



Sermon Series: Facing the End Times

Sermon Title: A Fragrance of Faith

Date: 4/16/2023

2 Titus 3:1–7

Big Idea: Surround yourself with godly Community that amplifies your aroma of godly character

In the most difficult times, people will see your godly character. We can do this by surrounding ourselves with three different kinds of people:

Surround yourself with Selfless people

Paul warns Timothy of two different kinds of people. He warns him of *lovers of self*, and of *people who choose to be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*. When we keep selfless people as close to us as possible, we become students of their selflessness. Proverbs 2:9-15 becomes real to us.

Who doesn't want more righteousness, justice, equity, and good in their heart? This is what we'll receive, and we'll avoid what Paul writes in **1 Corinthians 15:33**.

Do you want to have the Aroma of Godly character? Then hang out with people who Follow God's word - people who apply the reality of Paul's letter in **Romans 12:2**.

Surround yourself with people who prioritize God's will over money

Paul tells Timothy to avoid lovers of money, and this isn't the first time he's said this either. (**1 Timothy 6:10**)

When we love money, we stop following God's calling in our life. In this context, we see Paul writing to a leader within the body of Christ. Warning him against how destructive chasing after money can be. And

that's really what Paul means when he says lovers of money, the word craving in Greek translates to striving to attain. There's nothing wrong with having money, but when we begin striving for it, we neglect other elements of our lives.

Would you be willing to forsake your riches to follow Jesus? Jesus addressed this in Mark 10:17-22.

Surround yourself with people who know how to love like Jesus

Paul defines what is and isn't love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Paul is saying when it comes to people that you allow to influence, you make sure that they are people who actually know how to love! In the last days, there will be difficult times, and it's during these times that, more than ever, you will need people around you that actually know how to love you.

People who aren't jealous or boastful, rude or arrogant, people who don't insist on their own way, people who are self-controlled and don't rejoice in wrongdoing. This is the kind of love that should influence you. Because this kind of love provides protection and produces godly character within us.

When we think about Paul's purpose in telling Timothy all of these truths, what we see is a mentor trying to bring about the next generation of believers in a way that radiates the Glory of God. And Paul knows that this will require carefully choosing who you allow into your inner circle of influence.

Paul gives a qualification for the people to avoid saying that they are: Always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. In other words, make sure the greatest influences in your life are people who know truth and live by it. People who learn all there is about salvation and godly character but make no changes within their own lives should have no place in influencing you.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged you thinking?**
- **What are your thoughts on Christians being financially wealthy?**
- **Describe the most selfless act you ever witnessed. Was the person who did it a Christian? What were the benefits that came as a result?**
- **How would you advise a Christian who is clearly in love with material possessions?**
- **Is there anyone in your inner circle of friends who are boastful, lacking self-control, and rude? What influence do they have over you?**
- **How diligent are you about surrounding yourself with godly people?**