

**Matthew 5:4 NIV**

<sup>5</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

**1. What's that smell?**

**2 Corinthians 2:14-16 NIV**

<sup>14</sup> But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. <sup>15</sup> **For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.** <sup>16</sup> To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task?

In John MacArthur's commentary on 2 Corinthians, he wrote, "The call to the ministry is an invitation to unparalleled blessing and unequalled privilege. But at the same time, it is an invitation to discouragement, difficulty, sorrow, pain, and despair. Every pastor, no matter how richly blessed his ministry may be, knows those dark times when he is disheartened and downcast. No less a man of God than Charles Spurgeon wrote" <sup>1</sup>,

"Fits of depression come over the most of us. Usually cheerful as we may be, we must at intervals be cast down. The strong are not always vigorous, the wise not always ready, the brave not always courageous, and the joyous not always happy. There may be here and there men of iron, to whom wear and tear work no perceptible detriment, but surely the rust frets even these; and as for ordinary men, the Lord knows, and makes them to know, that they are but dust." <sup>2</sup>

MacArthur continued, "The **sweet aroma** of the Triumph arose from the incense-filled censers carried by the priests in the parade and from the garlands of flowers that were thrown into the streets. The fragrance speaks of influence; Paul's point is that God, in wonderful condescending grace and mercy, **manifests through** believers **the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Christ in every place**. He uses human preachers to give off the **sweet aroma** of the gospel, to influence people with the saving **knowledge** of Christ.

In the Triumph, the emperor seated on his great throne at the capitol smelled the fragrant aroma of the incense when it reached him at the end of the parade. Paul likens the preacher's ministry to **a fragrance of Christ to God**. Although a preacher proclaims the gospel to men, it is in reality God who is his audience. His faithful gospel ministry causes the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Christ to be manifest to people, but the **fragrance** of that gospel ministry ascends to the very throne of **God**.

Pleasing God was the consuming passion of Paul's heart." <sup>3</sup>

**2 Corinthians 5:9 NIV**

<sup>9</sup> So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur. (2017). *1 & 2 Corinthians MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set*. Moody Publishers, Chapter 5.

<sup>2</sup> Spurgeon, Charles. The Minister's Fainting Fits, in *Lectures to My Students, First Series* [Reprint; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980], 167

<sup>3</sup> John MacArthur. (2017). *1 & 2 Corinthians MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set*. Moody Publishers, Chapter 5.

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Paul encouraged / challenged others in a similar manner.

**Galatians 1:10 NIV**

<sup>10</sup> Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

**Ephesians 5:1-20 NIV** (emphasis added)

<sup>1</sup> Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children <sup>2</sup> and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

<sup>3</sup> But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. <sup>4</sup> Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup> For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. <sup>7</sup> Therefore do not be partners with them.

<sup>8</sup> For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) <sup>10</sup> and **find out what pleases the Lord**. <sup>11</sup> Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. <sup>12</sup> It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. <sup>14</sup> This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

<sup>15</sup> Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but **understand what the Lord's will is**. <sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reread verse 13; “But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light.” Consider the moon, it is incapable of providing light on it's own. It's light comes from the sun. We are very much the same in that we are incapable of providing light on our own. Any light that comes from us if from the Lord.

**Colossians 1:9-14 NIV** (emphasis added)

<sup>9</sup> For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually **ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will** through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, <sup>10</sup> so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: **bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God**, <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, <sup>12</sup> and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. <sup>13</sup> For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 NIV** (emphasis added)

<sup>1</sup> You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results. <sup>2</sup> We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition. <sup>3</sup> For the appeal we

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make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. <sup>4</sup> On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. **We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.** <sup>5</sup> You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. <sup>6</sup> We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. <sup>7</sup> Instead, we were like young children among you.

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, <sup>8</sup> so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. <sup>9</sup> Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. <sup>10</sup> You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. <sup>11</sup> For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, <sup>12</sup> encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

**1 Thessalonians 4:1 NIV** (emphasis added)

<sup>1</sup> As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to **live in order to please God**, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

In the John MacArthur Commentary, John MacArthur says, “While it always pleased God, the **fragrance of Christ** from Paul’s preaching had a twofold effect on the people who heard it. To **those who are being saved**, the **fragrance** of apostolic preaching was **an aroma from life to life**. These are the elect and redeemed people of God, who are headed for full and final glorification. On the other hand, the same message was to **those who are perishing**—those unbelieving sinners destined for eternal damnation—**an aroma from death to death**. In the Roman Triumph, both the victors, who were to be honored, and the vanquished, who were to be executed, smelled the aroma from the priests’ censers. To the former, it symbolized their victory; to the latter, their impending deaths. When God’s Word is faithfully preached, it will accomplish His purpose.” <sup>4</sup>

**Isaiah 55:11 NIV**

<sup>11</sup> so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

**2. Repentance and Sin**

In the John MacArthur Commentary, John MacArthur says, “Godly sorrow is linked to **repentance** and **repentance** is linked to sin.” <sup>5</sup>

“Repentance is agreeing with God about your sin” – David Glass

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<sup>4</sup> John MacArthur. (2017). *1 & 2 Corinthians MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set*. Moody Publishers, Chapter 5.

<sup>5</sup> MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur Bible Commentary : Unleashing God’s Truth, One Verse at a Time*, 157.

**Psalm 30:5 NIV**

<sup>5</sup> For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

**3. Forgiveness and Reconciliation**

Reconciliation:

- Does not happen without confession.
- Requires forgiveness. It is our responsibility to forgive, regardless of the response of the other person.
- Does not guarantee restoration.

**James 5:16 NIV**

<sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

**4. Sin Less vs. Sinless**

Can I live a sinless life? Can I live a sinless day? While an impossible task, I can strive for it. A great start is to sin less.

**5. Questions**

1. Does joy come when things go perfectly, or when we are in perfect communion with God?
2. Do we grieve our own sin, or just that of others?
3. Am I broken, or simply embarrassed? A better way to ask that is, am I sorry for what I did, or sorry I got caught?

**6. Challenge**

1. Don't be sorry, be different. If I find myself apologizing for the same thing over and over, it might be a good idea to look at myself and see what I might need to do differently.
2. Pray about sin you need to confess; repent of that sin and mourn over it if necessary.
3. Pray for the Lord to reveal any opportunity you have where you need to confess and repent to someone else to work towards forgiveness, reconciliation, and ultimately restoration.

**Bibliography**

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