

How You Can Celebrate Christ's Victory in Your Life

Recently, two of my grandsons and I were watching the movie *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. I have fond memories of my kids mimicking Jim Carey in his role as the Grinch. One of our favorite lines in the movie is when the Grinch says to his dog, Max, "One man's toxic waste is another man's potpourri."

As I've been thinking about that silly little line, my thoughts went to Jesus. In every way, He entered our toxic waste and turned it into potpourri. The apostle Paul wrote, "But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of Him everywhere" (2 Cor. 2:14, NIV). Paul is using the example of the Roman triumphal procession, which was a victory march for the conquering army. The commander would march out front, while the victors and the captives were all part of the triumphant parade. Basically, the commander would parade his captives before the town. Accompanying the parade and celebration was the smell of burning spices.

In our lives, Jesus Christ is the victor. He parades us as captives before the evil one who would dare to accuse us. We follow Him carrying the spoils of the fight. Perhaps the spoils are addictions Christ has conquered for us. Or maybe, abuse that Christ has healed in us. Or maybe the spoil of a stinky, rotten attitude that Christ has transformed. Or patterns of lying that have been transformed into truth. As we march in Christ's parade and sing His praises, our toxic waste—the sins that held us captive—no longer controls us. Instead, we follow our victor and sing songs of praise. In every sense, we become the aroma of Christ to the world around us.

Implications of This Truth for Us at Christmas

You have worth. Jesus came into the world to restore His relationship with you and to invite you into His victorious parade. You've been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20). You have worth and value. Sometimes, for one reason or another, people struggle with their worth around the holidays. Maybe it's because of comparison or all the advertising that happens during this time. Many seem to be asking, "Am I enough?" Jesus came to answer that question. You are worth everything to Him. That is why He came: to buy you back for Himself.

You have been set free. Jesus has won the victory over all sin and unrighteousness in your life. Don't go back. March in Christ's parade as though you're free—the truth is, you are free! Because of Christ's death and resurrection, you've been set free from every sin that once held you captive. You are now a captive to Christ. All the chains are gone. March with joy, friend! Celebrate the victory that's yours in Christ.

You have purpose. As a captive of Christ, you now live for one purpose: to be the aroma of Christ to the world. May I ask you this Christmas, *What kind of aroma are you sharing with the world?* Do people know you for what you are against or for your loving attitude toward them? No one is really won to Christ by a great lecture. They are led to Christ because they are attracted to the loving attitude they experience. This Christmas, as you gather with family and friends, as you pass people on the street, be the sweet-smelling aroma of Christ to them.

Remember, friend: As a captive of Christ, He takes your toxic waste and turns it into sweet-smelling potpourri.

Merry Christmas to each of you! May you know and experience all the joy of marching victoriously in Christ's triumphant parade! {eo}

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This article originally appeared at .