



## Week 39: 2 Corinthians

### Study Guide for the week of Sept. 21-27

#### Personal reflection / journaling exercise

This week, spend time with 2 Cor 2:14-17

The Romans would often use incense in their triumphal processions: for the victor, the fragrance was sweet, but for the vanquished, it smelled of slavery and death.

Spend some time thinking of sweet smells and not so sweet smells in your life. What memories surround those smells? Scientists tell us the sense of smell is one of the most powerful memory triggers.

Now consider the “fragrance” you emit in your daily life. Is it one that stirs good memories, that teases and tantalizes others with a welcoming glimpse of God’s kingdom? Or would others characterize your fragrance as an odor, sharp, bitter, harsh?

Spend time in prayer asking God to wash you and anoint you with the sweet fragrance of his love so others may experience God’s welcome.

#### Discussion starters

1. Does becoming a Christian guarantee you’ll be healthy, wealthy and wise? Reread 2 Cor 1:3-7. Does God promise to remove all our troubles or to give us the gift of endurance? Have you ever experienced a time when God gave you the gift of endurance rather than a momentary deliverance? If so, share your experience with your group.
2. Have you ever written a letter of recommendation for someone? What did you include in the letter? Reread 2 Cor 3:1-3. What kind of letter of recommendation for Jesus are you?
3. Have you ever had regrets about words you spoke or some action of yours? Did you ever wish you could have a “do-over”? Read Is 43:18-19; 65:17; 66:22; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Eph 2:15; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1-5. What does God say about do-overs?
4. What is your first reaction when you see the offering basket passed during worship or realize the topic of the sermon or teaching is about money? Have you ever felt pressured to give money by charitable organizations? Family? Church? Is the Church free to use pressure tactics or guilt when talking about tithes or offerings? What is Paul’s answer in 2 Cor 9:6-8? Is wealth a blessing or a curse? (Hint, reread 2 Cor 9:8).

#### Bible verse to memorize: 2 Cor 12:9