Lev. 1:9, 13, 17; Nu. 15:3, et al.

**Being saved** ([4982](#)) **sozo** has the basic meaning of rescuing one from great peril. Additional nuances include to protect, keep alive, preserve life, deliver, heal, be made whole. Sozo is sometimes used of physical deliverance from danger of perishing (see Mt 8:25; Mt 14:30; Lk 23:35; Acts 27:20, 27:31), physical healing from sickness (Mt 9:21, 22; Mk 5:23, Acts 4:9), and deliverance from demonic possession (Lk 8:36). More often **sozo** refers to salvation in a spiritual sense to rescue or preserve from eternal death, from judgment, sin, bring salvation, bring to salvation (active sense = Mt 18:11; Lk 7:50; Jn 12:47; Ro 11:14; 1 Cor 1:21; 7:16; Titus 3:5; Heb 7:25; Jas 4:12; 5:20; 1 Pet 3:21 or passive sense = be rescued or saved, attain salvation = Mt 24:13; Mk 10:26; Lk 13:23; 18:26; Jn 3:17; Jn 5:34; Acts 11:14; 15:1, 11; Ro 8:24; 11:26; 1 Cor. 3:15; 5:5; Eph 2:5, 8; 1 Ti 2:4). Jesus' very Name speaks of His primary purpose to save men from their sin - "She (Mary) will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save (sozo) His people from their sins." (Mt 1:21+) In Mt 1:21 **sozo** is equated with deliverance from sins (guilt and power of) with Jesus' Name being a transliteration of Joshua meaning "Jehovah is salvation".

**Sozo in Corinthians letters** - 1 Co 1:18; 1 Co. 1:21; 1 Co. 3:15; 1 Co. 5:5; 1 Co. 7:16; 1 Co. 9:22; 1 Co. 10:33; 1 Co. 15:2; 2 Co. 2:15;

**Perishing** ([622](#)) **apollumi** from **apo** = away from or wholly + **olethros** = state of utter ruin <> **ollumi** = to destroy <> root of **apollyon** [Re 9:11] = destroyer) means to destroy utterly but not to cause one to cease to exist. **Apollumi** as it relates to men, is not the loss of being per se, but is more the loss of well-being. It means to ruin so that the person (or thing) ruined can no longer serve the use for which he (it) was designed. To render useless. The gospel promises everlasting life for the one who believes. The failure to possess this life will result in utter ruin and eternal uselessness (but not a cessation of existence). **Apollumi** then has the basic

meaning of describing that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose.

**Apollumi in Corinthian letters** - 1 Co. 1:18; 1 Co. 1:19; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 10:9; 1 Co. 10:10; 1 Co. 15:18; 2 Co. 2:15; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:9

#### Related Resource:

- [Eternal Punishment](#)

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**TRUE ILLUSTRATION OF AN AROMA OF CHRIST - ADONIRAM JUDSON (SHORT BIOGRAPHY)** - was "The sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him (Jesus) in every place." (2Cor 2:14) Many years ago when the great missionary Adoniram Judson was home on furlough, he passed through the city of Stonington, Connecticut. A young boy playing about the wharves at the time of Judson's arrival was struck by the man's appearance. Never before had he seen such a light on any human face. He ran up the street to a minister to ask if he knew who the stranger was. The minister hurried back with him, but became so absorbed in conversation with Judson that he forgot all about the impatient youngster standing near him. Many years afterward that boy—who could never get away from the influence of that wonderful face—became the famous preacher [Henry Clay Trumbull](#) ([Read The life story of Henry Clay Trumbull, missionary, army chaplain, editor, author - 1905](#)) (See also his fascinating book [The Blood Covenant](#)). In a book of memoirs he penned a chapter entitled: "What a Boy Saw in the Face of Adoniram Judson." That lighted countenance had changed his life. Even as flowers thrive when they bend to the light, so shining, radiant faces come to those who constantly turn toward Christ! ([Read the original story in context of H C Trumbull's life story](#))

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#### A Pleasing Aroma

We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ. 2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:12–17

A perfumer who works in New York declares that she can recognize certain combinations of scents and guess the perfumer behind a fragrance. With just a sniff she can say, "This is Jenny's work."

When writing to the followers of Christ in the city of Corinth, Paul at one point used an example that would have reminded them of a victorious Roman army in a conquered city burning incense (2 Cor. 2:14). The general would come through first, followed by his troops and then the defeated army. For the Romans, the aroma of the incense meant victory; for the prisoners, it meant death.

Paul said we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ's victory over sin. God has given us the fragrance of Christ Himself so we can become a sweet-smelling sacrifice of praise. But how can we live so we spread this pleasing fragrance to others? We can show generosity and love, and we can share the gospel with others so they can find the way to salvation. We can allow the Spirit to display through us His gifts of love, joy, and kindness (Gal. 5:22–23).

Do others observe us and say, "This is Jesus's work"? Are we allowing Him to spread His fragrance through us and then telling others about Him? He is the Ultimate Perfumer—the most exquisite fragrance there will ever be. By: Keila Ochoa ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Do others recognize the work of God in my life? Am I spreading the fragrance of Christ? How?

A godly life is a fragrance that draws others to Christ.

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#### A Fragrance and a Letter

We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ. 2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:14–3:3

Every time I get close to a rosebush or a bouquet of flowers, I'm unable to resist the temptation to pull a flower toward my nose to savor the fragrance. The sweet aroma lifts up my heart and triggers good feelings within me.

Writing to the Christians in Corinth centuries ago, the apostle Paul says that because we belong to Christ, God "uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere" (2 Cor. 2:14). Through His strength we can live a victorious life, exchanging our selfishness for His love and kindness and proclaiming the goodness of His salvation. When we do this, we are indeed a sweet fragrance to God.

Paul then switches to a second image, describing Christians as a "letter from Christ" (3:3). The letter of our lives is not written with

ordinary ink, but by the Spirit of God. God changes us by writing His Word on our hearts for others to read.

Both word pictures encourage us to allow the beauty of Christ to be seen in us so we can point people to Him. He is the One who, as Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:2, “loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” By: Lawrence Darmani ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, let Your splendor fill my life, that I may draw people to You. Help me walk in the way that spreads the fragrance of Your love to others.

Our actions speak louder than our words.

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2 COR. 2:15.

We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ

When we are told that we may be to God a sweet savor of Christ, it must be meant that we may so live as to recall to the mind of God what Jesus was in His earthly career. It is as though, as God watches us from day to day, He should see Jesus in us, and be reminded (speaking after the manner of men) of that blessed life which was offered as an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. What a test for daily living! Is my life fragrant of Jesus? Do I remind the Father of the blessed Lord? Does He detect Jesus in my walk and speech? and that there are in me the sweet savor of that daily burnt-offering, that delight in God's will, that holy joy in suffering for His glory, that absorption in His purposes which made the life of the Son of Man so well-pleasing to God? F. B. MEYER.

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### **They Smelled Like Christ**

For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved. 2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:14–17

Hot and dusty, Bob dismounted from the bus he had ridden to a city far from home. He was tired from a long day of travel and grateful that he would be able to have dinner with friends of friends who lived in the area. They welcomed him in, and he immediately felt a sense of peace. He felt at home, comfortable, safe, and valued.

Later, wondering why he had felt such peace in an unfamiliar place, Bob found an answer in 2 Corinthians. The apostle Paul describes people who follow God as having the “pleasing aroma of Christ.” “That’s exactly it!” Bob said to himself. His hosts had “smelled like” Christ.

When Paul says that God leads His people in Christ's “triumphal procession” spreading the fragrance of His truth, he's referring to a practice in the ancient world. Victorious armies would burn incense as they marched through the streets. For their supporters, the smell brought joy. In the same way, Paul says the people of God carry a pleasing fragrance to those who believe. It isn't something we create on our own but something God gives as He leads us in spreading the knowledge of Him.

Bob is my dad, and that trip to a faraway town took place more than forty years ago, but he's never forgotten it. He's still telling the story of the people who smelled like Christ. By: Amy Peterson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Heavenly Father, thank You for leading Your people in triumph and spreading the fragrance of Your truth through us.

Who smells like Christ to you?

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### **The Sweet Aroma of Christ**

We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:14–17

I knew a rancher who lived near Lometa, Texas. His two grandsons were my best friends. We would go into town with him and follow him around while he shopped and chatted with the folks he knew. He knew them all by name and he knew their stories. He'd stop here and there and ask about a sick child or a difficult marriage, and he'd offer a word of encouragement or two. He would share Scripture and pray if it seemed the right thing to do. I'll never forget the man. He was something special. He didn't force his faith on anyone, but he always seemed to leave it behind.

The elderly rancher had about him what Paul would call the sweet “aroma of Christ” (2 Corinthians 2:15). God used him to “spread

the aroma of the knowledge of [Christ]" (v. 14). He's gone to be with God now, but his fragrance lingers on in Lometa.

C. S. Lewis wrote, "There are no ordinary people. You have never talked with a mere mortal." Put another way, every human contact has eternal consequences. Every day we have opportunities to make a difference in the lives of people around us through the quiet witness of a faithful and gentle life or through encouraging words to a weary soul. Never underestimate the effect a Christlike life can have on others. David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What do you think about the statement, "There are no neutral contacts"? What difference could it make in the way you view every contact and conversation throughout the day?

Fill me, Holy Spirit, with love, gentleness, and kindness toward others.

Read Compassion: Learning to Love Like Jesus at [DiscoverySeries.org/Q0208](http://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0208).

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## The Scent Of Flowers

We are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved. —2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:12-17

I was visiting a cattle ranch outside of Memphis. As my friend and I walked to the barn, he took a deep breath and commented, "Doesn't it smell great? I love coming out here. The sights and smells are wonderful!"

I didn't think so. Having grown up in the city, I told him I thought it smelled like something had died. He laughed. What had the odor of life to him smelled like death to me.

This reminds me of what the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians about how people respond to the gospel of Christ. As we, His followers, journey through life, we proclaim the good news about Christ by our holiness and testimony. And our message is received in one of two ways.

To those who hear and believe, the story of Christ is a sweet, welcome aroma (2 Cor. 2:15-16). But to those who reject Him, it has the repulsive odor of death. The gospel forces them to face the thought of death and eternity, which terrifies them.

The bouquet of flowers that reminds some people of a pleasant spring garden reminds others of a funeral home. The message of salvation through Christ is the smell of death to those who do not accept Him. But to those who believe in Jesus, it is the wonderful perfume of life. By: David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I want to be a fruitful Christian,  
Winning precious souls for Thee,  
Telling them of how my Savior  
Gave His life to set them free. —Ozbun

Do others sense the fragrance of Christ when they're with you?

**2 Corinthians 2:16 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?**

KJV 2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

NET 2 Corinthians 2:16 to the latter an odor from death to death, but to the former a fragrance from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:16 ος μν σμ κθαν του ες θνατον, ος δ σμ κ ζω ες ζωv. κα πρς τατα τς κανς;

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:16 To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume. And who is adequate for such a task as this?

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:16 to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who

is sufficient for these things?

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:16 ος μ ν σμ κ θαν του ες θ νατον, ος δ σμ κ ζω ς ες ζω ν. κα πρ ς τα τα τ ς καν ς;

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:16 to the one, indeed, a fragrance of death to death, and to the other, a fragrance of life to life; and for these things who is sufficient?

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:16 to the one a savor from death unto death; to the other a savor from life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:16 To some we are an aroma of death leading to death, but to others, an aroma of life leading to life. And who is competent for this?

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:16 On the one hand, to those perishing it has a morbid odor, a premonition of death. On the other hand, to those experiencing life it has a vital aroma. Who can handle these responsibilities?

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:16 to the one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:16 to the latter an odor of death that leads to death, to the former an odor of life that leads to life. Who is qualified for this?

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:16 for these last, the smell of death leading to death, but for the first, the smell of life leading to life. Who is equal to such a task?

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:16 To some people we are a deadly fragrance, while to others we are a life-giving fragrance. Who is qualified to tell about Christ?

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one it is a perfume of death to death; to the other a perfume of life to life. And who is enough for such things?

- **aroma from death to death:** Lu 2:34 Joh 9:39 Ac 13:45-47 20:26,27 1Pe 2:7,8
- **who:** 2Co 3:5,6 12:11 1Co 15:10
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 3:19 "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

John 9:39 And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind."

John 15:22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

### BELIEVERS ARE AN AROMA OF DEATH OR LIFE

**To the one an aroma ([osme](#)) from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life-** The same **aroma** (the same Gospel of Jesus Christ) is wafted to all, but the effect depends on the heart of the "smeller"! It is like a poisonous gas to some, but the oxygen of life to others.

In the Roman Triumphal Procession after the parade was finished, the captives would normally be executed; hence, the fragrance would signify victory for the conquerors, but impending death for the conquered

**Homer Kent** -The previous statement is further explained by this verse. To unbelievers the preachers who announced the gospel were proclaiming a message of eternal doom which would eventually be experienced in the unbeliever's destruction ("out of death unto death"). To those who responded in faith, the gospel preacher had brought a message which comes from Christ the Source of

true life and produces life eternal ("out of life unto life"). ([Ref](#))

**Robertson** on death unto death (ek thanatou eis thanaton) - From one evil condition to another. Some people are actually hardened by preaching.

**Broomall** - The transition from spiritual death (cf. Eph 2:1) to eternal death ( Cf. Rev 2:11; 20:14; 21:8) is probably indicated by from death unto death (ASV). ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

The bouquet of flowers that reminds some people of a pleasant spring garden reminds others of a funeral home.  
The message of salvation through Christ is the smell of death to those who do not accept Him.

**And who is adequate for these things?** - Who is adequate to be an aroma of life or death to other human beings? Answer? No one but God and His Holy Spirit working in concert the Holy Word proclaimed!

**Robertson** - Rhetorical question. In himself no one is. But some one has to preach Christ and Paul proceeds to show that he is sufficient. For we are not as the many (ou gar esmen hōs hoi polloi). A bold thing to say, but necessary and only from God (2Co 3:6).

**Homer Kent** - The rhetorical question, "And who is sufficient for these things?" has been answered differently by readers. Some have suggested the answer to be, "We apostles are sufficient," inasmuch as they did not peddle a false message (2Co 2:17-3:1). Others regard the answer to be, "No one is, if he depends on his own resources" (2Co 3:4-6). The latter explanation is best and could be expanded as follows: Certainly the religious peddlers are not sufficient, for they depend upon a personal sufficiency with selfish motivation. **Only those who depend solely upon God for His sufficiency can hope to bear this heavy responsibility** (2Co 3:5). ([Ref](#))

**Utley** on **who is adequate for these things** - The preaching of the gospel divides humanity eternally. From 2 Cor. 3:5–6 we understand that God equips His children for this awesome witnessing responsibility. Each believer's life is an aroma to God that others react to, either in trust toward Christ or rejection of Christ. It is important how we live; others are watching (cf. 2Co 2:16; 2Co 3:2–3).

**John MacArthur** - No one in his own strength is adequate or competent to serve God in the ways and with the power that Paul has been describing (cf. 3:5; 1Co 15:10; Gal 2:20; Eph 1:19; 3:20; Php 2:13; Col 1:29). ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Paul expands on his in chapter 3

Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 Who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2 Cor 3:5-6+)

**Adequate** (2425) (**hikanos** from the root **hik-** = "to reach [with the hand]," "to attain", "reaching to", "attaining to"; hence, "adequate") refers to that which reaches or arrives at a certain standard. **Hikanos** has been variously used from the time of the Greek tragic dramatists in the basic sense of **adequate** (sufficient for a specific requirement), **sufficient** (enough to meet the needs of a situation or a proposed end), **enough** (in or to a degree or quantity that satisfies or that is sufficient or necessary for satisfaction). Uses in the Corinthian letters - 1Co. 11:30; 1Co. 15:9 ("not **fit** to be called an apostle"); 2Co. 2:6 ("**Sufficient** for such a one is this punishment"); 2Co. 2:16 ("who is **adequate** for these things?"); 2Co. 3:5 ("Not that we are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves")

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## Salt: Good Or Bad?

To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. —2 Corinthians 2:16

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

Is salt good or bad? It's not that simple, is it? For instance, the salt that melts dangerous ice on winter roads is also the salt that eats through the steel of cars. And the salt that an athlete needs to prevent dehydration is the salt that some experts believe plays a significant role in many health problems, such as high blood pressure.

Truth, like salt, has more than one side. As we learn more about what the Word of God says on a specific subject, we grow in our understanding of how to apply God's truth to life. Then, as we obey that truth, our lives will demonstrate its different effects.

For example, as Christians we are the preserving salt of the earth (Mt. 5:13), but we are also a sign of destruction to those who resist Christ (2 Cor. 2:15-16). These were both true in Christ's ministry. And because He lives in us, our lives are to have the same effect on others. The Savior is merciful and patient to those who call upon Him in faith, but He is also the Judge, whose anger rests

upon those who arrogantly resist Him.

Let's diligently study God's truth so that we will increasingly become the aroma of life to those who believe in Christ, but a warning of death to those who reject Him. It's God's way of making our witness effective. By: Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thinking It Over

Does anyone treat you with cold contempt  
because of your faith in Christ?  
Has anyone responded warmly to your witness?

If we are like Christ, some will not like us.

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2 COR. 2:16.

To the one ... the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.  
The sun and rain will give vigor and growth to a living tree, but the same sun and rain will increase the rot and decay in a dead one.  
PENTECOST.

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### **A PARADE WORTH MARCHING IN - Joseph Stowell**

"But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him." 2 Corinthians 2:14

For Americans, the Fourth of July is usually a day of picnics, parties, and parades. Putting aside partisan differences and political perspectives, the people of the nation gather to celebrate Independence Day—the founding of the United States. Across the nation, people will line the streets of their towns and villages to see a line-up of brightly decorated floats, shiny fire trucks, antique cars, and grown men driving go-carts in circles. It's a wonderful holiday and a great celebration!

I find it interesting to note that the apostle Paul actually uses the picture of a parade to teach the Corinthian believers an important biblical truth about the work of Jesus on our behalf. In the second chapter of 2 Corinthians he says that God "always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:14). The Corinthians would have been very familiar with the idea of "triumphal processions." In fact, anyone living under the Roman Empire would have instantly pictured what Paul was describing.

Historians tell us that whenever Roman forces captured another region, the victorious Roman commanding general would stage a parade. Gathering his victorious soldiers, he would march through the streets of the city with crowds lining the roads. The captured general and his subdued men would be forced to march, shackled and humbled, with the Roman forces to demonstrate the power and might of Rome's reach. While they marched, the pagan priests of Rome would burn incense to symbolize the sweet smell of victory.

Paul takes that powerful picture and uses it to illustrate the immensity of Christ's victory over sin and death in the lives of His followers. He says that in the spiritual world, we are being led by the victorious one—Jesus—in a triumphal parade that displays His victory over the forces of evil. We have been set free from our enslavement to sin, and we are now "slaves to righteousness" (Romans 6:18). We have a new master now that we have been gloriously set free!

Paul even takes the illustration one step further by referencing the incense burned in the Roman processions. Look again at what he says in 2 Corinthians 2:14, "God . . . through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him." Isn't that incredible! Our lives, Paul says, are to be a sweet-smelling reminder of how attractive and appealing the freedom and victory we find in Jesus can be! The scent of God's grace is supposed to linger in the lives of those in our sphere of influence.

So today, if you are an American, enjoy the parades. But if you are first and foremost a follower of Jesus, revel in the independence and freedom that you have found in Him. Picture yourself being led through the streets of your town, on display to your friends and family as a trophy of Christ's victory. And pray that your encounters with others will leave behind the sweet smell of God's goodness.

And here's the good news: When Jesus is the victor, no one can rain on your parade!

YOUR JOURNEY...

- What are some practical ways to celebrate and remember the day that Jesus set you free from your sin?
- What freedoms and blessings do you enjoy now because of Christ's victory on the cross? (If you need some ideas, look at Romans 6-8 and 1 Corinthians 15.)
- How effectively is your life spreading the "fragrance of the knowledge of Him"? Do the people in your sphere of influence

tangibly see and experience the goodness and grace of God through you?

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## The Fragrance of Christ

We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ. 2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

Which of the five senses brings back your memories most sharply? For me it is definitely the sense of smell. A certain kind of sun oil takes me instantly to a French beach. The smell of chicken mash brings back childhood visits to my grandmother. A hint of pine says "Christmas," and a certain kind of aftershave reminds me of my son's teenage years.

Paul reminded the Corinthians that they were the aroma of Christ: "For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ" (2 Cor. 2:15). He may have been referring to Roman victory parades. The Romans made sure everyone knew they had been victorious by burning incense on altars throughout the city. For the victors, the aroma was pleasing; for the prisoners it meant certain slavery or death. So as believers, we are victorious soldiers. And when the gospel of Christ is preached, it is a pleasing fragrance to God.

As the aroma of Christ, what perfumes do Christians bring with them as they walk into a room? It's not something that can be bought in a bottle or a jar. When we spend a lot of time with someone, we begin to think and act like that person. Spending time with Jesus will help us spread a pleasing fragrance to those around us. By: Marion Stroud ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, please shape my thoughts and actions so people may sense that I have been with You.

When we walk with God, people will notice.

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## A Mysterious Fragrance

We are to God the fragrance of Christ. —2 Corinthians 2:15

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:12-3:6

Most of us can think of someone—perhaps a relative or a friend—who is known for a particular perfume she wears. Even without seeing her, we know when she's nearby. Wordlessly, her fragrance welcomes us into her company.

Every Christian should also be known for wearing a particular perfume—the fragrance of Christ. But it can't be bought at a cosmetic counter. It can't even be bottled and sold by the church. This mysterious perfume rises always and only out of our inner communion with Christ and wafts a subtle yet noticeable influence toward others.

Someone said about a Christian in his small town, "That man never crosses my pathway without me being better for it!" Another remarked of him, "You need only shake his hand to know that he is full of God." Most likely, this admired believer had given a verbal witness at some point. But without the perfume of Christ, his witness would not have been empowered by the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:6).

The apostle Paul asked, "Who is sufficient for these things?" (2:16). The answer is plain: Our fragrance, our entire sufficiency, is from Christ alone, not from ourselves. What fragrance will you be wearing today? By: Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Oh, make me, Lord, so much like Thee,  
My life controlled by power divine,  
That I a shining light may be  
From which Thy grace may ever shine. —Robertson

When we've been alone with Jesus,  
There's a difference others know;  
And to them it's like a fragrance  
That we leave where'er we go. —Hess

If you walk with Christ, others will sense His presence with you.

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**2 Corinthians 2:17 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.**

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KJV 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

NET 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not like so many others, hucksters who peddle the word of God for profit, but we are speaking in Christ before God as persons of sincerity, as persons sent from God.

BGT 2 Corinthians 2:17 ο γ ρ σμεν ς ο πολλο καπηλε οντες τ ν λ γον το θεο , λλ ς ξε λικρινε ας, λλ ς κ θεο κατ νανπι θεο ν Χριστ λαλο μεν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 2:17 You see, we are not like the many hucksters who preach for personal profit. We preach the word of God with sincerity and with Christ's authority, knowing that God is watching us.

ESV 2 Corinthians 2:17 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.

NIV 2 Corinthians 2:17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.

GNT 2 Corinthians 2:17 ο γ ρ σμεν ς ο πολλο καπηλε οντες τ ν λ γον το θεο , λλ ς ξε λικρινε ας, λλ ς κ θεο κατ νανπι θεο ν Χριστ λαλο μεν.

YLT 2 Corinthians 2:17 for we are not as the many, adulterating the word of God, but as of sincerity -- but as of God; in the presence of God, in Christ we do speak.

ASV 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not as the many, corrupting the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.

CSB 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not like the many who market God's message for profit. On the contrary, we speak with sincerity in Christ, as from God and before God.

MIT 2 Corinthians 2:17 We are not like those many who unscrupulously huckster the word of God. But with pure motives as agents from God, in Christ we speak in the presence of God.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

NRS 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not peddlers of God's word like so many; but in Christ we speak as persons of sincerity, as persons sent from God and standing in his presence.

NAB 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not like the many who trade on the word of God; but as out of sincerity, indeed as from God and in the presence of God, we speak in Christ.

NJB 2 Corinthians 2:17 At least we do not adulterate the word of God, as so many do, but it is in all purity, as envoys of God and in God's presence, that we speak in Christ.

GWN 2 Corinthians 2:17 At least we don't go around selling an impure word of God like many others. The opposite is true. As Christ's spokesmen and in God's presence, we speak the pure message that comes from God.

BBE 2 Corinthians 2:17 For we are not like the great number who make use of the word of God for profit: but our words are true, as from God, being said as before God in Christ.

GNB We are not like so many others, who handle God's message as if it were cheap merchandise; but because God has sent us, we speak with sincerity in his presence, as servants of Christ.

REB We are not adulterating the word of God for profit as so many do; when we declare the word we do it in sincerity, as from God and in God's sight, as members of Christ.

NEB At least we do not go hawking the word of God about, as so many do; when we declare the word we do it in sincerity, as from God and in God's sight, as members of Christ.

CJB For we are not like a lot of folks who go about huckstering God's message for a fee; on the contrary, we speak out of a sincere heart, as people sent by God, standing in God's presence, living in union with the Messiah.

The Message No—but at least we don't take God's Word, water it down, and then take it to the streets to sell it cheap. We stand in Christ's presence when we speak; God looks us in the face. We get what we say straight

from God and say it as honestly as we can.

AMP For we are not, like so many, [like hucksters making a trade of] peddling God's Word [shortchanging and adulterating the divine message]; but like [men] of sincerity and the purest motive, as [commissioned and sent] by God, we speak [His message] in Christ (the Messiah), in the [very] sight and presence of God.

- **not like many:** 2Co 4:2 2Co 11:13-15 Jer 5:31 23:27-32 Mt 24:24 1Ti 1:19,20 4:1-3 2Ti 2:6-18 4:3,4 Tit 1:11 2Pe 2:1-3 1Jn 4:1 2Jn 1:7-11 Jude 1:4 Rev 2:14,15,20 12:9 19:20
- **peddling,** 2Co 4:2
- **but from sincerity:** 2Co 1:12 4:2 Ac 20:20,27 Heb 11:27
- 2 Corinthians 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

2 Corinthians 4:2+ but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, **not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God**, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2 Corinthians 11:4, 13-15+ For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.....13 For such men are **false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ**. 14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

### NO HUCKSTERS PEDDLING THE WORD OF GOD FOR PROFIT

A [huckster](#) is anyone who sells something or serves biased interests, using pushy or showy tactics. Historically, the term meant any type of vendor, but over time it has assumed pejorative connotations. (Itinerant medicine men were known as hucksters - see [French drawing](#))

**For** ([gar](#)) - Term of explanation. Paul is explaining why he had just asked "*Who is adequate for these things*" here giving a picture of men who presented themselves as "*adequate*."

**We are not like many** - Don't miss the adjective **many** indicating that a substantial number of false teachers had infiltrated and defiled the purity of the Bride of Christ in Corinth (cf 2Co 11:2-4+). In Php 3:18+ he used "many" in a similar context writing that "**many** walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ." The implication is that Paul saw himself in the minority of men who were faithful ministers of the Word.

**Peddling the word of God - NET** = "hucksters who peddle the word of God for profit." **Amplified** = "shortchanging and adulterating the divine message." **Peddling** (kateleuo) is used only here in NT and is derived from **kapelos** (used in Lxx of Isa 1:22+ = a huckster who mixes wine with water) one who would sell damaged goods or lighten weight for personal gain. **Kateleuo** described a seller of merchandise, but with the nuance in this context that they were retailing (KJV - corrupting) the Word of God deceitfully rather than speaking it with sincerity. Even the pagan classical philosophers spoke against wandering philosophers who sold their "wisdom for money!" Paul sought to disavow and avoid any suggestion of a "money-seeking" reputation that he accused his opponents of having. This was an important issue in the Hellenistic world. Though Paul accepted money from churches (especially Philippi) for his support, he apparently never "had his hand out" when he was preaching except when he raised funds for the poor of the other churches.

**Utley** on **peddling** - This is a term from the wine industry. It was used in two ways: (1) to water down wine so as to make more money (adulterate) or (2) to hawk one's product for profit (a huckster) Paul did not change his message (the gospel) for different audiences (Greeks, Jews), but he did customize his approach (see Paul's sermons in Acts).

**Broomall** on the **word of God**. Paul's sincerity is evident in its (1) origin—**of God**; (2) manifestation—**in the sight of God**; (3) sphere of action—**speak we in Christ** (cf. 2 Cor 13:3). ([2 Corinthians 2](#))

**Gromacki** says these peddlers "were like vendors suspected of putting the best fruit on the top of a basket full of immature and bruised fruit. In a sense, they were men pleasers (Gal. 1:10+)." ([2 Corinthians - Stand Firm in the Faith](#))

**But** (term of contrast) **as from sincerity - The Message** = "but at least we don't take God's Word, water it down, and then take it to

the streets to sell it cheap." Paul brings forth an immediate contrast of his preaching with that [purveyed](#) by these "*unholy hucksters*." Paul's motives were **sincere** (*sine* = without + *cera* = wax!) pure, unadulterated, without guile, etc (see [list of synonyms for sincere](#)).

**Utley** on **sincerity** - It conveys the concept of unhidden, pure motives (cf. 1 Cor. 5:8; 2 Cor. 1:12; 2:17; Phil. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:1). Notice the parallel between "but as from sincerity" and "but as from God."

**But as from** (ek = out of) **God, we** (present tense - continually) **speak in Christ in the sight of God- As from God** is "*ek Theou*," literally "out of God," the Source of his message. Writing to the Galatians Paul testified that "the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man for I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal 1:11-12+). Paul was a God sent man like John the Baptist (Jn 1:6+). His speaking was **in Christ** (locative of sphere - see notes on [in Christ](#)) with His authority and power (enabled by the Spirit of Christ - 1Pe 1:11+), reflecting his new spiritual position described in 2Cor 5:17+. As an aside the implication is clear that his opponents were "*outside*" of Christ! **In the sight of God** indicates Paul's preaching was always carried out as if he had an audience of One Who He sought to please. Paul was an "open book" before God and therefore also before those to whom he preached. He understood the command he would later give to Timothy in 2Ti 2:15+ that to **be diligent** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) to rightly divide the Word of Truth for one day he would be held accountable for how he had handled the Word **from God** (cf 2Co 5:10+). Writing to the saints at Thessalonica (in Macedonia) he said "just as we have been approved ([dokimazo](#) in perfect tense - examined and passed the test) by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, **not as pleasing men, but God** who examines ([dokimazo](#) - present tense - an ongoing examination of) our hearts." (1Th 2:4+, see also 1Co 4:1-5+ especially the phrase "disclose the **motives** of men's hearts!")

**Homer Kent** - Objectively, the source of his commission was from God. Furthermore, he and his companions had carried on their ministry "in the sight of God," that is, with full consciousness that they were responsible to him and were being watched by him. Finally, they had spoken "in Christ," being fully aware of their position as members of Christ's Body and drawing power from their vital union with Him. Such a ministry left little room for suspicion. ([Ref](#))

The wonderful truth [in Christ](#) occurs 8x in 8v in 2 Corinthians - 2Cor 1:21 2Cor 2:14 2Cor 2:17 2Cor 3:14 2Cor 5:17 2Cor 5:19 2Cor 12:2 2Cor 12:19

**Sincerity** (1505) ([eilikrineia](#) from [eilikrines](#) from *heile* = shining of sun + *krino* = judge) literally means judged by sunlight, and then figuratively to that is tested as genuine, pure, sincere, uncontaminated, unmixed by seductive influences of world, the flesh, devil. **BDAG** - the quality or state of being free of dissimulation. Purity of motive. **In ancient times the finest pottery was thin** It had a clear color, and it brought a high price. Fine pottery was very fragile both before and after firing. And ... this pottery would [often] crack in the oven. Cracked pottery should have been thrown away. But dishonest dealers were in the habit of filling cracks with a hard pearly wax that would blend in with the color of the pottery. This made the cracks practically undetectable in the shops, especially when painted or glazed; but the wax was immediately detectable if the pottery was held up to light, especially to the sun. In that case the cracks would show up darker. It was said that the artificial element was detected by "*sun-testing*." Honest dealers marked their finer product by the caption from *heile*, the shining or splendor of the sun, and *krino*, to judge, discern. *sine cera* = "**without wax**." Even as it was wise for customers in the ancient marketplaces to give all pieces of pottery the "sunlight test," so it is wise and necessary for all believers to test their lives for the **wax of hypocrisy**. When held up to the light of God's Word ("the Son light" test), the presence or absence of sinful cracks will be apparent. That's why it is so important for us to feed daily on Scripture (Ps 119:9-11) and to allow our lives to be shaped by its power (Heb 4:12). **Eilikrineia** 3x in NT - 1 Co. 5:8; 2 Co. 1:12; 2 Co. 2:17 and not in Lxx.

**THOUGHT** - Would my life pass the test of being held up to the light of the Son? Or would my life show "cracks" I have tried to cover over and conceal from others (cf Pr 28:13+, Nu 32:23b+)? As Barclay says "Blessed is the man who has nothing to hide."

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## OUR SUFFICIENCY IS FROM GOD

INTRODUCTION: Let us note Paul's discussion of a problem in 2 Corinthians 2:14-16. We preach the "fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere." We are the aroma of Christ to God: to the perishing "a fragrance from death to death," and to the saved, "a fragrance from life to life."

The same gospel is preached by the same man to the same crowd. To one it is salvation; to another it is death.

And Paul cries, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Paul answers the question in 2 Corinthians 3:5: "Our sufficiency is from God."

I. "We speak in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:17).

- A. Says Paul, "We are not, like so many, peddlers of God's Word" (2 Cor. 2:17). He did not preach for money—nor for self-support.
- B. "For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5).

## II. God's sufficiency.

- A. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ the Redeemer.
- B. The Holy Spirit convicts us "of sin and of righteousness and of judgment" (John 16:8).
- C. It is the grace of the Lord which sustains us in difficult times: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9).

CONCLUSION: God's sufficiency is offered to every child of His in superabundance. The only lack is human failure to see, believe, and receive.

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### Columbus' Eclipse

We are not, as so many, peddling the Word of God. — 2 Corinthians 2:17

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

On one of Christopher Columbus' voyages, he found that his crew's food supply was almost depleted. Anchored off the island of Jamaica, he was grateful to be given food by the islanders. But as time went on, the gifts of food decreased so that the crew began to starve.

Columbus knew from an astronomy book that a lunar eclipse would soon occur. He called the native chiefs together and told them God was angry about their selfishness and would blot out the moon. At first the islanders scoffed. But when they watched the night's silver disc slowly become dark, they became terrified and quickly brought food. Columbus said that if he prayed, the moon would be restored. Though we may empathize with his circumstances, Columbus' "message from God" was dishonest and self-serving.

Aware of religious charlatans who "peddled" God's Word for their own desires, the apostle Paul wrote, "We are not, as so many, peddling the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God" (2 Cor. 2:17).

At all times we must be on guard not to misrepresent God's message to acquire what we want from others. With a heart yielded to God, we must honestly share spiritual truths that will benefit those who hear. By: Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Don't compromise the Word of God  
Or twist what He has said;  
For blessing comes from faithfully  
Proclaiming truth instead. —Sper

The purpose of sharing God's truth is to profit others, not to prosper ourselves.