

Chapter 2

v.1-3 Paul writes that he does not want to come to them to give sorrow but joy- see I John 1:3&4 That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

v.4-10 probably refers to forgiving the offender from 1 Cor.5- forgiveness can be a problem in two extremes- one, we can ignore sin and let anything go under the guise of God's love and not judging anyone or the other extreme and refuse to forgive repentant sinners- both are devices of Satan to keep us from God's true purposes

Calvin defined these devices as “the artful schemes and tricks of which believers ought to be aware, and will be if they allow the Spirit of God to rule in them.” Are you allowing the Spirit to make you aware of Satan’s strategy against you right now? What weak point is he trying to exploit? Where is Satan trying to get a foothold into your life? Are you ignorant of his devices?

v.12-13 Paul refers again to the doors opened by the Spirit for him- we too have open doors and need to be going through those doors

v.14-16 leads in "triumph"- refers to Roman victory custom- could only be approved by vote of the Senate- only against foreigners- “In a Triumph the procession of the victorious general marched through the streets of Rome to the Capitol... First came the state officials and the senate. Then came the trumpeters. Then were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land... Then came the pictures of the conquered land and models of conquered citadels and ships. There followed the white bull for 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 lictors 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... finally came the army wearing all their decorations and shouting Io triumphe! Their cry of triumph. 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.” (Barclay)

the smell of incense was to one the aroma of life to the other literally the smell of death

- to be a triumph there must have been a battle

- Diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge: Fragrance, in the form of incense, was common at the Roman triumphal parade. In Paul's mind, this fragrance is like the knowledge of God, which people can smell as the triumphal parade comes by.

No sense remains in the memory like scent. There is nothing we remember more strongly than pleasant smells, except perhaps unpleasant smells. "Thus the apostle wished that his life might be a sweet perfume, floating on the air, reminding me, and above all reminding God, of Christ." (Meyer)

"A sweet fragrance 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." (Meyer)

That aroma means different things to different people, our calling is to let the fragrance be diffused, not to try and make that fragrance more appealing- example onions

v.17 peddlers- speaks of those who went from place to place selling their wares- particularly wine dealers who watered down their wares for profit or polluted for profit- we will never water down the message even if unpopular

- rather sincere, without wax, referring to those who made vases of porcelain, cracks were filled in with wax so honest dealers stamped their vases sin cere

The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth

chapter 3 v.1-3 we are epistles-

- What is the purpose of a letter? to express ones mind on something
- many will not read Bible but will read us
- just as we need to whole counsel of God, so the world needs the whole counsel- ie each of us
- example of tapes to Phillip and Anthony so they can accurately translate the message