

Studies in 2 Corinthians

Lesson IV

TEXT: 2 Corinthians 2:12-17; 3:1-6 (NKJV)

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

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. **15** For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. **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? **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.

2:1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you or *letters* of commendation from you? **2** You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; **3** clearly *you are* an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart.

4 And we have such trust through Christ toward God. **5** Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, **6** who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Discussion Questions

1. What major disappointment did Paul face during his visit to Troas? (vv. 12-13)
2. What two things does God do on our behalf, according to verse 14?
3. In what way are we a "fragrance" or "aroma" of Christ (vv. 14-15)?
4. What do you suppose Paul has in mind when he speaks of the aromas of death and life? (vs. 16)
5. How does "peddling" the word of God hurt the cause of Christ? How does speaking it with sincerity further it?
6. Paul begins chapter 3 with a word picture. What illustration does he use and how does he relate it to the Corinthians (vv. 1-3)?
7. How do verses 4-5 reinforce our spiritual need for Jesus? Why are we not sufficient within ourselves?
8. What is the "letter" and how does it kill? Who is the "Spirit" and how does he "give life," in contrast to the letter? (verse 6)