

January 16

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 (NIV) ¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. ¹⁵ For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

Years ago, when malls were a main attraction, Carol and I would enjoy walking through them, looking at the people and window shopping. When we would see something interesting, we would walk through the store. I remember on time we were strolling through one of the biggest malls in Oklahoma City. As we were passing Dillard's, we noticed they were having a sale, so we went inside to investigate. We happened to enter the store where they sold makeup and perfume. Instantly, I was consumed by a myriad of smells from the different perfumes. I found it difficult to breathe. Carol, however, was drawn to a specific aroma that she found pleasing and fragrant. I was amazed as she moved around until she found that one fragrance.

Numerous times, the Bible refer to fragrances that are pleasing to God. When God gave Moses and the priests the law, He also gave them directions on how to create an oil with a fragrance that was pleasing to Him. No one was to duplicate this oil or use for themselves. God would recognize this fragrance. Paul picks up on this allusion by saying that we are the aroma of Christ Himself. An interesting aspect of a fragrance or aroma is that you cannot contain it. That aroma will spread throughout the room, entering every little crevice so that no one can escape it. Since we are the aroma of Christ, we are called to spread that aroma wherever we go. I have one cologne that I use. We both like the aroma, so I do not change. When I enter a room, the aroma of that cologne has no boundaries. It spreads to everyone who is near and fills the room. That is what we are to do. However, Paul warns us that not everyone will like that fragrance. To those who are being saved, we will be the smell of life. To those who are perishing, we will be the smell of death. I wear my cologne because my wife likes the smell. I will not change it because someone else does not like it. We are not to change our aroma of Christ because others do not like it. Because Christ dwells in us and because we are led by the Holy Spirit, we can spread the aroma of Christ wherever we go.