

Just A Minute! With Scripture

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

Theme: II Corinthians 2

Do You Have a Sweet Smell?

Paul took to heart the doctrine Christ taught him, which was written down for us in Romans through Philemon. He was driven to please God, as the Scripture will lead us to do: "...Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." (Rom. 14:5) Therefore his service became a valued, sweet aroma to the Father: "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. (II Cor. 2:15)

We all can be thankful how God has made it possible for us to always be triumphant. (II Cor. 2:14) Our desire can be to live godly and a sweet smell to God, but the world and our flesh battle for our affection. Satan has many tactics to inhibit us from living godly. (Eph. 6:12) The Word of God teaches that we're not in a fleshly, physical battle, it is a spiritual one. It is only by God's Word, motivated by godly love, that we can be successful. "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." (Eph. 5:2)

When we follow Paul as he follows Christ, we can become a fragrant sacrifice. Paul gives us our victory instructions: "If ye 1) continue in the faith 2) grounded and settled, and 3) be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." (Colossians 1:23)

These 3 things help us be an acceptable sacrifice unto God!

1) "Continue in the faith:" Stay consistent living your convictions, focused on what the Spirit is teaching you from the Word. Determine to live it out, learn, and then adjust.

2) "Grounded and settled:" Being grounded is knowing sound doctrine: regularly renew your mind by reading and being in meditation with prayer. Having trust to be settled in the faith is developed by proving things for yourself. How? Study/live the Word, not just believing what someone says.

3) "Be not moved away:" This is standing confident in our blessed hope, and relying on God. This way your feet are held fast and secure in the Truth. "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. (II Thess. 2:15)

Confirm Your Love

In I Corinthians 5:5 a man was in grievous sin, so the Church was instructed to turn him over to "...Satan for the destruction of the flesh..." Then, in II Corinthians 2:6-11, Paul admonishes the Church to respond to him in grace, since he repented of his evil deeds: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." (vs. 6-7)

Yet, how was the Church to interact with this saint? Above, the Scripture taught them in grace to "...forgive him and comfort him..." To "forgive" means not to hold anything against him, taking him back as a dear brother. To "comfort" is the idea to console and assure him of his acceptance in Christ.

Finally, verse 8 teaches: "Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him." They were to treat him as a beloved family member in their local Church and make known their care and great affection toward him in all things, confirming their love.

Application: All of us have fleshly desires and also sin at times. Yet, we are one in Christ and family, needing one another to function properly. Applying grace is how God designed for us to learn/support one another.

HOW TO BE JUST BEFORE GOD

God loves you so much that He sent His Son to suffer and die in your place, just so you could go to heaven to be with Him forever. It is grace...a free gift! All you do is believe.

"But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8) Also: "Being justified freely by his grace though the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:24)



Study-Devotional on Galatians Using Study Tools



This section progressively helps in the study of key verses in the book of *Galatians*. Take a few moments to gain a deeper understanding as you answer the questions below. Do one or two per week, meditating upon what Scripture teaches, allowing the Word to dwell in you.

Verses to read/study this Month: *Galatians 2:1-2:* ¹*Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. ²And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preached among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.*

1. After reading and rereading the passages above, name two major topics that Paul is teaching?
2. Are there any words that seem a bit unclear? If there are, use a dictionary to define them.
3. To what is Paul referring in *verse 1*, when he says, *"Then fourteen years after"*? When a verse refers to

something, always 'look back' for the context.

4. What do you know about Barnabas and Titus i.e. the work they did with/for Paul, and their faithfulness? Use a concordance and look up their names in Paul's epistles. Include *Acts* to expand your study.
5. What was the reason given in *verse 2* for why Paul went to Jerusalem? What did he do? Search for more information whenever things seem unclear or incomplete. 'Look back' to where this meeting took place in *Acts 15*. What happened and what was the outcome?
6. What did Paul mean when he said, *"I went up by revelation"*? Do you know other verses that help you?
7. Paul says he went up *"privately to them which were of reputation."* Why? Sometimes the answer will be revealed later in the chapter. Scan through *verses 3-10*, 'looking ahead' to find additional information.
8. What does this mean: *"lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain?"* Examine other times Paul uses the term *"run"* in *1 Cor. 9:24-26*, *Gal. 5:7*, and *Phil. 2:16*. Do these verses give you clarity? Explain.

God of 'ALL' Comfort

By Deborah Garner

"... and the God of ALL comfort; Who comforteth us in ALL our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

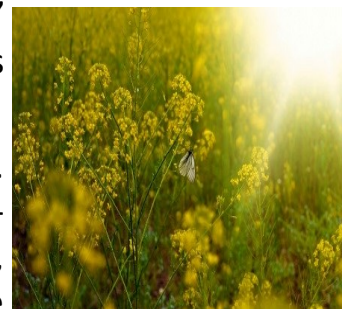
(2 Corinthians 1: 3b-4)

I've been applying God's Word to my life for over 40 years and I am convinced that God's Word is true and **that** He does what He says He will do. Just knowing that His comfort is there for me ALL the time gives me courage to face each day. The Greek word for comfort is "parakletos," which comes from "PARA," meaning "closer than a friend to give such things as he has" and "KALEO," meaning "to urge on, comfort, console, exhort, intreat."

I KNOW if I run to God in times of trouble, I WILL receive comfort from HIM. Isn't that what we want from a friend when we are hurting? Someone to comfort us? Someone that is so close to us/knows us so well that they empathize, but are the voice of reason to urge us on? Their words and genuine care cause us to rest from our troubled mind. We're not alone and they are bearing our burden with us. I remind myself that setbacks are but a blip on eternity's timeline. With this truth, I KNOW I will get through.

God wants US to comfort others with the truths of His Word and the testimonies of His faithfulness in our lives. It is God's Spirit that urges us on, comforts, consoles, exhort**s**, and intreats. Let's be His arms of comfort, His ears to listen, and His voice to urge them on in this life.

Homework: Meditate on the word "ALL" in this Scripture and experience His comfort.



Freedom Through Truth

By Kathy Heiniger

On A Personal Side

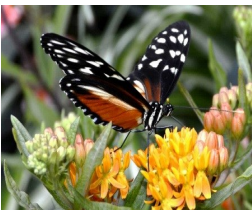
Question & Answers

by Deborah Johnson

I awoke with a start from dreaming I would be late for my first day of nurses training. I had arrived early, but was embarrassed to be the only one not in uniform. I raced back to my dorm to change, dealing with frustrating obstructions that come with dreams. I awoke fretting and deliberating if it would have been better to stay in class without my uniform rather than returning late. Although no longer dreaming, I was still in bondage to stress. Then reality dawned. I could say, "This is a dream! I don't need to waste time and energy on this!" With this thought, I was able to be grateful for the freedom of my awakened state.



There is a similarity between dreams and our flesh -- neither is Truth. Fleshly thoughts of worry, coveting, unfor-giveness, critical thoughts, etc. can also affect me, until I understand the freedom that is mine IN Christ Jesus. When Christ went to the Cross, He took my sin with Him, including the reactions of my flesh. "I am crucified with Christ..." (Gal. 2:20) I can apply faith in the identification Truths found in Romans 6, and other pas-sages in Paul's epistles. I can "reckon" I died with Christ, was buried with Him and rose with Him. When I choose to rest in Christ's finished work, the Holy Spirit does His work to make real the life of Christ in me, and the things of the flesh have no power. I can say, "Thank you Lord! This is my flesh! I don't need to waste time and energy on this!" I can be grateful for the freedom that is mine in the risen Christ for a walk in the Spirit. I don't need to be in bondage to dreams or to my flesh!



Question 1: Is it true that saints are going to be judged by God?

According to the Scripture, yes, but there are two very different judgments, one for the lost and another for saints. First, the "Great White Throne judgment" is for the unbeliever who rebels against God and His Word. (Revelation 20:11-15) However, for saints in the dispensation of grace today, there is the "Judgment Seat of Christ," which provides rewards for faithful work, as in Romans 14:10 and I Corinthians 3. Things that are unacceptable to God, those done in the flesh, are simply burned away, and we will experience loss: "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (I Cor. 3:14-15)

Question 2: Knowing that Satan is wise and set the course for this world, what can we possibly do to stop his impact upon us?

Of course, 'we' cannot overcome Satan and his ways. This is a spir-itual battle and it is the Lord's (Eph. 6). This is one of the many rea-sons we are to regularly renew our mind by Scripture. This is to be our power and wisdom. In this way, God prepares us for the battle, enabling Christ in us to empower and strengthen our inner man to respond wisely and effectively in situations. "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith..." (Ephesians 3:16-17) As we yield unto God, letting the Spirit by the Word dwell within us, we can become all of who Christ made us in whatever situation we face, being victorious.

Question 3: How can I reflect Christ's love in my life?

Actually, I have come to the conviction that we do not 'reflect' His love, but rather, much more gloriously, God made it so that it is Christ the Word that actually works in and out of us. Therefore, it is Christ's light that shines and is manifest within us: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (II Cor. 4:6-7) Saying this another way, we are not just a common mirror that reflects. The treasure we have is Christ the Word mag-nified in us, the source of godly characteristics shining. Therefore, we are able to manifest Christ's genuine qualities so that it is not just a fleshly imitation, the Word needs to be dwelling/living in us as we live. Thus, we manifest Christ; it's not a mere reflection.

Question 4: Could you explain what it means to have a ministry?

Ministry can mean many things. To me, it is a loving time of com-munication and fellowship with our spiritual family. Along with this, our purpose is to be used of God, as a living sacrifice, to be whatever our family needs us to be, using all God has given to us in order to help them with whatever they need. This is a description of the natural love and care God placed within mankind for their own physical children or family, and yet it is the same attitude we are all to have with our spiritual family.

Think practical application: How can I live out the verses?

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To:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)

Thoughts on Faith

By Gene

Everyone has faith in something: people, places, politicians, the government, the justice system, their family, job, or money. It’s an innate part of being human. Unfortunately, virtually everything that people can, and do place their trust in is fragile at best and totally unreliable at worst. One can have the utmost faith in walking across the thinnest river ice, but to no avail. *Hebrews 11:1 says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* Ordinarily, I would have a LOT of difficulty with this, being a “bird-in-the-hand” kind of guy.

However, we can have unfailing faith and trust 100% the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ! *“For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” (Colossians 2:9)* He is the living Word of God that spoke all things into existence from nothing. *Colossians 1:17 states, “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”* He is all knowing, all powerful, and always present everywhere -- His being spans all of eternity so that He knows for certain that there is none other like Him.

From before creation, God had a plan for humanity, even when we sinned against Him, as He knew we would, to reconcile us to Himself through faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on His cross on Calvary. He did all the required work for us as the only sufficient substitute. He did all the necessary work Himself, because we couldn’t. No word or deed on our part can restore us

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to a right relationship with God. We simply need to have faith in this gift of God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ’s finished work alone!

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