

Smelling

2 Corinthians 2:14-16; Luke 2:34-35

Christmas season engages the senses. This sermon series unpacks what Scripture says about The Five Senses, as we pursue deeper lessons about life and faith.

Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh... What do the last two have in common?

- Your nose would know!

Why is smelling a big deal?

- Stench vs. aroma. Would you pay \$\$ for the latter?

Are there spiritual truths about smelling in Scripture?

(1) You: What does Scripture tell you to smell?

- A strange question, right? And a silent answer...

(2) God: What does God smell?

- A "pleasing aroma" at least 43 times in the Bible! (ESV) These are offerings, sacrifices.
 - See the frankincense example in Leviticus 2:1-2, giving a pleasant scent to a grain offering. (Also see Philipians 4:18, Revelation 5:8, 8:3-4.)

(3) Others: What do others smell around you?

- 2 Cor 2:14-16: Stench of death vs. aroma of life!

- Luke 2:34-35: Simeon's words about the baby Jesus

- I want there to be one group of people, not two! But facts are what they are.

- So you *stink*. To some people, at least.

- But you are the aroma of life! The greatest gift you could give anyone.

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. Search an online Bible (e.g. biblegateway.com) to see how many passages speak of God appreciating a "pleasing aroma."
 - What do these passages have in common?
 - See Philipians 4:18, Revelation 5:8, 8:3-4 for how this applies to us.
2. Read Simeon's words in Luke 2:34-35, and Paul's words in 2 Cor 2:14-16.
 - Why would Jesus, the perfect and loving one, be opposed? This is a basic question, but we need to keep answering it for ourselves as believers. (Why?)
 - We all know that we might be opposed, too. What we believe is controversial and the stench of death. Does this intimidate you? How should you respond to this?
 - But what an amazing gift it is to bear the aroma of Life! Have you underappreciated this fact? Pray about this, and ask for the boldness of the early church (e.g. Acts 2-4).