**Transformed: 2 Corinthians wk 3 – That Makes Cense .**

**Candles / perfume - Certain smells are appealing or repelling – they can take us to a place, memory, (Research: smell is the most powerful memory enhancer) or a smell make you want to run away.**

**I want to talk about what you smell like - lean over and take a whiff.**

**God uses change to change us, shape us, and make us smell good. Sometimes - when things don’t go the way we want – God is working in us growth and aroma.**

**2 Cor. - the messy process of becoming more like Christ**

**An ongoing conversation with Paul and a troubled church.**

**Trouble in Troas**

**(He just spoke of the need to forgive an offender and to restore him – he follows) 2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, 13 my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia. 14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, 16 to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? 17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.**

**Some of the background - (MAP) Paul left Ephesus to go to Philippi - planning to meet with Titus in Troas who was recently in Corinth. To give him an update.**

**2 Corinthians 2:12 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, (On his way to Philippi a door was wide open in Troas – the opportunity was given - however) 13** **my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So, I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.**

**He waited & waited - but Titus was a no show. Even though there was an open door in Troas his heart was so troubled about both Titus & Corinth.**

**He was heavy hearted- schedule all messed up- facing trouble.**

**Things were not going as planned. Paul needed some peace about the issue – so he went looking for Titus.**

**What did he do? – 2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God... (thankful in the chaos)**

**1. When things don't go as planned - Praise**

**When you’re depressed - praise / frustrated - praise / sick - praise / Alone - praise / Get fired - praise / whatever - praise!**

**1 Thes 5:18 - Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 5:20 - repeats similarly)**

**2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always (without fail) leads us in triumphal procession (NIV - who always leads us as captives (what?) in Christ’s triumphal procession... (as prisoners in a glorious parade)**

**They would have imagined a victory parade led by a Roman general or king with prisoners (the captives) he had conquered behind him. It was a massive, glorious event. (pic/clip)**

**Those held captives were those whose rebellion has been conquered - and he now takes them as his own servants...**

**2. When things don't go as planned – Surrender**

**Paul is saying he was overpowered and taken captive by Jesus the great hero king! That Paul’s rebellious heart had been defeated and brought to faith in Christ. He is glad and willing to serve the greatest leader of all time - as a servant of Christ in total surrender.**

**I may not know what is always happening – But I know who I belong to and I am confident that my king is triumphantly leading the way!**

**1 Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.**

**Jesus is triumphant, Paul is now in his service – The great General / King has conquered his life, and Paul will willingly go wherever the general leads him… Paul is not his own.**

**1 Corinthians 7:22 For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord’s freed person; (you might be a slave to a person, but you are free) similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ’s slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings. (but to Christ!)**

**Whatever happens, I am following. I will submit to the one who conquered my life. I am a defeated foe in service to my King!**

**That's my prayer: God wreak me, defeat me, and conquer me!**

**What do we surrender? Paul understood he had to completely surrender...**

* **My stuff (things)**
* **My status (what people think)**
* **My sin (habits, temptations)**
* **My self (your life your future)**

**What are you holding on to?**

**2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession… (Christ the Victor)**

**Not only did Paul understand submission to Christ - but also found hope knowing... God was always leading him to victory!**

**3. When things… - Know God is leading you to victory**

**When your marriage... family… health… life… does not go as planned. Jesus is triumphant and leading those who are his to victory!**

**In the face of sickness and heartbreak… either in this life or the next – I will not fear - I know... I am victorious!!!**

**1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Romans 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? / Romans 8:37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.**

**Colossians 2:15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.**

**1 John 4:4 - ...the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. and - 3:20 If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. and- 5:4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.**

**2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.**

**In this parade of life - sometimes unaware of where we are going - What are we to do? We surrender and smell good.**

**Aroma Therapy**

**2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere (NIV - uses us to spread the aroma of him)**

**In ancient victory parades - Incense gave way to the hero – it declares the hero is coming – the hero is here! And the smell of sacrificial altars filled the city. The streets were filled with the sent of victory! Candles / perfume**

**4. When things don’t go as planned - Smell good**

**This is what happens in our reliance, dependence and thankfulness to God in spite of our situations - turns us into a living incense of praise.**

**We are to be God's incense in the world! Faith in trials – wow!**

**Phil 4:7 - a peace that surpassed understanding = sweet aroma.**

**The Role of incense in the bible - OT and NT**

**Genesis 8:20, Exodus and Leviticus, and Numbers it speaks of the sweet-smelling incense offered up to God through a burnt offering...**

**In the Temple: Incense was forever to be burning before the altar of God = represents God's presence that fills a room as worship ever before the throne of God.**

**Matthew 26:6-13 - a woman came with an alabaster box... filled with expensive perfumed oil - She poured it all over Jesus’ feet...**

**The oil was her praise - brokenness before Jesus - that aroma was a reflection of her love and worship of Jesus.**

**In Luke 24 (the original spice girls) were bringing oil and scents to anoint Jesus - but he was found resurrected - he was alive! (They were bringing Old Spice - But God is not looking for Old Spice but New Spice – A living Spice - you!)**

**Malachi 1:11 - My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to me, because my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD Almighty. (Malachi tells us the incense is God's people in the world)**

**Hbw word for ‘anoint’ comes from ‘shemen’ which means seed. When you want the smell of a seed, you must crush it. (BTW - If you crush a peanut, you get…peanut oil. If you crush an olive, you get… olive oil. I wonder where they get baby oil?) When a seed is crushed - fragrance follows.**

**Jesus was crushed for us - and His anointing fragrance now flows over the lives of those who are His!**

**Eph 5:1** **Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.**

**Paul understood - as Christ was crushed, we too will be crushed (trials of life) – so that the aroma of God might be poured out.**

**What’s that smell?**

**2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.**

**Tells us - Who do we are to smell good for:**

**\*\* To other Christians – “…among those who are being saved...”**

**How do you smell here? How do you reflect Jesus to other Christians? How are you resolving conflicts, encouraging others, and serving one another in the body of Christ.**

**Jo 15:3 ...everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.**

**1 Jo 3:14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. / Eph 4:1-3 - Be humble, patient, and forgiving - make every effort to keep unity.**

**When we love each other here well - that smells good to God - and to the world - that aroma draws people to the kingdom of God. Unity is an aroma God loves = manifest presence.**

**Matt 18:20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.**

**\*\* To those who do not know Jesus - “…among… those who are perishing.”**

**How do you smell to your friends, family, at work?**

**Do you smell well around your friends? Do your words, actions, love, and life - give off the aroma of God?**

**2 Corinthians 2:16 …to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. (NLT - To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume.)**

**Those responding to the HS, the aroma of death (the cross) is life.**

**They understand their need and embrace the cross of Christ.**

**They surrender to the triumphant king.**

**But those who do not surrender - the cross is foolish and pointless**

**1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

**Paul declares that God conquered him and is leading him in triumph and in suffering – crushed by the king - he becomes an aroma of victory to the world.**

**2 Corinthians 2:16b Who is sufficient for these things? (Who can God use to do this? Who will be that aroma?) 17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ. (Those that are truly Christ's give off the aroma of grace)**

**This verse tells us - Two things that stink:**

**17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, (NIV - "we do not peddle the word of God for profit.")**

**1. Corrupt and selfish motives**

**Sometimes I think God looks at leaders in the church and says you stinks. The focus on money/materials - rather than aroma.**

**Ecclesiastes 10:1 (NLT) As dead flies cause even perfume to stink, so a little foolishness spoils great wisdom and honor. (Doesn’t take much to stink – stepping in doo – smells bad all around you)**

**I used to sale designer fragrances door to door. You can’t patent a smell – so there are a lot of imitations – but you can’t fool God.**

**Around 3000 diff. ingredients ranging from oils from fruits, flowers, wood, and animal glands. FYI – The most expensive ingredient is pure elk musk, which is the secretion produced by a male elk. Pure deer musk is sold at the staggering price of $300 a gram. Deer Musk Absolute from Siberia is $1,500 a gram.**

**Scientists have been able to artificially create that smell... But it’s a cheap imitation and wears off quick - The real deal lasts!**

**2:17 For we are not, like so many… (but) we speak before God with sincerity"**

**2. Insincere prayers and worship**

**Worshiping God with all your heart, soul and mind – makes scents!**

**Are you trying to live the old spice way – from the outside in**

**Or the New spice way – from inside out (from the heart)**

**John 4:24 - (Jesus said) “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”**

**Put way the old way – God does not want a splash of passion, or a dab of doing good, but for us to live out the aroma of God.**

**Perfume can go bad… and start to stink. I think we often offer God stinky half-baked insincere smelly worship. Like the fishing wharf sign: Old fishermen never die; they just smell that way!**

**Esther spent a year bathing in perfumes & oils just to spend 5 minutes with the King! What effort do put into smelling good for your king?**

**Take a look at this again - 2 Cor 2:14 – “… 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.”**

**5. When things don’t go as planned - God has a bigger plan!**

**When life has us confused and crushed... we can break forth with praise that points Christ to the world! God likes to show you off to the world when we smell good... Candles / perfume.**

**Like a mother/ father this is my child look at his trophy, that accomplishment, that song, check out the pics on my phone…**

**Look World those are my kids!**

**And like a groom – who show his well adorned bride to the guests.**

**The bigger plan is this – Jesus will be spread everywhere!**

**I pray that we as followers of Jesus as we as a church would be a sweet fragrance to world pointing to Jesus.**

**Smell yourself... your family... do you stink? You can get your new car smell back – surrender to the king... and join the parade!**

**BTW - Paul found Titus at Philippi and soon received the good news that many of the problems at Corinth were starting to get resolved.**

**On your way out turn to your neighbor and tell them, “Smell you later”**