

Sermon Series Title: "The Church of God"

Sermon Series Summary: The Church of God is the people of God throughout the ages, redeemed by Jesus Christ. We're going to take a look at who we are and who we are called to be as the church of God. More specifically, we see that who we are is directly connected to whose we are in Christ.

"We are in our "The Church of God" sermon series, and we see that we are defined not by who we are but whose we are as the Church."

Call: Luke 1:54-55

Text: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

Title: "The Aroma of the Church"

Next Week's Call: Luke 1:68-69

Next Week's Text: 1 Peter 2:11-12

Next Week's Title: "The Alienness of the Church"

Future Calls: Luke 1:70-73, 74-75, 78-79; Luke 2:13-14, 29-32; Revelation 5:6-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14; Revelation 15:3, 4; Revelation 21:1-4, 5-7, 22-23

Future Titles: "The Attraction of the Church" (1 Peter 2:9-10), "Church as Building" (1 Peter 2:6-8), "Church as City" (Ephesians 2:19-22), "Church as Body" (1 Corinthians 12:12-31), "Church as Family" (John 1:12-13), "Church as Bride" (Ephesians 5:22-33), "The Eternality of the Church" (Revelation 21:1-7)

Fallen Condition Focus: We aren't the aroma of Christ in our sin, and we lose sight of Christ's Word and Lordship.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ is the greatest Aroma/Sacrifice, who died according to God's word to glorify Him and save us.

Central Truth: "Through Christ who is the greatest aroma, let us be the aroma of Christ to those around us."

Summary: A theme of this letter is how the Christian journey is marked by weakness and humility. Paul talks about that in our passage today. We are captives in the procession of Christ, being led to our death. But this death will lead to our ultimate life and joy. And if we

are captives unto life, we are empowered to be the aroma of Christ to those around us through our words and life.

Reflective Questions:

1. How do you feel that we are part of the procession of Christ as captives?
2. In what ways, can we be the aroma of Christ?

I. Introduction

- A. Hook- How do we smell?
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

II. The Sacrifice (v. 14a)

- A. Setting of this letter
 1. Factions who doubt Paul's apostleship and message
 2. Their theology of suffering is flawed, thinking that weakness is a liability and not an asset.
 3. Paul in this letter shows that God works through weakness and humility more than strength and glory.
- B. Setting of our passage- confesses his weakness of being distracted in ministry
- C. In that state of confession and weakness, Paul thanks God who leads Paul and us in triumphal procession.
 1. This is a reference to Roman triumphal processions where the general/captor would parade throughout the city in victory with captives following behind them (being led to their death).
- D. Are we the captor or the captive?
 1. Though there is debate on this, based on the context, we know that Paul is speaking of himself as a captive, being led to his death.
- E. Why does Paul thank God for this awful picture?
 1. It's because he was an enemy of God. He needs to die to himself and to sin in order to truly live.
 2. Freedom from sin, guilt, and shame- Joshua Broome
- F. In these processions, there would be incense lifted up, so everyone would know about it.

III. The Smell (vv. 14b-16a, 17b)

- A. Through us, He spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ.
 1. The aroma is rooted in our death (going back to the procession).

2. The fragrance is the knowledge of Christ- through the Word and our lives.
 1. Knowledge refers to intimate, personal knowledge (sex).
3. We need to make sure we are not “peddlers of God’s word” (v. 17b)
 1. Merchants would water down their product for greater profit.
- B. We are the aroma of Christ in God.
 1. Smells are seared in our memories and bring up emotions.
 1. Open House- cookies
 2. We are to show the grace, love, mercy, and joy of Christ.
 3. Maybe people do not love the church because we don’t have the aroma of Christ.
 2. Smells are unique.
 1. Mall stores
 2. Smoking
 3. Our Savior is unique, so our message through our lives are unique.
 3. Smells are pervasive.
 1. Retreat
 2. We are called to go out and share Christ with others.
- C. To those being saved and perishing; death to death, life to life
 1. Smell of wintergreen in US and UK
 2. Smell of incense meant something different for the captors and the captives during the procession.
 3. Simeon- Jesus will be the cause for the rising and fall of many.
 4. The Word and our lives will drive people away into death or drive people toward Christ in life.

IV. The Source (v. 16b-17)

- A. Who is sufficient for these things?
- B. Not like peddlers, but we are men of sincerity (honesty, integrity, love- like Jesus weeping for Jerusalem & Paul desiring his brothers to be saved, etc.)
- C. Commissioned by God
 1. Authority is not in man or commissioned by us; it is by God.
- D. In the sight of God- God sees and judges all
- E. We speak in union with Christ.
 1. Christ is the ultimate captive, so we can be set free.
 2. He is the Aroma, who took on our death, so that we can have life
 3. Christ is the Sacrifice that took on our sins, so we may be righteous.

4. Christ is the Aroma that left the throne of heaven to bring us to Himself.