

A Fragrant Aroma

in. 12:1-3

Introduction:

- A. When I lived in Arkansas, a skunk was disturbed on the front steps and thus decided to spray the one who disturbed it. Those steps were wooden, and they absorbed the smell quite easily. In fact, they absorbed it so well that five years later it was still there every time it rained. And no, Tomato Juice does not remove the order.
- B. At the other end of the spectrum, the smell of Apple pies baking of fills the whole house with the wonderful smell of cinnamon. Smell is one of our acutest senses.
(Read text)
- C. John's statement seems to suggest that Mary's ointment had quality, but it also implies that it left something distinctive with the people there. In a similar way, our lives leave something distinctive with the people with whom we associate.
- D. So, the question is, how can we be a fragrant aroma?

I. We Must Learn To Follow Christ - Eph. 5:1-2

- A. It is certainly Jesus wish - Matt. 16:24
 - 1. But how do we follow Christ?
 - 2. It's more than just walking around after Him
 - 3. It means doing what He says--denying ourselves or subrogating our own desires to Him and taking up the cross or being willing to bear any burden that He demands
- B. The idea of following Christ is sometimes illustrated by the relationship of sheep to the shepherd - Jn. 10:11-15,27-28
 - 1. 1st, the sheep hear his voice, so they can know what he wants them to do
 - a. The only way that we can hear the voice of Jesus is to listen to His written word that we might learn and know it
 - 1. 2nd, the sheep follow him
 - a. When he calls, they come
 - b. When Jesus tells us to do something, we must do it
- C. The primary reason that Jesus left heaven and came to earth was to die for our sins that we might be saved, but He also came to show us how God wants us to live by the way that He lived on earth - 1 Pet. 2:21-23
 - 1. He left us an example that we should follow in His steps
 - 2. When we do that, we'll be a fragrant aroma before both God and man

II. We Must Determine To Be A Good Influence To Others -2 Cor. 2:14-16

- A. Jesus Himself taught us the importance of our influence - Matt. 5:14-16 1.
We're to be like salt which makes food taste better and like light which shows the way
- B. To maintain a good influence, there's the positive aspect of trying to be an example to others - 1 Tim. 4:12
- C. But there's also the negative aspect of making sure that we refrain from that which would harm our influence with others - 1 Pet. 2:11-12

1. When we think about influence, we often speak of being the salt of the earth or letting our lights shine
2. But we might also consider how "aromatic" our lives smell to others

III. *We Must Be Willing To Help Others* - Phil. 4:14-18

- A. One obvious way is to provide aid, as we have ability and opportunity, to those in need - Matt. 25:31-46
- B. While Jesus makes it clear that this is important, as Christians we have something else that's even more important that we can give to help others, and that's the gospel of salvation - Acts 5:41-42, 8:4
- C. The point is that instead of always thinking about ourselves, we need to be thinking about others and how we can help meet their needs in this life - Phil. 2:1-8
 1. A selfish, ego-centric person just doesn't "smell" right to others
 2. But a person who's willing to give and help people leaves a good smell for Christ

Conclusion:

- A. Notice what Paul says in Phil. 2:12-16. He is talking about the kind of influence that God wants His people to have in this world. As Christians, we need to determine, as some of the old-timers used to pray, we'll do as much good and as little harm as possible, so that we can be a fragrant aroma in this world rather than leaving a bad smell.
- B. Of course, to have a fragrant aroma for Christ, a person must first be a follower of Christ, a Christian, and one can't do that until he's been forgiven of the sin that separates him from Christ. We've all sinned and deserve death, but God loved us enough to provide forgiveness of sin through Christ that we might have life--and all we need to do is to obey His will (Heb. 5:8-9).