

“Spiritual Aromatherapy”

We have a diffuser in our house. A diffuser is used to fill the air with tiny, breathable particles of essential oils. Essential oils are made from natural plant extracts and are used to help people improve their physical and emotional health. Using essential oils and a diffuser is known as “Aromatherapy.” In our sermon lesson for today the Apostle Paul reminds us that God has called us to be spiritual aromatherapy for others, to help improve the health of their soul and faith in Jesus. Breathe in deeply God’s Word today, selected verses from 2 Corinthians chapters 2 and 3.

¹² Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, ¹³ I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.

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? ¹⁷ Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like people sent from God...

⁴ Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. ⁵ Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. ⁶ He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Whether you realize it or not, you are a diffuser of the essential oils of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into this world. Spiritual Aromatherapy is happening in your life as you live and share Jesus love, forgiveness, eternal life in Heaven, resurrection, peace, joy, and more with others.

Opportunities to be the aroma of Christ in this world are endless. **“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.** (2 Cor. 2:14). The Apostle Paul experienced open door after open door of opportunities. The Bible records for us almost 60 different cities or territories where he was the aroma of Christ! You, most likely, will not log the same travel miles that the Apostle Paul did, but God has opened doors for you to be the aroma of Christ. Doors have been opened for you to be the aroma of Christ to your family, friends, co-workers, classmates, teammates, neighbors, and even total strangers as you live like a Christian and talk like a Christian and strive to take the conversation to the next level and have spiritual conversations with the people God has placed in your life. Doors have been opened for you to be the aroma of Christ as you stay informed about mission work, pray for missionaries, give financial offerings to support local and worldwide Gospel ministry efforts, and as you volunteer your time to serve in some capacity both in the church and your community.

Opportunities to diffuse the essential oil of the Gospel in this world are plentiful, but not always easy. Paul was planning to meet up with Titus in Troas, but for some reason Titus was delayed. Paul was anxious to hear how the Corinthian Christians received the first letter he sent to them, a letter that contained some strong calls to repent of sin. Pouring yourself into Spiritual Aromatherapy means there will be some nervous stomach and stressful moments as you pray for the people you witnessed to and wait to see how the Holy Spirit blesses your diffusing efforts. **“For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life”** (2 Cor. 2:15-16). Nobody knew better than the Apostle Paul how difficult Spiritual Aromatherapy work is. To some people your Christian faith stinks and they might even let you know it. But to some people, the Holy Spirit brings them to appreciate the smell of Christianity as the fragrance of life.

“Who is equal to such a task?” (2 Corinthians 2:16) the Apostle Paul asks. Great question! A question that each of either has, or will, or should ponder. Who are you and who am I to be a diffuser of the essential oil of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Carrying out this work is too much for each of us. Why should anyone listen to a rotten sinner like you and me? All Christians feel totally inadequate in some way when it comes to living as a Christian and sharing the Christian faith. And when left to our own power and good intentions, none of us is equal to the task. However, listen to this! **“Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God”** (2 Cor. 3:5,4). Only through Christ are we competent to diffuse the essential oil of the Gospel. Through faith in Christ we have been forgiven of our incompetence. And in the peace of forgiveness, **“In Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like people sent from God”** (2 Cor. 2:17). Through Christ we receive the motivation and the power necessary to be competent of such a spiritually health changing task of Spiritual Aromatherapy.

Aromatherapy is such a simple concept. Use the natural resources that God has given us in the plant world to help people improve their physical and emotional health. God chose you and me to be followers of Christ so that with the spiritual resources we have been given we can help benefit people when it comes to their spiritual health. **“God has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant – not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life”** (2 Cor. 3:6). Spiritual Aromatherapy doesn't kill people with a bunch of rules to follow in order to be right with God and spend eternity in Heaven. Spiritual Aromatherapy calls people to repent of their sins, shows them their need for Jesus, and then heals them by giving them Jesus. Through Jesus a person enjoys forgiveness, freedom from Hell and a guilty conscience, peace to deal with earthly struggle, resurrection from the dead and eternal life in Heaven. Through that message God the Holy **“Spirit gives life”** (2 Cor. 3:6). So pour yourself into Spiritual Aromatherapy, because God has made you equal to the task. Amen.