

**“THE AROMA”****SPEAKER: BRAD WILLIAMS****DATE: OCTOBER 10, 2021****DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. They can help you understand and apply the teaching.

BIBLICAL TEXT(S) + MESSAGE SUMMARY:**2 CORINTHIANS 2:14-17, ROMANS 8:29 + 13:8, LUKE 6:27-38, 43-45**

This week concludes our series *A People in a Place* with a look at two meaningful features from 2 Corinthians 2, verse 14: the triumph that is ours because of Christ's victory on the Cross, and the “fragrance” we Christians offer others as we live a transformed life among our neighbors.

Both qualities are an essential feature of life for those who follows Jesus. Romans 8:29 speaks to the transformation we experience while 2 Corinthians 4 declares how we live within an attractive triumph, one designed to appeal to people who are accepting Jesus invitation. Our transformation begins when we start following the Lord, and continues as the Spirit makes us more like Christ over time. The effects of that transformation fill the space between us and others like a distinct aroma, attractive to some and repulsive to others.

LEAN IN: *These are icebreakers and warm ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. What's your favorite aroma and why?
2. Do you have a strong memory associated with a particular smell? If so, how did that connection get established?
3. Why do you think most people like the smell of newborn babies?
4. What kind of memories do you associate with a new car smell, besides a “new car?”
5. When was the last time you had a life-changing event? What was it?

LOOK DOWN: *These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. What do you notice most about 2 Corinthians 2:14? Who leads the procession, and how does the answer to that question impact your understanding of what it means to live victoriously?
2. What is the progression of ideas in Romans 8:29? Why do you think that is the case?
3. What is one of the purposes of loving others according to Romans 13:8, and why do you think that's so?
4. According to Luke 6:27 and following, who are we to love? Why do you think Jesus teaches this?
5. Based on the metaphor Jesus uses in Luke 6:43 and following, where does good come from? Why is that important?

CONTINUED:

LOOK OUT: *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. Forget for a moment about the Christian story. Why would we then call something we observe in the world around us good or bad? What's the measure of that judgment?
2. Where do you see victory and defeat in the world? What do those observations make you feel and why?
3. What are some examples from our culture about how people pursue "victory?"
4. What "aromas" of transformation do you observe within the culture of your city?
5. Do you see people in the broader culture loving their enemies? If so, how do they do that? If not, why do you think they don't?

LOOK IN: *These are questions that help you consider how to engage the teaching personally. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. Where can you celebrate a victorious procession in your life?
2. What part of your life needs more of a realized victory?
3. What do you think your "aroma" smells like among different people? How do you "smell" at church, within your family relationships, or at work? Are there differences and if so, why?
4. What does it look like for you to be conformed to the image of God's Son? Where are you in the process and how have you arrived at that point?
5. Think of an enemy in your life, or the person who is closest to that description. How do you feel about loving them?

LIVE IT OUT: *These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life. Choose one prompts and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. What's one concrete action you can take this week to experience the victory Jesus already achieved?
2. Write a letter to yourself describing the ways in which you have already been more conformed to Jesus' image. You can also include areas where you want to grow more. After writing *and* reading it, thank God for that progress.
3. Identify an "enemy" and begin to pray for them regularly as an expression of your love for them. Think about practical steps you might take to connect with them and build a relationship. When you sense the time is right, try to do what it is you've thought about doing.