

Eph. 2 - There are certain smells that remind us of certain things –

Recent studies have shown the correlation between our sense of smell and our memory

- The smell of freshly baked cookies can bring back specific childhood memories or family gatherings.
- The scent of freshly cut grass might remind you of a past summer, and the smell of glue could transport you back to kindergarten.
- Scents can also trigger traumatic memories. For example, a study showed that the smell of diesel was more distressing and activated fear centers in veterans with PTSD.

I love the scent of real Christmas tree – Candles, Hand Sanitizer, Scent-sicles

- People talk about that new car smell, or that smell of a new book – That usually means adventure is just around the corner...
- Keep that in mind as we turn to Eph. 2 – ***The Aroma of Hope to the World***

We are in a Sermon Series – “Unstoppable Force – The Church: A People of Hope in the World

- Because we Value the Word of God, We usually align our Bible Reading Place, Group Studies, and Sermon Series with the Same Passage
 - This morning while you are in this room, your children are learning about the 12 spies, which is what we have been reading, what we are studying in groups.
 - I have heard from multiple parents of how that is so helpful – They know what their children are learning, but they learned / were reminded of the same thing.
- We working on Renewing our Mission, Vision, and Values
 - Evaluate Ministries – Where is God leading us. How can we further His Kingdom, glorify the name of His Son!
- Jesus said in **Matthew 16:18** – I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Ephesians 2 – What we see in this passage is a Call and a Commission to live our our faith, not just individually but collectively – Our individual Salvation leads to Collective Identity

- ***From Foreigners to Family***
- Paul describes a deep, complex, hostile rivalry between Jews and Gentiles.
- **Yet through Christ these two enemies have not become one family, citizens of one kingdom demonstrating what it's like to live in the Kingdom to Come**
- No longer foreigners and strangers, but Kingdom Citizens, Family Members, & Stones in God's Temple

Tony Merida outlines this section this way –

- 1. Alienation – Eph. 2:11-12***
- 2. Reconciliation – Eph. 2:13-18***
- 3. Identification – Eph. 2:19-22***

Alienation – Who we once were - Eph. 2:11-12

Ephesians 2:11-12 - Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were ***without Christ***, being ***aliens*** from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, ***having no hope*** and ***without God*** in the world.

- Christless, Hopeless, helpless, and godless ***Sin Separates!***

- Rom. 5 – Paul said we were without strength, sinners, ungodly, enemies of God – Quite a pretty picture!
- Isaiah 59:1-2 - Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Ephesians 2:1-3 - And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Reconciliation – What Christ has done - Eph. 2:13-18

Ephesians 2:13 - But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Every person who trusts in Christ...repented of Sin, Trusting in Jesus for salvation

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Scripture Memory – Numbers 14:18a 'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression

- Has been brought near – "...were far off..." Phrase used of those unclean
- **2 Corinthians 5:17-18** - Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ¹⁸ Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

Ephesians 2:14 - For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

- Christ is our peace - **Rom. 5:1** - Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 - Before Christ, There was enmity (extreme hatred)
 - We lived in rebellion against God -
- He abolished enmity, verse 15, not only between God and man, but between men and men

Romans 8:1 - *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

2 Cor. 5:21 - For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Justified – Just is I'd never sinned – Just as if I'd always obeyed.

Identification – Who we have now become - Eph. 2:19-22

Ephesians 2:14-18 - For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Ephesians 2:19-22 - Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles

and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Not only do we have peace with God, but we have peace with one another

Three Pictures

Citizens of God's Kingdom

Ephesians 2:19- Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

- No Longer refugees – we are citizens – Gentile Believers were not 2nd class citizens
 - This World is not my home, I'm just passing through
- What is the Kingdom of God (Heaven) – God's Redemptive rule over His people – where His privileges are enjoyed and the responsibilities are carried out
 - We long for His Kingdom Advance – We pray – "...thy will be done..."
 - We long for His return...as Kingdom citizens, we out to eagerly await the King's return to set up the full realization of his Kingdom
 - Phil. 3:20 - For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,
 - Even So Come, Lord Jesus Come!
- As Kingdom Citizens, we demonstrate what it's like to live under the redemptive rule of King Jesus. Through our love for God and our love for one another we show what the future kingdom will be like!

Members of God's Family

Ephesians 2:19- Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

Greek word is "Oikos" "household"

- You are not a guest / occasional visitor, but a permanent dweller in the house – Brother – in Law - Make yourself at home...
 - There is a show: "Long Lost Family" Connects children with birth parents
 - We are part of the family, we support one another. We prefer one another (give & take)
 - We comfort. We weep with those that weep ... rejoice... We live out the 50 one another commands
 - Someone said, "The church is not a building we go to or an event we attend. It is a family, living life together obedient to the Father – as Jesus said, "I must be about my fathers business..."

Stone in God's Building

Ephesians 2:20-22 ⁻²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The Apostles and Prophets are the foundation – Jesus Himself is the Chief Cornerstone

- The Cornerstone make the whole building possible
- He secures the building and gives it alignment – Ancient builders would set the cornerstone, and the then building would take shape based of the placement of the cornerstone

- Temple – place where God’s Spirit dwelt – God manifested his presence there.
 - Where is the Temple now – 1 Cor. 6:19-20 – Our Body
 - Where is the Temple now – 1 Cor. 3:16 – Gather of the Saints

Think of the significance of this...Previously, Gentiles were not allowed into the Temple, now they are part of it

We have the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than ourselves

This goes against rugged individualism of Western Culture –

- We celebrate the Lone Ranger, We are drawn to stories of lone hero –
- The guy that stands against the evil corporation polluting the environment, Soldier who single handedly turns the tide in battle

That is Not the way God has designed the Church

- It is not good for man to be alone
- 2 are better than one – 3 fold cord is not quickly broken

Evaluate Your Connection to the Church

Elevate Your Participation with the Church

I want you to hear me... This is not so that we can build Thorsby First Baptist

- We do not want to be the biggest church in the area. We want to church the area.
- Through our commitment to the Chilton Baptist Association, we want to see our family of churches thrive, reaching their communities with the Gospel
 - We regularly met with other pastors, praying together, equipping one another, striving together to build up the believers in their church so that together, we can reach Chilton Co with the Gospel.

Evaluate Your Connection to the Church

If I were to ask you how connected to TFBC, or how committed you are to TFBC, what would you say?

How would you rate your commitment.

Rick Warren, Founding Pastor of Saddleback Church in Orange County CA, wrote a book in 1995 that I found very helpful early on in Ministry – Do not agree with everything he has done – Helpful

Circles of Commitment

Community – People living in your area 33,000 live within 20 min. drive of TFBC

Crowd

- Show up to Events – Participated in some way –
- VBS, Fall Festival, Attended occasionally

Congregation

- Official Members of the Church – They have been through the Process of Membership
- We have heard their story – They have heard ours
- They understand what is expected of them – They know what they can expect from us.

Committed

- They are active in every aspect of the Church
- Part of a Group – They Serve in a Ministry – They Give, not only of their money, but their time and the talents.

Core

- Key Volunteers and Leaders – Without these people, the church would not function.
- Look up deeper dive into Core – Rick Warren PDC, chapter 7

You see these same levels in the ministry of Jesus

Crowds – Feed 5,000 & 4,000 – Many people gathered to hear him

Congregation – 120 Gathered after his Resurrection and Ascension in Upper Room

Committed – 12 Disciples who carried His message to the Ends of the Earth.

Core – Inner Circle – Peter, James, and John

Where are you?

Elevate Your Participation with the Church

Next Step – Salvation, Baptism, Church Membership (Starting Point), Group, Serve, Give

There are certain smells that remind us of certain things –

- I know that many of you have grown tired of hand-sanitizers – Before Covid, I rarely, if ever used hand sanitizer – Now it's become habit – I had gotten so used to using it after being in store that recently, I put some on when I got in my car...AND I WAS AT HOME!
- I love the scent of real Christmas tree – Around Christmas time last year, my family bought be some hand sanitizer, that smell just like Christmas Trees – I have about 5 little bottles left
- People talk about that new car smell, or that smell of a new book – That usually means adventure is just around the corner...
- Keep that in mind as we turn to Eph. 2 – ***Welcoming Aroma of the Church***

2 Corinthians 2:14-15 - 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. ¹⁵ For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

We want to fill Thorsby with the doctrine of Christ so that
it's fragrance of Heaven can be sensed here

When we are at work – Diffuse fragrance