

# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## II CORINTHIANS 2:12-17

Lesson 5

### FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Application of the Word is one of the most important purposes of Joyful Life Bible Studies. What affect did last week's study of II Corinthians 2:1-11 have on you?
2. Although the verses in II Corinthians 2:12-17 were written to the Corinthian church hundreds of years ago, they continue to encourage, bless and inspire Christians today. Our study this week will give us insights into a variety of practical subjects, including the amazing opportunity we have as believers to spread the fragrance of Jesus wherever we go. Preview the contents of these verses by reading II Corinthians 2:12-17. Identify the subject of each of the following divisions:
  - a. verses 12,13
  - b. verse 14
  - c. verses 15,16
  - d. verse 17
3. *The Bible prayerfully read, believed and applied will transform a life.* In response to this begin your study of II Corinthians 2:12-17 by writing a prayer. Include in your prayer any specific concerns or needs related to your lesson this week.

*Thanks be to God Who leads us, wherever we are,  
on His own triumphant way  
and makes our knowledge of Him  
spread throughout the world like a lovely perfume!*  
II Corinthians 2:14 Phillips



**THIRD DAY:** Read II Corinthians 2:14

1. Beginning with II Corinthians 2:14 Paul moved away from the subject of his itinerary to describe and defend his ministry. Notice Paul's attitude and perspective in this verse. Let the truth of verse 14 penetrate your mind and heart as you write it here phrase by phrase.
  - a. Consider the two reasons Paul mentioned in verse 14 for which he thanked God. What is your initial reaction to this verse?
  
2. Observe II Corinthians 14a NIV: *Who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ.* Paul gave his readers a word picture drawn from a secular event familiar to the Corinthians. The Romans celebrated their triumph over their enemies with a victory parade. The victorious commander or general would ride in his chariot, leading his soldiers and their captives through the streets which were lined with cheering spectators while clouds of incense from burning spices filled the air. To the victors the incense was the fragrance that signified life; to the captives doomed to execution, it was the scent of death. With this in mind explain what verse 14a means in your life.
  - a. Link the truth of verse 14a with Romans 8:37. How should this affect our perspective when experiencing difficult circumstances?
    - (1.) In recognition of these truths, what instruction does I Corinthians 15:57,58 give us?
  
3. Focus on Paul's second reason for giving thanks to God by reading II Corinthians 2:14b NIV: *And through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him.* How does this speak to you about the opportunity and privilege we have as Christians?
  - a. List a few ways the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ is spread by us.
  
4. In response to II Corinthians 2:14 complete today's lesson by writing a prayer expressing your thanks to God.

**FOURTH DAY:** Read II Corinthians 2:15,16

1. It is essential for us to grasp the concept presented in II Corinthians 2:14b-16. The word *savour* in these verses has been translated *fragrance* and *perfume*. Observe verse 14b NLT: *Now wherever we go He uses us to tell others about the Lord and to spread the Good News like a sweet perfume.* Personalize II Corinthians 2:15 as you write it here.
  - a. What does realizing you are *a sweet savour unto God* mean to you?
  - b. What parallels do you see between the diffused fragrance of a lovely perfume and a Christian?
2. The fragrance of our lives is *a scent breathed in heaven and on earth*. II Corinthians 2:15,16 reveals this world is divided into two categories of people. From verse 16 record the affect this fragrance has on:
  - a. *them that perish* (are lost)
  - b. *them that are saved*
3. Are you aware on a daily basis that *you are the fragrance of Christ in this world*? This fragrance is not manufactured or applied on the outside. Its source is the indwelling presence of Christ, the Fragrant One. Although Christ is the source, what things can hinder the release of His fragrance through us?
  - a. You may be the only fragrance of Christ in your home, workplace, or neighborhood. How does this speak to you?
  - b. Print Paul's question in verse 16c.
    - (1.) If the Apostle Paul didn't feel adequate for *these things*, how much less might we. What encouragement does II Corinthians 3:5 give you concerning this?
4. The costliest perfume is made from extracting the essential oil from flower petals. This process of extraction always involves the loss of that which does not contribute to the fragrance. How might trials in a believer's life be used of the Lord to produce the sweetest fragrance possible?

**FIFTH DAY:** Read II Corinthians 2:17

1. In II Corinthians 2:17 the phrase *corrupt the Word of God* means to *peddle for profit or deal deceitfully with*. Synthetic perfume is perfume made with artificial ingredients. It is meant to imitate or replace the thing. What parallels can you draw between this and verse 17?
  
2. In contrast to *many who peddle the Word of God for profit* (II Corinthians 2:17a NIV), what characterized Paul's ministry? Answer from verse 17b.
  - a. The word *sincerity* conveys the idea of *transparent* or *pure*. Why is this essential for those in Christian ministry?
  
3. According to II Corinthians 2:17c Paul was conscious that everything he said and did was *in the sight of God*. Everything we say and do is also *in the sight of God*. How should this affect our choices and conduct on a daily basis?

*Like a watered garden full of fragrance rare,  
Lingering in Thy presence let my life appear.*  
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**SIXTH DAY:** Review II Corinthians 2:12-17

1. With this week's study in mind record a thought, discovery or insight from the following verses:
  - a. II Corinthians 2:12,13
  
  - b. II Corinthians 2:14
  
  - c. II Corinthians 2:15,16
  
  - d. II Corinthians 2:17

