Christians Stink!

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday February 3rd, 2019

Text: II Cor. 2:14-17

### Intro

1. Jn. 11:39: When Jesus asked for the removal of the stone covering Lazarus’ tomb, the response was, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead for four days” (NKJ)
2. The stench of death—Not pleasant for those who have experienced it.
   1. Perhaps many have experienced the odor from the death of an animal, but how many have experienced the stench of death from a human body, or know someone who has?
   2. Those who have been involved in the removal of bodies that have been dead for several days have described the stench of death as a retched, almost unbearable smell.
3. Mt. 5:13-16: We are all aware that Christians are the salt and light of the world, but few are aware that the Lord through Paul speaks of the “smell” which comes from Christians.
4. II Cor. 2:14: Paul (through the Spirit) speaks of the fragrance of Christianity: “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place” (NKJ). (NAS: “sweet aroma”)
5. As saints, there is an “aroma” we spread as we give others knowledge of God and His will!

#### Saints: The Fragrance of Christ

* 1. II Cor. 2:15: “For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.”
     1. The “smell” of Christians is a beautiful aroma to those we are leading to Christ, but we also are to God the fragrance of Christ!
  2. The Saint’s responsibility to the world is to teach it the gospel, while remaining separate from the world! *(II Jn. 2:15-17)*
  3. II Tim. 2:24: The Lord’s bond-servant is “able to teach.”
     1. The phrase, “able to teach” means the individual is “skillful in teaching” (Vines); “apt to teach,” “instructive” *(G1317 didaktikos [did-ak-tik-os']).*
     2. In order to be “skillful in teaching” or “able to teach” one must know what one is teaching. (To know what to teach, one must study)
     3. II Tim. 2:15: To accurately handle the word of truth, you must study to know what it contains, to teach it, to defend it, and to not be led astray by error.
     4. Not everyone can be or desires to be a teacher (or should be), but saints ought to be able to defend or “answer” questions of faith (Js. 3:1-2; I Pet. 3:15).
     5. Heb. 5:14: The mature servant, through practice, has their senses trained to discern good from evil. (The Hebrews audience should have been teachers but instead, they themselves had need of being taught the basics again!)
     6. II Tim. 2:26; Jude 23: Saints teach to save people from condemnation! *(II Cor. 5:10-11: Out of fear of the judgment we “persuade men.”)*
  4. II Cor. 6:16-7:1: Be separate – “Come out from their midst…” *(From Is. 52:11: Judah to be different)*
     1. 6:18: Those that do become God’s children: “I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me.” *(From II Sam. 7:14: Promise to David)*
     2. Not love it – *I Jn. 2:15-17*
     3. Not be conformed to it – *Rom. 12:1-2*
     4. Keep unspotted from it – *Js. 1:27*
     5. Be against it – *Eph. 6:12*
     6. Be as “aliens and strangers” – *I Pet. 2:11*
  5. In teaching the world the gospel, & being *in* it but not *of* it, saints are “the Fragrance of Christ!”

#### Saints: The Aroma of Death

* 1. Then, what does the title, “Christians Stink!,” have to do with all of this? If we are the “fragrance of Christ” to God and to those who are being saved, then how is it that Christians stink? Look at the next words Paul expresses…
  2. II Cor. 2:16: “To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life” (NKJ).
  3. Jn. 3:19: Jesus said, “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.”
  4. As we spread the fragrance of the knowledge of the Lord, it is beautiful to some, but to many the same words are the stench of death!
     1. As we live among men and the light of heaven shines through us, that beautiful aroma from heaven is to the wicked as horrendous as the stench of death.
     2. Jn. 3:20: Jesus describes the man who practices evil and hates the light. He refuses the light “for fear that his deeds will be exposed.”
  5. Jesus told His followers that they would be hated without a cause.
     1. Jn. 15:18-19, 25; 17:14: The world hated Him so would hate His followers.
     2. *Jn. 15:19:* “If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.”
  6. The world is filled with people who are unreasonable and unfair.
     1. II Thess. 3:1-2: From lack of faith, men will commit evil deeds to those who preach the word of God.
  7. Those who belong to the world will think you are strange!
     1. *I Pet. 4:1-5:* Once separated from former ways of sinful life, there are some who will try to bring you back, and when you don’t, they think you strange.
     2. *II Tim. 3:12:* Those that desire to live godly will be persecuted.
  8. In doing what Christ commanded: to be salt and light to the world, the world will “smell” saints as “the Aroma of Death!” *(As reprehensible as the “stench of death!”)*

## Conclusion

1. II Cor. 2:17: Despite what people think of saints, we are NOT to spread a “corrupted” word of God (KJV) but speak the word of God as from God (I Pet. 4:11).
   1. NAS, NKJ use “peddling”: *G2585 kapēleuō [kap-ale-yoo'-o]:* From *kapēlos* (a huckster); to retail (peddle), that is, (by implication) to adulterate (figuratively): - corrupt.
2. Saints are to live *in* the world but *not be of* the world:
   1. *I Pet. 1:14-16:* Saints are to “be holy” as God is holy!
   2. *I Pet. 2:5-10:* Know our relationships to God – special to Him, different from the world!
   3. *Jn. 17:14-16:* Jesus said His disciples could not be removed from the world – had to live in it, but are not of the world – just as He is not of the world!
   4. ***So we live in the world but are not to be part of the world!***
3. God expects us to be conformed to His Son and not the world. *(Rom. 8:28-30)*
   1. *Mt. 5:14-16:* Be lights to the world! (*Rom. 12:2:* Do not be conformed to the world!)
4. If your life is ruled by political correctness and your desire is to be loved by all those around you, you will “smell” good to most people.
5. But as saints, as our lives and speech uphold righteousness we must expect the ungodly to react to us as most react to the stench of decaying bodies.
6. We are told that to some, “Christians Stink!” (II Cor. 2:14-16)
7. Be the sweet “fragrance of Christ” to those around you! *(What they smell is up to them!)*
8. If you are not a Christian, when you hear the gospel what do you smell? The sweet aroma of Christ or the stench of death? Repent and be baptized into His name!
9. If a Christian in error, be the fragrance of Christ to those around you! Repent and be renewed!
10. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!