



Part 5: Seven Keys to Lasting Impact

To be a person of lasting impact, I must be...

1. _____ in God's ultimate triumph

"But thanks be to God, who **always** leads us in **triumphal procession** in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him." 2 Cor. 2:14

2. _____ about the obstacles

"For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?" 2 Cor. 2:15,16

3. _____ in my motivation

"Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity..." 2 Cor. 2:17

4. _____ in my actions

"...like men sent from God." 2 Cor. 2:17b

5. _____ to others

"Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." 2 Cor. 3:1-3

6. _____ in Christ's strength

"Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent..." 2 Cor. 3:4-6a

7. _____ by grace

"...as ministers of a new covenant--not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." 2 Cor. 3:6

Daily Meditations

Here's a chance to spend some time each day this week meditating on today's topic!

This week's memory verse: *"But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him." 2 Cor. 2:14*

Monday

Read 2 Corinthians 2:12-14. Here's the background: Paul sends Titus to the Corinthian church to talk to them about the issues causing tension between them and Paul. But Titus stays away longer than expected! In this passage, Paul says he had no peace of mind when he cannot find Titus. At first he imagines the worst. Eventually, Paul does meet up with him and gets a good report about the trip to Corinth. Read 2 Cor. 7:5-7 and 13-16 for details about Titus' report. What does this whole episode tell you about Paul's concern for the Corinthian church?

So often there can be competition or envy between churches instead of the kind of loving concern shown here by Paul. Why do you think this is?

Can you think of a church you are concerned about? Pray for them right now, the way Paul might have prayed for the Corinthians.

Look at 2 Corinthians 2:14 again. This verse is very similar to Romans 8:28 and Romans 8:37. Paul is reminding himself of the ultimate triumph God always brings through every situation. Think of the context: Paul is rejoicing in this truth as he remembers his anxiety over not finding Titus. Is there a situation in your life right now where you need to remind yourself that God *always* will triumph?

How have you seen this to be true in your life?

Thank God for his triumph in any and every situation! Pray for churches you know that are going through a struggle right now.

Tuesday

Read 2 Corinthians 2:15-16. How are Christians the “aroma of Christ” to both unbelievers and believers?

In what way can the same “aroma”-- the same message, the same lifestyle-- be the smell of death to some and the fragrance of life to others?

How does it help you to remember this?

Ask God if there is a way you can be a better “aroma of Christ” to those around you today!

Wednesday

Read 2 Corinthians 2:17. How do some Christians peddle the Word of God for profit today?

How can a church or other ministry distinguish between appropriately meeting costs and “peddling for profit”-- where do you think the line can be crossed?

Paul says he is different from the “peddlers”-- he mentions two things: Sincerity and a sense of being “sent from God”. As you share with others, are you *sincere* in your desire to help them or are your motives mixed?

Do you have a true sense of being *sent* by God, or do you serve and share your faith out of guilt or obligation?

How do sincerity and a sense of being sent by God make a difference in the way our message is perceived?

Ask God today to help you search your own motives: Are you sincere in sharing your faith? Do you have a sense of mission? Ask Him how you can be a witness for Him to those around you with all sincerity and purposefulness!

Thursday

Read 2 Cor. 3:1-5. In what ways were the Corinthians Paul’s “letter of recommendation”?

In what ways are the lives of those around you-- your spouse, friends, children-- a “letter of recommendation” about you? (In case you’re thinking-- but some of those people in my life are making poor decisions! --remember, the Corinthians were very flawed also! Paul means that even in the way he deals with their mistakes, they are his letter of recommendation!)

If it’s true that your letter of recommendation is the lives of those in relationship with you, what can you do to “improve your resume”, as it were?

Ask God to help you improve your relationships-- Pray His grace would be seen in your life!

Friday

Read 2 Cor. 3:4-6. Where do you feel incompetent right now?

What does this verse say about the source of your competence?

How does this encourage you today?

How have you seen the truth in your life that “the letter kills, but the spirit gives life”?

Ask God to help you remember the source of your competence-- is Jesus! Thank Him for his life-giving grace!

Saturday

Review any devotions you may have missed and polish up that memory verse at the top of page three! Please pray for this weekend’s service. Thanks!