**THE FRAGRANCE OF CHRIST**

**II Corinthians 2:12-17**

**Introduction- As I have traveled the world, one of my many encounters in places I have landed are the smells that greet you. Unless our “smeller” is not working correctly, we encounter smells of various kinds. Take for instance places with open sewage or the fragrance of home-grown flowers. Perhaps, you have a favorite perfume or cologne. Maybe you have been in a travel situation where someone next to you have severe body odor? I have been in ministry situations with children that have not bathed for weeks. They want to be hugged and sit right next to you! It requires grace from God.**

**Power Point- We all have an aroma flowing out of us. We are a fragrance of Christ or we are a bad smelling odor.**

**Paul, the apostle, was searching for a much-loved brother named Titus. He was a needed partner in the ministry. The Lord had opened a door for the gospel in Troas and greater Macedonia. Macedonia is the eastern part of Greece with Ephesus as the main city. When he came to Troas looking for him, Titus was not there. Paul took his leave to find his disciple and team. If you read additional history, how Paul found him was amazing. Paul began to go from town to town and found the fruit of the gospel through Titus and his team. Eventually, he found him ministering in a small town. For Paul, people were always more important that ministry. Paul continued to minister, but built and equipped his teams to do the ministry. He tried to take care of them. As Paul searched for Titus, he makes a powerful proclamation. As Paul saw the evidence of the gospel, he greatly rejoiced and the trail of fruit led him to Titus. Paul erupted in thanks to God!**

1. **\*Christ always leads us in His triumph**

 **A. The imagery of a Roman triumph procession…**

 **B. How this applies to us in Christ… [Colossians 2:13-15]**

 **=We always triumph in His name! Do not take no or defeat for an answer.**

1. **\*He manifests His sweet aroma through us**

**A. Of our intimate knowledge of Him [Relationship, not religion or ritual]**

**Illustration= Lois, an 87 years old lady about to die…**

**B. In every place… My testimony on the ship and in the Victoria Canada hospital**

 **III. \* We are a fragrance (first to God) then to those we encounter**

1. **To those being saved: loving, kind, patient when wronged, gracious and believing the best…**

**=Illustration- How the veterinarian helped my beagle when he had been hit by a car**

1. **To those who are perishing: they may resist the truth or mock you a bit, but they need to hear it**

**1. We need to have “crucial conversations”. They are courteous, courageous, and deal with the crucial.**

**2. Follow Matthew 18 and Romans 12**

 **IV. \*We are two kinds of aromas: We are not adequate in ourselves; it is Christ flowing out of us.**

**A. From death to death to those who are perishing. One day, the Lord may flash our encounter with someone as we are sharing and they are rejecting.**

 **B. From life to life: Dr. Jenny on the boat…**

 **V. \*God looks at our heart and motives for why we share the gospel**

 **A. Peddlers corrupting/twisting the word for profit**

 **B. We serve an audience of One and share because of what has happened to us… testimonies/gospel**

**Conclusion- Missaha and I had a unique experience 15 years ago when we visited a Holy Spirit outpouring in Lakeland Florida. We were in a gathering of 4000+ people and had been worshipping the Lord with all our hearts for an hour. Suddenly, everything became very quiet and still. What followed was a sign and wonder! The entire room began to fill with the fragrance of the Lord. It was the fragrance of lilacs. People began to proclaim all through the crowd, “do you smell that?” It was indeed the wonderful presence of the Lord manifesting in our midst. Many of us without being guided began to find our knees and some even laid on the floor face down. Something was imparted to us during that time. A seed of grace and patience increased toward people. Instead of anger, self-control was released in new measure. Instead of finding quickly people’s short-comings and doctrinal issues with a critical spirit, I learned to love. It has led to numerous conversations around God’s word and genuine Godly changes are taking place. The fragrance I was manifesting took on a new smell. The Holy Spirit began a journey working the characteristics of love in my spirit and soul.**

**How about you? Do you need a fragrance change in your life and flowing out of your life? Let us ask the Holy Spirit if He wants to spot-lite anything needing to be dealt with. Then, I will pray the blessing of Christ’s fragrance over us.**