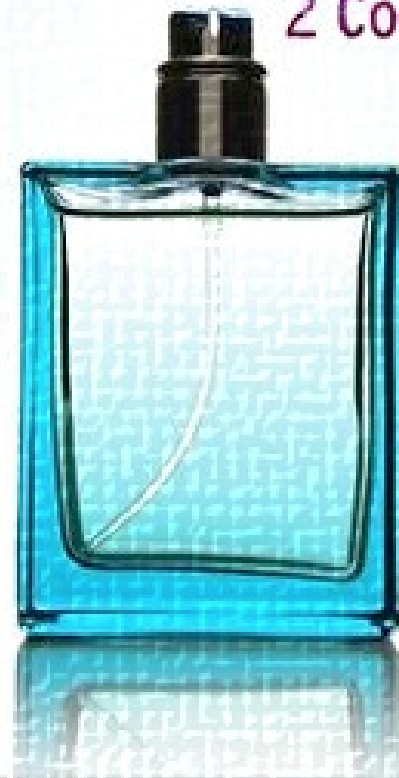


the aroma of CHRIST

2 Corinthians 2:14-17



Smelly 'Facts' [www.everythingsmells.com]

- Everyone has a unique smell, except for identical twins
- Taste is about 75% smell
- The aroma of green apples can help control appetite
- Smell function falls off dramatically in men after their mid-50s, a decade earlier than in women
- Women are born better smellers than men and remain better smellers over life
- In a recent study, men thought women wearing a citrus floral scent were 12 pounds lighter
- Recall can be enhanced if learning is done in the presence of an odor and that same odor is present at the time of recollection

Background of Corinth

- 146 B.C. – Romans destroyed Corinth after rebellion
- 46 B.C. – Rebuilt by Julius Caesar
- A.D. 50 – Romans made Corinth the capital of Achaia (present-day Greece)
- Giant cultural melting pot (Roman, Greek, Oriental)
- Population estimates vary from 100K – 700K
- Strategic seaport and bustling commerce
- Venue of Isthmian Games held every two years
- Great diversity of wealth, religions and moral standards
- Widespread sexual immorality and idol worship
- Pagan temples employed over 1000 prostitutes, “Corinthian girls”

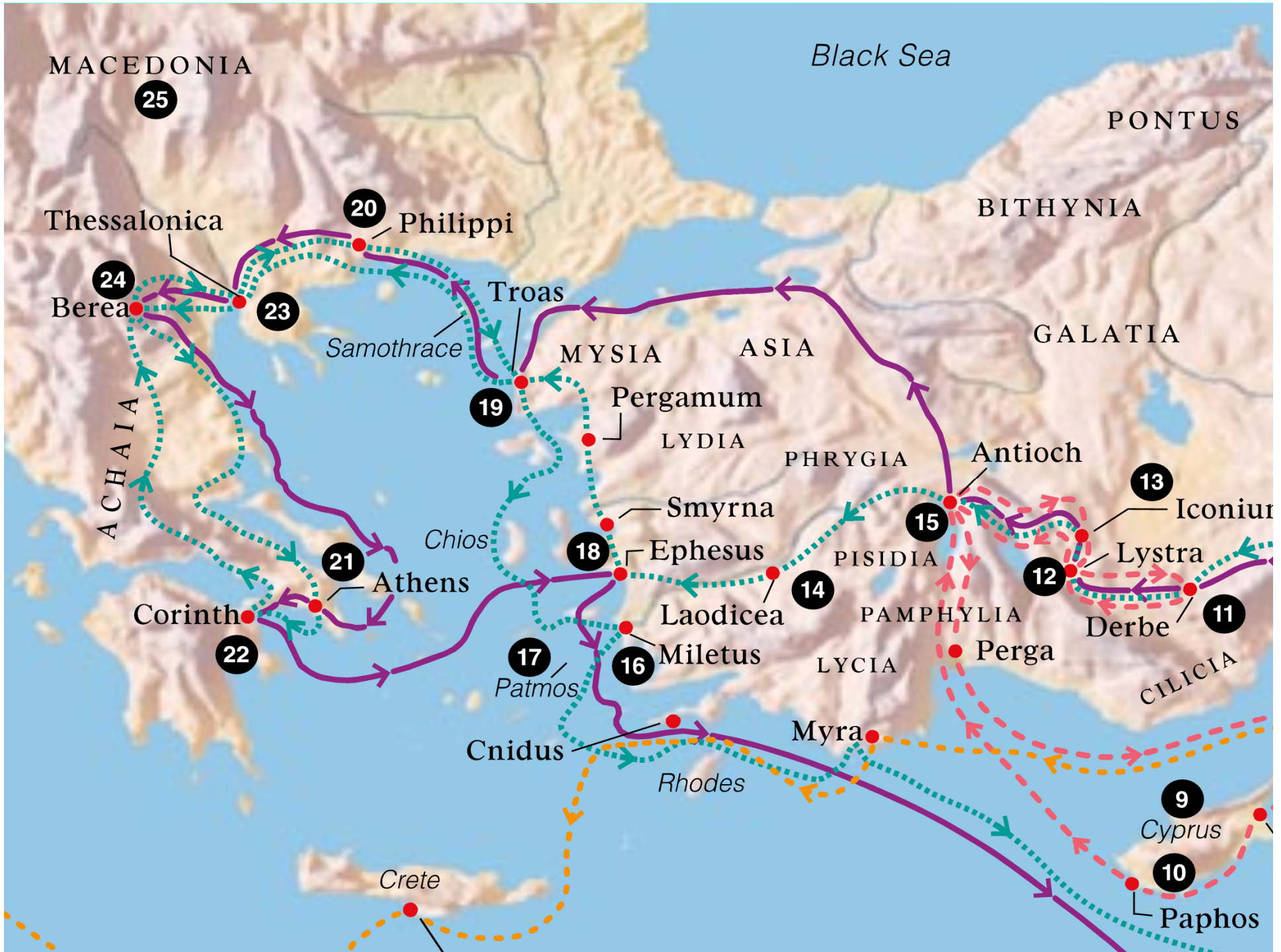


Miles

Kilometers

Background of Corinth (con't)

- Paul visited Corinth on 2nd missionary journey and founded church (Acts 18)
- Wrote 4 letters; 1 Cor & 2 Cor are the 2nd and 4th. 1st letter alluded to in 1 Cor 5:9-11. 3rd letter alluded to in 2 Cor 2:6-9, 7:12.
- 2 Cor written from Macedonia
- Text likely takes place during 3rd missionary journey after 3-year teaching and evangelistic ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19, 20)
- Could not find Titus at Troas, went on to Macedonia (2 Cor 2:12-13)
- Finally finds Titus at Macedonia (2 Cor 7:5-6)



2 Cor 2:14-17

14 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. **15** For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. **16** To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task? **17** Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.

Triumphal Procession

- Roman Triumph
- Victorious generals marched through the streets
- City magistrates, state officials, Roman senate and trumpeters
- Soldiers carrying battle spoils
- White bull for sacrifice
- Captive rulers, princes and generals in chains, to be executed or for further display
- Musicians and priests swinging their censers with sweet smelling incense
- General with his family and army followed with shouts of triumph

The Victorious Captive

- Partners in victory and triumph OR Defeated enemies and captives?
- Col 2:15 – Triumphant over them by the cross
- Prisoner of Christ Jesus (Philemon 1)
- Servant of Jesus, or doulos (slave)
- 1 Cor 4:9 – Apostles put on display, condemned to die, made a spectacle

Roman Triumph	Christ's Triumph
No share in victory	Share in victory
Victory over captives	Victory over captives
Victory against captives	Victory for captives
Bondage & Death	Freedom & Life

Spread the Knowledge of Christ

- Imagery switches from a captive in chains to a priest swinging his censer
- God wants to use us to spread everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Jesus Christ
- 1 Cor 15:3-4 – For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

Aroma of Christ

- Imagery switches from a priest swinging his censer to the aroma from the incense itself
- In the OT, pleasing aroma result from a sacrifice to God of a burnt offering (Ex 29:18, 25, Lev 1:9, 13, 17)
- Phil 4:18 – Gifts sent to Paul were a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God
- Eph 5:1-2 – Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God
- The aroma of Christ is the aroma of Christ's obedient sacrifice in his life, death and resurrection, according to the will of the Father
- To be the aroma of Christ, we must have Christ in our lives

Smell of Death / Fragrance of Life

- Victors and captives of the Roman Triumph
- 1 Cor 1:18 – For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God
- To those who are saved or being saved, gospel of Christ is the fragrance of life because it signifies life now and life eternally with Christ.
- To those who are perishing or reject the gospel, gospel of Christ is the smell of death because it signifies and leads to their ultimate judgment of death and destruction

Who is Equal to such a Task?

- Who is sufficient for these things? (NKJV)
- 2 Cor 3:5 – Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.

No Peddling!

- To corrupt, to adulterate. To preach for selfish ends, to trade in the word of God.
- Diluting wine with water to increase profits (Isa 1:22)
- Methods, message and motives of these false teachers were wrong

Ministry of Reconciliation

- God has given us the ministry of reconciliation and has committed to us the message of reconciliation
- 2 Cor 5:20-21 – We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Do you Smell like Christ?

- We smell like who we've been around
- Acts 4:13 – Peter and John had been with Jesus
- Do I put on other aromas?

Be Reconciled with God!

- But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8)
- God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21)
- Now is the day of salvation (2 Cor 6:2)