

“MAKING GOD SMELL GOOD!”

Community Series, GGSDA, 9/19/15

TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 2:14-15 “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. For we are to God the aroma of Christ.” We are supposed to be the Aroma of Christ, the fragrance of Christ. Passing out 700,000 Great Controversy’s month before the Pope comes—probably not the Aroma of Christ. Church called me, wanted to use our **BAPTISTERY** early Sabbath morning—people above me said “NO.” 2000 people in prison camp in **CHINA**, American Red Cross—sent packages. 7 per American. Leaders of the prisoners said—Give each American 2, rest 1. Americans said, No, this is our Red Cross—keep all 7 for themselves. My last church, boy going to our Academy, non-Adventist, having Bible studies with youth pastor, got a girl **PREGNANT**—school kicked them out, we don’t want to see you anywhere around the church—one year. **POISONWOOD BIBLE**—Baptist pastor, took wife and 4 daughters to Congo, village. Miserable to the people. Tried to change everything, made the women wear more clothes, fought with the witch doctor, miserable to his wife and daughters. After 1 year, preaching every week, had a vote, two bowls, one for the witch doctor, one for Jesus,—witch doctor won 56-11. Religion so messed up—wife and daughters just marched out of the jungle. Left the Church forever. Bible says—We are supposed to be the **AROMA OF CHRIST. Fragrance.**

B. DURIAN—maybe the worst smell I have ever had in my life! In Thailand, People would give them to my parents, gifts—whole apartment building. In hotels—no durian. Planes, sign—no durian allowed. Think of worst smells in the world—outhouses, diapers. Sewage in Mexico, we had to drive through to build the house—washed our car ten times, garage smelled terrible for 6 months. **SEWER TOUR, PARIS**—one part—smelled terrible. Bible says—be the Aroma of Christ.

C. PERFUME—come down the aisle. INCENSE—Kiev, Ukraine, priest came out, swinging incense all over us. **ROSES**—Dolores, 80th birthday tomorrow, I can’t come. **Baking pies, bushes you walk by. Some would say smelling coffee, candles, potpourri.**

LVICTORY. A. The background for this passage is **ROMAN PARADES**. Whenever a Roman general won a great victory—Over 5000 people had to be killed. Grand parade. Trumpets, horses, The General, the soldiers, the captives, the slaves. And then the Priests sprinkling **INCENSE** all over the crowd.

B. The first point is—**WE ARE NOT GOING TO LOSE! The Church is not going to die, not going to lose!** Sometimes it can look—hopeless. We don’t have enough money, billions have never heard of Christ, more babies being born than we can keep up with, Europe, nobody’s going to church. I think about the money—need \$20,000 for church we promised in Vietnam, \$20,000 for Thailand, we need \$20,000 for the new basketball court, carpet upstairs, kitchen, sign outside, Church Budget, Tuition Aid. Hopeless. But said to a group this week—The Church has been going for 2000 years. When Paul said this, few hundred people. But he sees this big Parade. The church is not going to die, just turn out the lights. Jesus won the big battle on the Cross, Satan knows he’s lost—We are not going to lose!

C. But he wants to say—This is not regular war. This is not Muslim **JIHAD, 9-11, bin Laden, ISIS**, beheading people, Crusades. We are in a war—but we are going to win by being the **AROMA OF CHRIST. THE FRAGRANCE OF CHRIST.** Hippies, when I was in college, police all standing in a row in San Francisco, guns—hippies putting flowers in the guns—flower power.

D. In our Mall, Riverside—walk in one entrance—**SMELL CINNABON.** For 500 feet. Almost impossible to walk on by. **PAPAYA—SAMAAN**—pastor, friend of mine, teaches at Southern, daughter had some papaya, put it in the refrigerator—saving it for supper—father came home, saw it—ate the whole thing. Daughter came home, went to get it—nothing, Did you eat my papaya? **You did, I can smell it!” What Christians are supposed to be—so full of God, people can smell Christ.**

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD. A. **People** use phrase OT God. Lady I did a funeral for, grew up SDA, got kicked out of nursing school for getting kissed, just couldn’t get over it, husband, Jew, talked about her OT picture of God. Articles on the internet, way it is, God both merciful, angry, deal with it.

B. People try to solve it—OT just wrong, or God was just learning, slowly figuring it out, or just through it out, like Thomas Jefferson, just cut those pages out of the Bible. No, we don’t take it out of the Bible—all inspired—God is NOT both a Thundering God and an Aroma God. The Thundering, OT God

was a temporary, something God had to do, starting with where they were, **emergency measures**, but the Aroma God is who He really is. When we get to heaven, there will not be two sides of God, yelling and thundering some times, to keep everybody in line, and an Aroma God the rest of the time.

C. In the OT Sanctuary—Altar of Incense. When they dedicated the Sanctuary, Shekinah Presence, glory of God filled the Temple, they could see it, feel it—incense everywhere—could smell it. Priest goes in there, with the blood of the sacrifice, for every sin of every single person in the camp—stand there before the curtain before the Judgment Seat of God—incense everywhere. When you stand before the presence of God, no matter how many sins you have committed—covered by the incense of God. And it's a **PROMISE**--someday God would come—and be the Aroma of God.

D. Jesus comes down—wise men bring incense and myrrh. Mary pours perfume all over His feet. When He dies, they bring incense and spices. The message is—**HE'S HERE. THE OT PICTURE OF GOD IS NOT THE FINAL PICTURE OF GOD—THIS IS WHO GOD REALLY IS.**

E. WHATEVER WE ARE—IS WHAT PEOPLE WILL THINK OF GOD.

1. **Chicago, TRAIN**—busy stockbrokers, bumped girl selling apples. All over floor, he raced on. One went back. Girl was blind. Helped her pick them all up, separate bruised ones. Gave her \$40. “Are you Jesus?” Aroma of Christ.

III. PRINCIPLES: A. So we are trying to do more to be the AROMA of GOD to Garden Grove. We do so much here. We go all over the world. But maybe God is calling us to do more—right here. We don't know exactly what we should do, praying, talking, brainstorming. We know a few things:

1. We don't want to do what we want to do, we want to do what they need us to do.

2. We want to somehow be WITH them. Like Jesus came down here. Missionaries go around the world, live in much bigger houses than everybody else, cars, go to different schools, dress like Americans, make churches like America, make everybody sit in pews, wear white shirts and ties, sing same songs, just with their words. **OOSTERWAL—friend of mine**, went to New Guinea years ago, lived with them, dressed like them, learned their language—and ended up baptizing every single one of the villagers.

3. We want to make sure, if our church was gone—somebody would miss us. “What are we going to do without that Adventist pyramid church?” If our church burned down, would they all help us rebuild? **EGYPT, HIEROPOLIS**—during riots against Christian churches, Muslims stood guard over our SDA church. Would anybody do that for us here?

IV. STORIES: A. **MECKSTROTH**—had to get some kid from the neighborhood off the pyramid. Kid said they had kicked a soccer ball up there. Few weeks later, last week, Bob and Josh found an old basketball hoop behind Youth Chapel, dirty, not good—got it out, cleaning it up, saw that same kid walking by, called him over, didn't say anything about the roof—“You want a basketball hoop?” Maybe. Go ask your parents. Came back—they say OK. Gave it to them, he and Dr. Bob wheeled it over, down 4 houses, set it up. **That's the Aroma of Christ! BACKPACK project**, 37 backpacks, other stuff. **English class for Vietnamese. CROP BOX**--\$7 box, 6 kinds of farm stuff, straight from local farms. Come get it at the Adventist Church. **Huntington Beach, free haircuts. Another church—free clinic, 1 night month. Refugees—Germany**—some closing borders, water hoses. Others—big crowd at train, buses, Welcome, waving, food, water, share houses. **Aroma of Christ.**

B. PEYTON MANNING—story on news this week. Writes notes to people, retired players, all the time. Last week, lady write from Wyoming, dying, Stage 4 cancer, he told staff, get them here, two plane tickets, tickets to field, game. Friend of lady wrote story, newspaper. Aroma of Christ.

APPEAL: A. **2 or 3 big moments in my life, changed my life.** High school, appeal people wanted to be pastors, I went forward. Chicago, 40, sermon, Hybels, Impact players, coaches looking for impact players, easy to find regular players, hard to find impact players, God looking for Impact players. 3rd—Newbury Park, Hilda and I just married. Came from country churches, people poor, needed me constantly. Now, everybody worked for the church—Union, Media Center, Academy. Not needed much. Family invited us to house Sat night, movie—**SAVING GRACE**. New pope, young, after one year, hates it, people kissing ring, bowing, nobody real, just church leaders. In the garden, regular clothes, wind blows paper outside the walls, goes to get it, gates shut, can't get back in, wanders, decides to stay out, goes to village, blind girl had come to him asking for a priest. They are pretending to have a disease, so government will give them

money. Priest has quit, church closed. Nobody knows he's the pope—begins to help them build water aqueduct, saves the village, gets the priest back into it—figures out he's the pope. Goes back, Vatican, changes everything. I sat there crying—could not spend my whole life just hanging out with the church. Started doing mission trips, all the rest. Now—in 60s—we are determined to find a way to be Impact players—right here. Be the Aroma of Christ.