

“Olfactory Faith”

*“For we are to God the pleasing **aroma** of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an **aroma** that brings death; to the other, an **aroma** that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? (2 Corinthians 2:15-16).*

2 Corinthians 2:12-17 ¹

Those of you who’ve seen this week’s *Laptop* know that I’ve been thinking a lot about sensory things this week. I’ve most recently been thinking about hearing, and am giving thanks to God for renewed ability to hear higher frequencies as a result of Beth and Dan Trollinger’s extraordinary gift of their father’s hearing aids. I’ve also been thinking about noses and breathing, thanks to beginning life with a CPAP machine.

Our text in 2 Corinthians uses the metaphor of smelling—another function of noses—as an example of how we who follow Jesus are supposed to be experienced by others. While a dog’s nose is from 10,000 – 100,000 times more sensitive than our own, our sense of smell is pretty amazing in its own right, and I had sinus surgery some years ago because my “smeller” wasn’t working very well. So let’s see what Paul had to say about “olfactory faith”

In order to see what Paul was saying, we need to understand his situation at the time. Paul lived had lived Corinth for about a year and a half prior to writing this letter. Corinth was a seaport city on the isthmus connecting the Peloponnesus to the Greek mainland, and Paul had founded a church there. After he moved on to begin churches in other places, Paul wrote at least four letters back to the church in Corinth, of which the letters we call “first” and “second” Corinthians are the second and fourth. We don’t have the other two.

Corinth was a famously immoral city, and the church there had a great many problems as the new believers tried to figure out how choosing to follow the Way of Jesus was different—it was hugely different—from how they had previously lived. Paul’s four letters to Corinth were efforts to correct various errors in the Corinthians’ understanding and in their behavior, and these letters were interspersed with what appear to be three return visits to the city.²

Paul’s third letter to Corinth came between his second and third return visits, and it was a severe letter. Given the issues addressed in the letters we have, we can imagine what their problems may have been, but we don’t know for sure. Paul’s second visit had been very painful for himself and for the church, and Paul decided to send the severe letter through his friend and associate, Titus, a Gentile who would later become the Bishop of the churches in Crete.³

¹ A sermon by Dr. David C. Stancil, delivered at the Columbia Baptist Fellowship in Columbia, MD on July 12, 2020.

² See 2 Corinthians 2:1, 13:1

³ Titus was a Gentile companion of Paul ([Gal. 2:3](#)) and recipient of the New Testament letter bearing his name. Titus may have been converted by Paul who called him “my true son in our common faith” ([Titus 1:4](#) NIV). As one of Paul’s early associates, Titus accompanied the apostle and Barnabas to Jerusalem ([Gal. 2:1](#)), probably on the famine relief visit ([Acts 11:28-30](#)).

Though Acts does not mention Titus, he was quite involved in Paul’s missionary activities as shown in the Pauline letters. He was evidently known to the Galatians ([Gal. 2:1,3](#)), possibly from the first missionary journey to that region. Titus also seems to have been a very capable person, called by Paul “my partner and fellow worker” ([2 Cor. 8:23](#) NIV). He was entrusted with the delicate task of delivering Paul’s severe letter ([2 Cor. 2:1-4](#)) to Corinth and correcting problems within the church there ([2 Cor. 7:13-15](#)). Titus’ genuine concern for and evenhanded dealing with the Corinthians ([2 Cor. 8:16-17](#); [12:18](#)) no doubt contributed to his success which he reported in person to Paul, anxiously awaiting word in Macedonia ([2 Cor. 2:13](#); [7:5-6,13-15](#)). Paul responded by writing 2 Corinthians which Titus probably delivered ([2 Cor. 8:6,16-18,23](#))

Paul apparently was released after his first Roman imprisonment and made additional journeys, unrecorded in Acts. One of these took him and Titus to Crete, where Titus remained behind to oversee and administer the church ([Titus 1:5](#)). It was to Crete that Paul wrote his letter, asking Titus to join him in

By sending Titus with the letter, Paul was trying to avoid a confrontation with his opponents in Corinth that could sever his relationship with the church, but he wasn't at all sure the effort would succeed. Some time after Titus went to Corinth, Paul went from Ephesus to Troas, where he had apparently arranged to meet Titus after the letter had been delivered.

Like Ephesus and Corinth, Troas was a large and significant seaport, located near the entrance to the Dardanelles. Paul had visited the city briefly in the past, and, never able to keep himself from proclaiming the Gospel, he found receptive hearts—an “open door”—for the Good News of Jesus as he waited for Titus.

Even though his audience was responsive, Paul was upset that Titus had not arrived when expected, and Paul feared that this meant that the news from Corinth was not good. He was so distressed, in fact, that he could not bear the waiting; so though “the fishing was good” in Troas, Paul concluded his preaching mission there and began heading toward Corinth by land, through Macedonia, hoping to meet Titus more quickly.

Paul did find Titus in Macedonia, and he was overjoyed by the news that the Corinthians had responded graciously to the severe letter.⁴ It was in response to this news that Paul wrote the letter we know as 2 Corinthians.

While most of the congregation in Corinth had responded positively to Paul's correction, there were still some who objected to Paul's leadership, saying that anyone who experienced as much trouble, persecution and sickness as Paul did must not be enjoying God's blessing, and should therefore have no authority over them. Paul spends a good bit of ink in 2 Corinthians responding to this charge, and the “olfactory” verses in our text are part of his response. Let's read those verses again:

*¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the **aroma** of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are to God the pleasing **aroma** of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are an **aroma** that brings death; to the other, an **aroma** that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? (2 Corinthians 2:14-16).⁵*

While the “*aroma*” portions of these verses are pretty clear, there are a number of opinions about how we should understand “*captives in Christ's triumphal procession*.” What point was Paul making with this phrase?

Scholars are confident that Paul was referring to the triumphal military parades that took place in Rome, the capital city of the Empire. Everybody in the Roman empire knew about these parades, which were represented on Roman arches, reliefs, coins, statues, medallions, paintings, and cameos, not to mention the approximately 350 triumphs that are recorded in ancient literature. They were ostentatious celebrations, filled with valiant soldiers, the spoils of war, and the most theatrical pomp and circumstance Rome could muster.

Nicopolis on the west coast of Greece ([Titus 3:12](#)). Following Paul's subsequent reimprisonment, Titus was sent to Dalmatia ([2 Tim. 4:10](#)). According to church tradition, Titus was the first bishop of Crete.

- Trent C. Butler, ed., “TITUS,” in *Holman Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991).

⁴ 2 Corinthians 7:5 ff.

⁵ Verse 14 begins what is sometimes called “The Great Digression,” which runs through 7:4. The theological grandeur of this digression tends to eclipse the reason for the letter, which was the danger to his relationship with the congregation.

Moreover, triumphal processions demonstrated Rome's victories not only by parading the spoils of war, but also by leading in triumph the most important leaders and warriors of the enemy, now presented as conquered slaves. The highest honor any Roman Caesar or general could receive would be to lead one of these parades.⁶

That much seems clear. The problem comes with Paul's apparent placing of himself as a captive in such a parade. Most of the captives in Roman parades were executed at the end of the parade as an offering to the various gods of Rome, and that's the general sense of the only other use of this term in the New Testament.⁷

In order to understand what Paul meant, we really need the context of all of his letters to the churches, which were, of course, in the context of his own conversion to faith in Jesus. Paul points out in several letters that before persons become followers of Jesus, we all were/are "enemies of God."⁸ And as you remember, prior to his own conversion, Paul had been a powerful enemy of those who followed Jesus, and worked hard to destroy them.⁹ Jesus had in fact had to conquer Paul, and did.¹⁰

So, in one sense, Paul regarded himself as "captive" to Jesus, who had conquered him, not by military force but by irresistible Love. In another sense, Paul regarded himself as "already dead," a term that would have been true of the captives in Rome's great processions. Paul wrote that "*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*" (Galatians 2:20).

⁶ From William Barclay's commentary: In his mind is the picture of a Roman *Triumph* and of Christ as a universal conqueror. The highest honour which could be given to a victorious Roman general was a Triumph. To attain it, he must satisfy certain conditions. He must have been the actual commander-in-chief in the field. The campaign must have been completely finished, the region pacified and the victorious troops brought home. Of the enemy, at least 5,000 must have fallen in one engagement. A positive extension of territory must have been gained, and not merely a disaster avoided or an attack repelled. And the victory must have been won over a foreign enemy and not in a civil war.

In a Triumph, the procession of the victorious general marched through the streets of Rome to the Capitol in the following order. First came the state officials and the senate. Then came the trumpeters. Behind them came those carrying the spoils taken from the conquered land. For instance, when Titus conquered Jerusalem, the seven-branched candlestick, the golden table of the shewbread and the golden trumpets were carried through the streets of Rome. Then came pictures of the conquered land and models of conquered citadels and ships, followed by the white bull for the sacrifice which would be made. Walking behind all these were the captive princes, leaders and generals in chains, who were shortly to be flung into prison and in all probability almost immediately to be executed. Then came the officers who attended the magistrates, the lictors bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres; then the priests swinging their censers with the sweet-smelling incense burning in them. After that came the general himself. He stood in a chariot drawn by four horses. He was dressed in a purple tunic embroidered with golden palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked out with golden stars. In his hand, he held an ivory scepter topped with the Roman eagle, and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter. After him rode his family, and finally came the army wearing all their decorations and shouting *Io triumphe!*, their cry of triumph. As the procession moved through the streets, all decorated and garlanded, surrounded by the cheering crowds, it made a tremendous day which might happen only once in a lifetime.

That is the picture that is in Paul's mind. He sees Christ marching in triumph throughout the world, and himself in that conquering procession. It is a triumph which, Paul is certain, nothing can stop.

⁷ In Colossians 2:15, Paul makes reference to God's judgment of the spiritual powers of darkness who thought they had engineered Jesus' destruction: "*And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*"

⁸ Romans 5:6-10; Ephesians 2:11-22

⁹ Acts 8:1, 3; 1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13

¹⁰ Acts 9:1-20

And so, as we continue to approach the idea of “aroma,” Paul’s response to his critics with respect to his suffering is essentially this: “*I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church*” (Colossians 1:24).

In other words, Paul is telling them that “Just as our Lord Jesus overcame the powers of darkness through the unexpected jiu-jitsu of His death, so my suffering and persecution—which some of you did not expect—is proof of the veracity of my message, not a condemnation of it. The message of Jesus is a great separator. For those with eyes to see, my suffering is, in a small way, similar to Jesus’ suffering. The aroma, the fragrance of my life brings either life or death, depending on your response to my message about Jesus and the cost of following Him.”¹¹

It’s at this point that I’m going to try to apply these few verses to our lives today. Hear the verses one more time:

*¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the **aroma** of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are to God the pleasing **aroma** of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are an **aroma** that brings death; to the other, an **aroma** that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? (2 Corinthians 2:14-16).*

Using the metaphor of “aroma,” Paul reminds us that hearing about Jesus opens up the Way to Life for some, while that same hearing causes others to become even more resistant to and hardened against that Way. Some persons find themselves drawn to Jesus, while others are repelled by this message about a crucified God who Lives again; rather like magnets either attract or repel each other.

To use our sense of smell as example, as Paul does here, we might think about the words, “aroma” and “fragrance,” which we use to describe olfactory sensations we find pleasant, and about the words, “odor” and “stench,” which we use to describe olfactory sensations we find unpleasant. In a literal, physical sense, you and I experience various olfactory sensations differently. That’s why there are so many variations in perfume, for example.

And now, to my point. If you remember nothing else from this message, I hope you’ll remember these thirteen words: “[**God**] **uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere**” (2 Corinthians 2:14b). That’s what I’m going to be talking about from here on out.

Hear those words again: “[**God**] **uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.**” Those words apply to you, and they apply to me. That’s the Great Commission “in a nutshell.”¹² I’m going to unpack that sentence using the terms, **Visual Example, Verbal Witness, Vital Service, and Vibrant Community**.

Visual Example. I’ve told you this story before, but it certainly fits here. Some missionary candidates were in their first day of language training prior to going to their fields of service. On that first day, their teacher walked in the room and, without saying a word, walked

¹¹ Luke 12:49-53. With respect to Paul’s highlighting of his suffering as part of his rebuttal to his critics, see 2 Corinthians 6:3-13, 11:1-12:10.

While Paul’s use of “aroma” may have some reference to the incense burned in Rome’s triumphal processions, he more likely refers to the fragrance of the offerings of the Older Testament: Genesis 8:21; Exodus 29:18; Leviticus 1:9, 13, 17; Numbers 15:7; see also Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:2; Philippians 4:18; Revelation 5:8.

¹² The Great Commission is Matthew 28:19-20.

up and down every row of students and then walked out of the room again. Then she came back in and asked, “Did you notice anything special about me as I walked through the room?”

Nobody could think of anything, but finally one student timidly raised her hand. “I noticed that you are wearing a very lovely perfume,” she said. Everyone else chuckled, but the teacher said, “That was exactly the point. It will be a long time before you will be able to speak Chinese well enough to share the Gospel with anyone in China. But long before you are able to do that, you can share the sweet fragrance of Christ with these dear people by the quality of your lives.”¹³

Paul told us that God “*uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume. Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God*” (2 Corinthians 2:14-15, NLT).

Now in order for your life and my life to have “a Christ-like fragrance,” we must first of all know the Lord Jesus ourselves. We must be people who have ourselves repented, who have committed ourselves fully and completely to the Way of Jesus, and who live lives that, while less than perfect, are examples of what God-transformed lives look like. We must be growing in our love for and our obedience to Jesus and His Way. That’s the essential starting point, and there is no other.

Many people know that you and I are Christians, and some of them are watching closely to see whether we live Monday through Saturday what we profess to be on Sunday. What kind of story do people read when they watch your life? Is your life a fragrance or an odor to them? Do others see Jesus in you?

A college student named Dave was a well-known follower of Jesus on his campus. Another student, whom I’ll call Bill, came to Dave and said, “I come from a family that doesn’t believe in a literal resurrection and all that stuff. That’s a bit much for us. But we’re a fine family—a good, church-going family. We love each other, care for each other, and we do good in the community. We’re a stable family. So what have you got that we don’t have?”

Dave responded, “Watch me, Bill. Move in with me. I have an extra bed. Just follow me around. You see how I behave, what’s important to me, what I do with my time, the way I talk. You watch me, and at the end of three months you tell me there’s no difference.”

Wow. What a challenge! Would you make, *could* you make, such a challenge? Bill didn’t take Dave up on the offer, but he did keep coming back to watch how Dave followed Jesus. And eventually, Bill chose to commit his life to Jesus and became a medical missionary.

My friends, part of what it means to be “the aroma of Christ” is to live with an attitude like Dave’s: “I’m one poor beggar telling another poor beggar where there’s bread. I have drunk deeply from God’s wellsprings of grace, and God knows I need more of it! But if you’ll watch me, you’ll see some glimmers of the Savior, and ultimately you’ll want Him, too. *Watch me.*”¹⁴

Verbal Witness. Yet as important as our example is, we make a significant mistake if we attempt nothing more than living a Christlike life, without verbal witness where God gives opportunity. Jesus Himself, God in human flesh, at whose word the sea was stilled and the demons fled, knew that actions alone—even miraculous ones—are insufficient. Jesus continually explained what His actions meant and Who it was to whom they pointed.

¹³ Michael Green in *Stories for a Faithful Heart*, ed. Alice Gray (Multnomah, 2004), p. 95.

¹⁴ Based on D. A. Carson’s sermon, “Biblical Authority: The Exclusive Authority of Scripture for Faith and Practice,” 2008.

Further, simply living a good life without giving verbal witness to our faith presumes that other people will correctly guess the source of our power. I've told you this story before, too, but it makes the point. It's from a fellow named Lorne Sanny. . . .

"Years ago, when I was with the Billy Graham team in a crusade, a businessman came forward one night and received Christ as his Savior. The next Sunday he went to a church he sometimes attended.

"After the service, he walked up to one of the leading elders in this church and said, 'I was at the Billy Graham meeting last week out at the ball park. I went forward and received Christ.'

"I heard about it,' the elder replied, 'and I am delighted!'

"Then the businessman said, 'How long have you and I been associated in business?'

"About 23 years, I think,' the elder answered.

"Have you known Christ as your Savior all that time?' the businessman asked.

"Yes, I have,' he answered.

"Well, I don't remember you ever speaking to me about Christ during all those years,' the businessman said. *'I have thought highly of you. In fact, I thought so highly of you that I felt if anyone could be as fine a man as you and not be a Christian, then I didn't have to be a Christian either.'*¹⁵

Wow. That's pretty sobering, isn't it? You probably know that we live in a time in which adults of all ages are more likely to consider themselves "spiritual" than to think of themselves as "religious." In a way, that's good, because it's awfully easy for religious activity to be mistaken for and to substitute for a passionate, growing, liberating, empowering, and transforming love relationship with God.

But the problem with "spirituality" is that people who call themselves "spiritual" are usually just infatuated with a vague, faintly religious sentiment that requires nothing of them and really offers nothing to them—except that they get to write the rules themselves.

Such "spirituality" offers no healing for guilt and no power for redemptive living. Such "spirituality" may give some sense of connection with a mysterious "life force," but such connection is no more than a pale and powerless counterfeit of true redemptive relationship with the Living God.

The Truth is that Jesus, not Coca-Cola, and certainly not "spirituality," is "The Real Thing," and no imitation can satisfy our deepest yearnings and needs. **It is only in soul friendship with Jesus of Nazareth in the power of God's Spirit that our heart hungers are satisfied.**

What the world calls "faith" cannot produce eternal life. Eternal life doesn't come from faith in humankind, or faith in yourself, or faith in faith, or faith in America, but only from faith in Jesus Christ, born of a virgin, crucified in our place, raised to life by God's power, reigning in majesty in heaven, and returning as the Lord Christ to claim His own.

My friends, "Olfactory Faith" involves *Visual Example*, but it also involves *Verbal Witness*. Olfactory Faith involves having meaningful conversations about Jesus where God gives us opportunity . . . and sometimes, we need to create that opportunity ourselves.

¹⁵ Lorne Sanny, "The Key to World Evangelism," *Discipleship Journal* (Jan/Feb 1982).

Think about this: Do you have a hard time talking to other people about your favorite ball team? Your favorite hobby? Your favorite recipe? Your grandchildren? Of course you don't! If your life in Christ *really is* the wonderful, transforming, purpose-giving, fear-eliminating, deeply joyful experience that we say it is on Sunday mornings, then it shouldn't be hard to talk about.

My friend, if someone asked you what the Good News is, or how to become a follower of Jesus, could you tell them? **Could you tell someone how to be Born Again if they gave you that opportunity?**

There are many resources available to help in such efforts, and the basic outline of a sufficient response has only four points: *God's Purpose; Our Problem; God's Provision; Our Decision*.

God's Purpose is that every person receives the gift of eternal life, purchased on Calvary's Cross (John 3:16); but **Our Problem** is that Sin prevents our receiving this gift (Romans 6:23). **God's Provision** is the sacrificial death of His Son to remove our Sin (Romans 5:8); and Eternal Life awaits **Our Decision** to acknowledge our need and to ask for God's transforming forgiveness (Romans 10:9-10).

God's Purpose; Our Problem; God's Provision; Our Decision. That's not complicated, is it? You already know plenty of passwords and phone numbers that are more complicated than this.

Explaining these things is called "giving witness" or "giving testimony" to what God has done for us. Witnessing is not preaching or "button-holing." Witnessing is simply telling others what has happened to us in an attitude of prayerful respect and care: "*Once I was blind, but now I can see!*"¹⁶

If you and I have truly been again, born from above, and if our redeemed lives demonstrate God's presence in "Olfactory Faith," then we ourselves are powerful arguments for the truth of the Gospel, and those around us need to know where our power comes from.¹⁷

That brings me to **Vital Service**. While it's similar to *Visual Example*, *Vital Service* is more "up close and personal." Here's just one example. It's a story Lee Strobel told about flying into Chicago's Midway Airport one night:

"I remember flying into Midway Airport in Chicago during a blizzard. An engineer from India was sitting next to me. As we talked, I found out he was planning to take a bus all the way to O'Hare Airport and then have his pregnant wife drive from a distant suburb with his two young children to pick him up.

"Look, I have a car at Midway," I told him. "How about if I give you a lift home?"

¹⁶ John 9:25; 1 Peter 3:15-16

¹⁷ And Jesus gives us much more than power. Rick Warren put it memorably when he said that Jesus gives us

A **Profession** (Truth) to live *out*

A **Purpose** to live *for*

Principles to live *by*

People to live *with*

Power to live *on*

Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), pp. 117, 313-314

He was grateful, and during our drive he asked why I had been willing to go out of my way for him. I tried to explain: “**Has anybody ever done something so kind for you that it makes you want to pass a kindness along to someone else?**” [That’s a question worth remembering!]

He nodded slightly.

“Well, Jesus Christ has done something incredibly kind for me,” I said.

As we talked, he began to understand that God’s outpouring of grace had motivated me to help him. When we arrived at his house, he thanked me and said, “I’m going to have to do some thinking about all of this.”

Lee concluded, “There is no doubt in my mind that my words about Jesus registered with him because he experienced the love of Jesus through my practical deed of giving him a ride through the storm.”¹⁸

One of the important things about this story is the truth that we don’t have to “close the deal,” in a conversation about Jesus. That is, we don’t have to move someone to a place of personal commitment in every conversation. Sometimes we do get to be “midwives of eternity” and are present when someone makes that commitment, and that’s truly wonderful, but that doesn’t happen in every chat. Our goal in any given conversation is just to help someone move a little closer to Jesus, one step at a time, until they choose to welcome His embrace.¹⁹

Well, time gets away, and I need to say a word about **Vibrant Community**. While *Vital Service* builds bridges of friendship across which the Love of Jesus can eventually travel, it’s crucial to remember that while people come to church for many different reasons, they only stay for one: FRIENDS.

“Olfactory Faith” causes us to *make* friends, to *serve* our friends, and to bring our friends to Jesus. And the good news is that Olfactory Faith doesn’t involve going to any more meetings at church. Olfactory Faith involves paying attention to what you already love to do. Olfactory Faith works through groups of which you’re already a member, through activities in which you’re already involved.

Olfactory Faith has to do with Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, quilting clubs, bridge clubs, shooting clubs, bowling leagues, soccer teams, swimming teams, motorcycles, bicycles and kayaks—all kinds of fun stuff. The important thing is to spend time doing things with people who don’t yet know Jesus and then using the opportunities God provides to befriend them, love them, and bring them to the Savior.

The idea of *Vibrant Community* is that while God does indeed love us beyond all measure as unique individuals, God doesn’t save us for ourselves alone. God’s Ultimate Purpose is to create a “New Heaven and a New Earth,” a community of vibrant, redeemed relationships unlike any other, anywhere.

This *Vibrant Community* is the Goal toward which the whole universe is moving, and this is not “Mission Impossible.” This is “Mission Inevitable.” This has been God’s plan even before Creation began, *and it’s going to happen*. The amazing thing, the wonderful thing, the truly *exciting* thing about God’s Purpose is that God has given us—to you and me!—the task and the opportunity of helping it come to be.

¹⁸ Lee Strobel, *Men of Integrity*, “Why Do You Care?” (May/June 2010).

¹⁹ See the “Engle’s Scale,” attached with this message.

This Goal is what Paul was talking about later in this same letter when he wrote, “*And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. . . . For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal*” (2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:17-18). Keep that Goal in mind . . . always.

While He was physically among us, the Bible tells us that ³⁵ *Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.* ³⁶ *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.* ³⁷ *Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.* ³⁸ *Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field”* (Matthew 9:35-38).

“*Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field.*” So here’s the Real Deal about “Olfactory Faith”: God has already sent me; and God has already sent you. Let’s roll.

Hark, the voice of Jesus calling, “Who will go and work today?
Fields are white, and harvests waiting, who will bear the sheaves away?”
Loud and long the Master calls us, rich reward he offers free;
Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me”?

If you cannot cross the ocean, and the distant lands explore
You can find the lost around you, you can help them at your door;
If you cannot give your thousands, you can give the widow’s mite;
What you truly give for Jesus will be precious in his sight.

Let none hear you idly saying, “There is nothing I can do,”
While the lost of earth are dying, and the Master calls for you;
Take the task he gives you gladly; let his work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when he calls you, “Here am I, send me, send me!”