

The aroma of Christ in the Believer

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Date: 06 August 2023

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[0 : 00] Amen and blessings to you all this morning. Trust that we've been inspired already and sensed and felt Jesus.

That's what it's all about, is to hear from Him, hear His voice, hear His word, and to worship Him like we heard.

I appreciate what was shared this morning about worship, Brother Enos. I'd like to talk today about the aroma of Christ in the believer and about what that means, I guess.

Yes, we're early. I don't have a long message. So, hopefully you can stay awake and hear what the Lord wants to speak to us.

Hopefully it'll encourage you as a believer. If you're not a believer and Christ is not flowing through you, then you can do. We know the effect that it has on us when we're around something that smells very good.

[1 : 29] A sweet smell. One of my favorite smells in this life, physically speaking, is lilacs.

I don't know if God made a better one. That's just my opinion. That's it. My nose held me. And I just love lilacs in the spring.

Kind of envy they want for people that have lots of them. But that's okay. That's a good kind of envy, right? And I was thinking this morning about how good it is to be somewhere where it smells good. Did you ever think about that? The difference between sitting in a spring breeze and there's lilac in full bloom versus sitting next to a separate thing that's open.

It has a very different effect on you. One, you want to get away. And the other, you just like to stay a while longer. Right?

[2 : 43] I just had to think of this morning, think of the time that Ellie and I were out for dinner. At a very, one of her favorite places to eat.

And we decided to sit outside. It was a beautiful evening and they gave us that privilege. We had outside seating, so we sat outside. But they didn't tell us that they had been working next door and had been digging and opened up the sewer system in the town.

And there we are trying to eat her favorite dinner. No lilacs. Nothing nice about that, as you can imagine.

So the Bible talks about a sweet savor of Christ. So I want to give you that word picture of something that smells very, very good versus not.

So let's look at a few scriptures here this morning. You can turn your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 5. And the verse that I wanted to look at first was in 2 Corinthians 2.

[4 : 01] Verse 15 says, For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish.

That is a deep verse. But we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ. Now in Ephesians chapter 5, I'm going to read most of the chapters here.

Starting in verse 1. Be therefore followers of God as dear children, 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 sweet-smelling savor.

He has given himself as an offering and a sacrifice to God as a sweet-smelling savor.

But fornication and uncleanness and covetousness, let it not once be named among you as becometh saints. He's saying here that don't even question.

[5 : 16] Don't even. It shouldn't even be named. Not once. Among you. Neither filthiness nor foolish talking.

What about that one? Nor jesting nor joking in foolish ways, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.

For this you know, that no whoremonger nor unclean person nor covetous man who is an idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

So there in that verse he says, not only don't do these things, but don't be a partaker. How can we be a partaker in those things?

[6 : 13] Maybe. Somebody says a dirty joke, we don't laugh. We don't partake. It's not funny to laugh. Right? Used to laugh about those things, but as a believer, it's not funny.

I'm not going to take part of that. That's just one area. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. I believe Paul here is saying to the Galatian church that this is an area to be separate.

You know, a lot of us grew up in cultures that had a very strong emphasis on being separate. Being separate from the world and not being part of the world.

And yet, when it comes to these things, we were just as worldly as they were. But here he says, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

[7 : 31] Don't even fellowship with it. Don't have any part of it. But rather, reprove them. Now what does that say? Reprove them.

In other words, correct them. Maybe sometimes it's not even with words. Maybe sometimes it's just by how we live. Our godly way of life.

Maybe our silence. But it does say to reprove them, and I would tend to believe that most of the time it means saying something. We are to reprove the unfruitful works of darkness.

To stand against. To speak against. Say, no, I can't do that. Sometimes it could just be a one line. Just a simple reprove.

Verse 12 says, For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light.

[8 : 42] See, that's why we reprove. It's because it makes manifest. It exposes. By the light. For whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Now, Paul said this probably close to 2,000 years ago, and he called the days, the time he was living in, evil.

And if the days were evil then, how much more evil are they today? What are we doing with our time? That God gives us. Time is a gift.

We're not promised tomorrow. So time is a gift from God. What are we doing with it? Are we using the gift of time for the purposes of God? For the kingdom of God?

[9 : 47] Is this aroma of Christ, we want to look at that, is it flowing through us? As we think about the gift of time and the time that we are in.

Wherefore, in verse 17, Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves one to another and the fear of God.

Verse 17, Wherefore be ye not unwise? You know, what I just read here in the last few verses, I believe are commandments for the Christian.

They are commandments that apply to us today. To not be unwise. What is that saying? How are you not wise or unwise?

So if you're not unwise, what are you? Anybody? Why? So it means we need, it's just another way of saying, or having a call to wisdom.

[11 : 21] We need wisdom. Today. Not wise in our own eyes or our own understanding, but the wisdom that comes from God.

That's what he's, that's the call on this verse. That we are not unwise, but that we understand what the will of the Lord is. And if God is saying that to us in his word, then it's not impossible.

If he gives us a commandment, then he also gives us the provision. He doesn't command you to do something, Jeffrey, and then says, but I won't tell you how.

Right? He always, whenever there's a commandment, there's always a provision. And God will provide that for us.

Through his word, through walking with him, through fellowshiping with him, and fellowshiping with other believers, we can have that wisdom, and understand what the will of the Lord is.

[12:29] There's also a commandment in verse 18, it says, and be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit. Is that a commandment?

It says, to be filled with the Spirit. The Bible speaks much about the Spirit of God and walking in the Spirit, and we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

And we might look at this later, but there's a verse that says, well, right here it is, in Romans 8, verse 9, it says, I know I read that verse two weeks ago when I was preaching here, but that came to my mind as I was studying for this.

And here it says that without His Spirit, we are none of His. Do we have His Spirit? Does His Spirit have us?

Might be the better question. Does the Spirit of God have us? Let's look at a few more of these. In verse 19, we weren't quite done here.

[13:46] Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody, in your heart to the Lord. Is that a commandment? If the verse before it, the several verses before were commandments, we've agreed that they are.

What about this one? We heard about that this morning from Enos, our brother, about music. He didn't know I was going to preach this, I'm sure, but it says here, speaking to yourselves.

I think it means speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts.

Maybe it's just speaking to ourselves. I'm not sure. It could be that as well. But basically, it's worship. It's giving God glory through the focus of spiritual psalms and hymns.

Do we do that? Do we look at these things as commandments? They were commandments to the Galatian church. What about verse 20? Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[15:03] Giving thanks, you know, we read these so fast, don't we? We just read these verses. And we kind of think, well, yeah, okay, that's for sure. But, does it really settle in our hearts?

giving thanks always? Really? For all things? Unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, Christians are called to a higher standard. We're called to a higher standard than what we were before we were a Christian.

Before we were a Christian, this isn't even possible. You can't give thanks to God for all things all the time. But as a Christian, we can. God's calling is for that.

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. What about that? Is that a command? Submitting ourselves one to another in the fear of God.

[16:09] And then he commands us there in Romans to have the Spirit of God. Do we have that? If we don't, and if we don't walk in the Spirit, then it is not possible for us to have that fragrance, that sweet aroma of Jesus.

Let's look at Philippians chapter 4. You can turn if you want. There's one verse there I want to get in. Philippians 4 verse 18. And in this chapter, Paul was talking well about the church there at Philippi.

He was talking about how they took care of him and how they met his needs. He was blessing them in other words. And then in verse 18, he says, But I have all and abound.

I am full. Having received of Apocritus. I'm not sure how to say that. Apocritus.

Something like that. Yeah. Hard name for me. The things which were sent from you, you receive this from him, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

[17:41] I believe that God is calling his people to have a sweet fragrance coming from our lives.

And I know if you're like me, you think of your life and you go, wow, that's, is that really how it is? I got mad yesterday. I did something really bad or whatever.

And I'm sure it didn't smell so good to the people around me. Right? We can think of those things where maybe we haven't been walking right. Maybe we haven't been a blessing to those around us.

And as I think, as I was thinking of that and how that, you know, there's people that may have more of a, just a friendly character or a friendly, you know, they always seem to be happy and jolly and others are more serious, you know, a little quieter and more serious.

Others are more bubbly. I'm not talking about that necessarily. Although I think Christians should have more smiles. I think we should smile more.

[18 : 57] We should be happy and joyful. But I'm not talking about just the characteristic, but rather that we have the characteristic of Christ. And I want to look at some of that.

The Apostle Paul was also a man. You know, even though he says these things about this sweet fragrance of Jesus, he was also a man that was very adamant about truth.

And his heart was after Christ. One place he said he was a slave to Christ. He did not believe in a cheap gospel, but in a gospel that changed lives.

He was a man to think of Paul's testimony of him being a bitter man that was against Christ. He was persecuting the church, throwing them into prison to becoming one of the strongest advocates for Christ that probably existed in that day.

A true ambassador for Christ. He once called himself a chief of sinners. He became one of the godly, one of the most godly men that ever lived.

[20 : 18] Does your passion for truth and righteousness match that of the Apostle Paul? Is that your goal? Is that my goal? Do we have that desire to live a godly and a clean life and to be passionate about the things of God?

You know, the reason I bring this in about truth, being lovers of truth, as soon as we turn from truth, as soon as we take a step away, if you will, from truth, and we misrepresent Christ and His word, then the fragrance is not so good anymore.

In fact, it disappears quickly. And many are doing that in our day today, and yet they claim to be following Christ. They willfully disobey the word, they turn away from it, they say it doesn't matter, careless and loose living, and they don't represent Christ.

Words are just words. Jesus said in Matthew 7, if you would turn there, Matthew chapter 7, in verse 13, it says, Enter ye in at the straight gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, because straight is the gates and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?

[22 : 20] Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits you shall know them. That's why I said words fruits are just words, but fruits are fruits.

Then Jesus said these words, Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works. And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you.

Depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Wherefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock.

[23 : 39] If we are true ambassadors for Christ, we will be doers of the word. We won't just hear it, but we're going to be willing to be doers. And the rain descended, verse 25, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

That's exciting to me, that we can build our house upon a rock. How do we do it? By being a doer of the word. Verse 26, He's talking about people that hear but don't do.

As soon as we stop doing and following Christ and God's order, we become weak and we'll be blown around. when we see people changing their lifestyle and becoming less godly than they once were, what is that?

It's because they are not doers of the word, but hearers only. That's if they're even hearing. But their house will fall.

Verse 27, and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell and great was the fall of it. What a tragedy.

[25 : 18] You know, the pressures of this life, the winds are blowing and there's pressure. There's tremendous pressure, especially for young people in this generation.

there's more pressure today than there was 30 years ago, I believe. I don't know how it is to be 16. I know how it was when I was 16, 18, 20.

But there's a lot of pressure in this life. And the winds are blowing. The question is, will our house stand? Will we stand? Will we stay strong?

It depends if we're willing to be a doer or not. It's really simple. We're doer of the word and we take this word and we apply it to our lives and we walk in it, we'll be just fine.

This word is still powerful today. We can take great comfort in these words if we are lovers of truth. We must love the truth in order to do that.

[26 : 26] verse 28 says, And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.

It's amazing. You know, they didn't know who was speaking to them, did they? Hallelujah. It's not because he just taught with authority, it's because he was authority.

He is authority. He is their creator, the one that he was speaking to, the ones that he was talking to.

What are some things that hinder this fragrance of Christ in us?

But the one we covered, I think, now, and that is walking in truth. As soon as you walk away from the truth, don't expect the fragrance of Jesus to come forth.

It won't. It can't. What about a bitter heart or an envious heart? In Hebrews chapter 12 verse 14, I want to read verse 14 and 15.

[27 : 43] It says, Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord, looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God.

Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and therefore many be defiled. Justin, can you get me some water, please? Somebody told me last Sunday when I was preaching in Ohio, I can't remember how that was, but the preacher gets water that means he's going to preach along.

It's not really the case. Thank you. Like I said, I don't have a long message today, but back to this Hebrews verse.

looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God. It's not the grace of God that fails. The grace of God never fails us.

But it says here that if any man fail, the grace of God. It's the man, it's us that can fail. Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled.

[29 : 11] if we are troubled with a root of bitterness, not only does it take away the sweet aroma of Christ from us, but it has the potential of many being defiled.

I have seen that happen, where many were defiled by a root of bitterness. There's no sweetness in that.

There's no fragrance of Christ flowing in that. if we have a bitter or unforgiving heart. You know, the Bible says that out of the heart are the issues of life, that we're supposed to guard our heart, we're supposed to keep that stuff out of our heart.

God's heart. I might just say that I was talking with Mike and Mike Steery, your cousin, and he had this desire to not be bitter, and I just so appreciate that because that's a characteristic of Christ.

That's wanting to be like Christ and not to be bitter. Even when people say things falsely against us, to not become bitter. You know, the seriousness of having a right heart, a heart that's right with God, a heart that has the image of God.

[30 : 55] In Corinthians chapter 3, I think it's well, there's just one verse, I just want to read it.

Verse 18, it says, But we all with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

You know, as we come to Him and as we yield to Christ, and we give Him our heart, give Him our all, He changes us. He makes us like Himself.

The Bible says that we become in the same image. It's like a reflection of who Jesus is. is our life a reflection?

Is our image portraying Christ? When people see our life, do they see Jesus? And I have to say, we're honest, and we look back, for me anyway, there's many times that I missed that mark.

And I wish I would have been more Christ-like. Acts 4. Let's turn to Acts chapter 4.

[32 : 18] This is such a picture, such a powerful testimony, and yet it's so simple.

the apostles. Let's see, I think it's in verse, the verse I want is in Acts 4 verse 13.

But maybe I'll just read, maybe I'll just start reading in verse 5.

Peter's sermon for the council. And it came to pass on the morrow that their rulers and elders and scribes, and Annas, the high priest, and Cephas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priests, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, by what power or by what name have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole?

[33 : 45] Be it known unto all of you. They had just had, this man was healed. Be it known unto all of you, and to the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand here before you whole.

This is the stone which is set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Hallelujah. That's the verse I wanted. Do people take knowledge that we have been with Jesus? Jesus. That is the challenge for us.

You know, we might be like Peter and John, kind of ignorant sometimes, right? We don't know everything. And remember, they were fishermen.

[35 : 10] They weren't highly educated people. We read the scriptures and we sometimes, maybe in our minds, we think that the men that wrote these were just so educated and so fluent and so smart.

And they became some of those things, yes, as they walked with Christ. But it says they realized that these men were, how does it say, they were unlearned.

And they called them, they thought they were ignorant. and they marveled. Why? Because the influence of Jesus was in them. The Spirit of God was in them.

They had a boldness, they were empowered. And this should be an encouragement to any of us, to all of us. That verse should be very encouraging, especially when we're tempted to be intimidated by others.

Maybe you don't have all the talent somebody else does, or maybe you can't speak as well as somebody else, or you just don't have all those gifts. Well, neither did they.

[36 : 23] It says they were ignorant men. It doesn't say they were, it says they perceived they were. But they had a boldness. And I believe that there was a love flowing from them.

Those are things we can have. We can have love, we can have peace, joy in our heart. Those are all things that God puts in there when we're a believer.

And we don't have to know a whole lot otherwise. What about joy? The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Is there joy bubbling out of our lives? Other people can see that. Do they perceive that we too have been with Jesus?

We have met the Son of God, our Redeemer. We've had a revelation of who He is. And are we becoming the image of the Son?

[37 : 25] Love, mercy, long suffering, gentleness, lowliness of mind. These are all things that Jesus had. No reputation.

It says He made Himself of no reputation. Those are things we struggle with from time to time. Jesus said that if we don't deny ourselves and take up our cross, we can't be His disciples.

We're not worthy of Him, Jesus said, about laying down our rights. When we do these things, we will have that fragrance that we're talking about, that sweet smelling Savior of Jesus.

To be more like Him. Is that our desire? To be more like Him? The question is, are we willing to be more surrendered to Him?

That's what makes us like Him. He does the work. We don't have to do the work. We just need to surrender and lay everything down at the foot of the cross.

[38 : 37] Is our life fulfilled and full of joy? I'd like to get a song book here. My wife picked a song this morning that really spoke to me.

She didn't know what my message is even, I think. I think it was 387 in this book. I just want to read that.

It's a familiar song. But as we think about a heart, and as we think about this fragrance, the fragrance of Jesus coming out of our lives, to those around us, that song, Oh, for a heart to praise my God, a heart from sin set free, a heart that sprinkled with the blood so freely shed for me.

Verse 2 is a heart resigned, submissive meek, my dear Redeemer's throne. You get that?

My dear Redeemer's throne. Not my throne, but it's the place where my Redeemer is, where only Christ is heard to speak, where Jesus reigns alone.

[39 : 59] Powerful words from Charles Wesley. Verse 3, a heart in every thought renewed, and full of love divine, perfect and right, and pure and good, a copy, Lord, of thine.

I ought to sing that one again, as this so precious. take copy, Lord, that image that we're talking about. Verse 4 is an humble, lowly, contrite heart, believing, true and clean, which neither life nor death can part from him that dwells within.

Verse 5, the last verse, thy nature, gracious Lord, impart. Come quickly from above. Write thy new name upon my heart, thy new best name of love.

Is that our prayer, that we would have the nature of Christ? We sang that this morning. Did we really mean it? Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart.

If you were helping sing, you sang that song. come quickly from above. Write thy new name upon my heart. I just, so much depth in that song.

[41 : 26] Is the sweet aroma of Christ coming through when we are working? I usually end with some questions, so I have a few.

But when we are working, when we're at home, when we travel, when those pressures of life are pressing in, when things go wrong, things just get messed up sometimes.

You know, and by having a selfish attitude, I've learned, I'm trying to learn this, never fixes a thing. so we might as well have the joy of the Lord, even when things go wrong, right?

Things go really wrong and they get messed up, tools break, whatever. Have you ever thought about that? Getting upset just doesn't fix it anyway. Makes it worse, actually.

And there's no sweet aroma. But there can be. You know, we get together on Sunday, like that seventh day we get together and that's when we're our best, right?

[42 : 47] Just leave all those things that trouble us behind and get together to worship the Lord and sing praise and hear free and we're pretty good.

But the real test is those other six days. For sure five. right for us men when we work. What about when we see what sin does to our loved ones and we get really discouraged and maybe frustrated? Is there still a fragrance of Jesus? What about when we disagree? What about when we're falsely accused and we're persecuted for what we believe?

Jesus said that they persecuted me, they're going to persecute you. Is there still a fragrance? By the way, that scripture we read there in Acts, if I remember right, they were actually being held overnight, I think.

I'd have to read it again, but in verse 3 it says, and they laid hands on them and put them in hold unto the next day. But they still knew that these men were with Jesus.

[44 : 07] How would I be under that test? You know, when we're spitefully used. How are we? When we are misunderstood, when we face these many things, in our family and those around us, still see that we have been with Jesus.

We spend time with Him. We become like Him. The question is, have we been with Jesus?

Do we spend time with Him? Do we truly know Him and does He know us? Are we allowing Him to make us into His image?

into a picture of Jesus where we have that sweet aroma, that fragrance. You just want to stay a while longer.

Let's pray. continue. Imagine on us.

[45 : 22] of need to see