

# Faith Is Action

July 2014 • USPS 184720 • Volume 53 • Number 7



**In This Issue:**

## THE FRAGRANCE OF MESSIAH

2 Corinthians 2:14-16: “*Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.*” The word *savour* is somewhat archaic, because when we think of savour, or at least I do, we think of *tasty*. But in the King James English *savour* meant *fragrance*. Therefore, I will substitute *fragrance* for savour.

“*For we are unto God a sweet fragrance of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the fragrance of death unto death; and to the other the fragrance of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?*” (vv.15-16). Or, *who is able to have such a ministry?* To God we are a sweet fragrance in Christ, but we have two different groups of people, if you will, who are *smelling* us. To the one group we are like a *sweet perfume of life*: very pleasant; very

attractive. But to the other group who are perishing, we are like a fragrance, or should I say, like an *odor of death*.

Think about it: **This means we are either fragrant or foul.** One group of people is drawn to us because we smell so sweet and pleasant. The other group wants to avoid us because to them we smell foul. Now, how can this be? The rabbis of Paul’s day used this very language to refer to *the Law of Moses*, and they said that for some it was *medicine for healing*, but to others it was a *prescription unto death*. It seems to be a contradiction: On one hand it is a medicine or fragrance that goes from life to life. On the other it is a foul odor that leads from death to more death.

In fact, other translations and some commentators state that to the one we are *the stench of a rotting corpse*. That’s pretty foul, isn’t it? But to the other we are as

# THE FRAGRANCE OF MESSIAH

BY SHARON HARDY KNOTTS

*the Lily of the Valley and the Rose of Sharon.* You may be thinking, *How does that work? How can we be both of these?* It corresponds with 1 Peter 2:7-8 speaking of Jesus the Messiah:

*“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.”*

To those who believe, Jesus is the precious Cornerstone; the very foundation upon which we build our lives, but to those who stumble at the Word, He is a stumbling stone and a rock of offense. They are offended by Jesus, and they are offended by His Word.

Again we see the dichotomy of one thing branching into two: A cornerstone can be either a rock you build on or a rock of offense that you trip and stumble over. Likewise, on one hand we are the stench of death, and on the other hand we are the fragrance of life. Here’s how it boils down, folks: Those that harden their hearts to the Word and to the truth of the Gospel will reject us. Jesus said that they will reject us *“for my sake”* (Matt.5:11). Outside of the Gospel, you may have been the best of buddies; close friends who have a lot in common with per-

sonalities who get along great, but bring the Gospel into the equation, and it does not work. Jesus said that men will reject us, despise us, revile us and persecute us, and it is because they can smell on us the scent of death.

Let me say this clearly: *Jesus Christ will have an eternal impact on every person that comes in contact with the Gospel.* He is going to impact them eternally one way or the other: Whether from life to life or death to death. Once a person is introduced to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it will have an eternal impact on him. To the one who accepts Him, it’s unto life; to the one that rejects Him, it’s unto death. They would rather cling to their filthy rags and garments of sin and carry with them the stench of death, so that which was ordained to bring life becomes death to them. When we are in their presence, we remind them of their sins and they don’t want to be around us, because to them we smell like a rotting corpse.

### **The Scum of the Earth**

*“And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat. We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day”* (1Cor. 4:12-13). The word *revile* means “to abuse someone with words; insult



with contempt.” This is what they do to Christians who are walking in the light and in the truth. They *persecute* us. The word in the Greek means “to hunt down as an animal.” They won’t get off our case. They’re always looking for something else to harass us about. They *defame* us, which means they outright lie about and slander us. To them we are counted as *filth*. In the day of the Bible, this word was used to refer to the worst criminals of all; the ones that were to be put to death. And we’re counted as the *offscouring*.

“Offscouring”, in a word, means *scum*. It’s the residue that is left when you clean a nasty mess, like your filthy stove or grill you’ve let go too long. Think about your trash cans in the middle of August that have crab shells and fish heads in them, and they get that liquidy thing in the bottom that smells awful. That’s how the world sees us — as *scum*. I’m getting graphic here, because I want you to understand how the world feels about us.

### A Warning from the Wise

The following was written by Messianic Rabbi Jonathan Cahn. He wrote the book *The Harbinger* that sold millions of copies and was on the New York Times best seller list for a long time. Keeping in mind that he is a Messianic Rabbi and a modern day prophet, this is what he wrote in *Sapphires*,

his monthly devotional, in July 2013:

“Michael Weinstein is the man who heads the Military Religious Freedom Foundation of the United States Military. But the MRFF has nothing to do with religious freedom, quite the opposite. In one of his recent articles, Weinstein calls *evangelical Christians ‘monsters’*; He calls sharing the Gospel *‘spiritual rape.’* And this is just the beginning. Even in this age of vulgar discourse, the hatred he spews forth towards evangelical Christians is startling.”

Rabbi Cahn quoting **Weinstein** again: “*We must vigorously support the continuing efforts to expose the pathologically antigay, Islamophobic and rabidly intolerant agitators for what they are: Die hard enemies of the United Stated Constitution. Monsters one-in-all, these fundamentalist Christian monsters of human degradation, marginalization, humiliation and tyranny crave for your universal silence in the face of their rapacious reign of theocratic terror.*”

### Rabbi Cahn Comments:

“Apparently with the encouragement of the Obama Administration, the Pentagon has been meeting with Weinstein for guidance...” (The guy that said these things against Christians is the one the government is consulting for guidance.) “... on its policy toward (Christian) faith. The new

policy of religious ‘tolerance’ in the United States military is set forth in the following words: *‘Religious proselytization is not permitted within the Department of Defense. Court Martials and non-judicial punishments are decided on a case-by-case basis.’* Religious proselytization includes everything from sharing one’s testimony, sharing the love of Jesus, sharing a word from the Bible, talking about why you believe what you believe and potentially any other noticeable expression of one’s faith. Thus, Christians in the military can now be treated as Weinstein has called for, *as enemies of the state, subject to court martial, if not imprisonment.*

“No matter what happens to this law, the very fact that it could happen in America is profound. It was just a little while ago that the administration overturned *Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell* and established the open practice of homosexuality in the military. This was to be a new step in the creation of a new tolerant America. But now we’re seeing the other side of this new ‘tolerance’ ... an intolerance for the Word of God and the Gospel. What happened to the American military in less than two years is a microcosm in a controlled environment; a graphic witness to what lies ahead. When the Sanhedrin told the disciples to stop sharing their faith, the apostles replied that they had no choice but to fol-

low God and not man. As pressure increases for believers like us to be silent, we have no choice but to share the Word of God and the good news of salvation. When the dark gets darker, it’s a sign for the light; it’s time to get brighter.” **(End Cahn’s remarks).**

Think about this, had the apostles obeyed the Sanhedrin in the book of Acts when they were beaten and forbidden to speak in the name of Jesus or spread His name or His Gospel, you would not be saved today. I would not be saved today, because the great commission of Jesus Christ to go and preach the Gospel would have come to a standstill. But they did not let the fear of man dissuade them. They went out anyway, and the Bible says that the saints prayed for them to *“speak more boldly in the name of your holy Son Jesus”* (Acts 4:29-30). They spoke more boldly until there was nothing that the Sanhedrin could do to put out the fire of the Gospel, the fire of evangelism.

So you and I have to be bold and get a spiritual backbone, because some things pertaining to evangelism are going to become illegal. Maybe you are thinking, *So that’s the military and doesn’t apply to me.* Well let me read another story referenced in Cahn’s *Sapphires*, September 2013:

“The Supreme Court has ruled that kindergarten children can no longer verbalize a prayer

of thanksgiving as they partake of their morning snack. The specific words the Supreme Court ruled contraband is this: *‘We thank you for the flowers so sweet; we thank you for the food we eat. We thank you for the birds that sing; we thank you God for everything.’*”

I ask you, why would the forces of Hell pick on kindergarteners? I’ll tell you why: Prayer has a powerful effect on their little minds and their moldable hearts. It gives them the understanding: *“You didn’t come from scum. You didn’t come from a monkey. God made you and gave you everything.”* It’s not some great theological lesson, but it’s saying to thank God for everything. He made the birds. He made the food you’re eating. He made everything. It plants in their little moldable hearts the seed that can start growing. That’s why the devil picks on kindergarteners and doesn’t want them to pray and why he’s made it an illegal activity, and why we must stand up for the truth.

### Speak the Truth in Love

So how do we respond when we’re reviled, persecuted, defamed, and treated like filth and scum? The scripture we read says: *“We bless; we suffer it; we put up with it; we entreat.”* Let me tell you a good way to translate *“we entreat”* – *“we stay sweet.”* In other words, we do what Ephe-

sians 4:15 says, *“But speaking the truth in love.”* We do not apologize for the truth. We don’t back down from the truth. We speak it boldly, but we speak it in love. The world is accusing Christians of not having love, and it’s all because we speak the truth. The moment that you call sin *“sin”* — *“You don’t have love.”* When you say *adultery is sin*; when you say *fornication is sin*; when you say *homosexuality is sin* — *“You don’t have love.”* But the scripture does **not** say to *speak the truth OR have love*; it says to *speak the truth IN love*. **Speaking the truth is loving the sinner!** Speaking the truth is telling them that to be saved, they must know Jesus, because the good news is: He is a Savior who will forgive them; who will receive them; who will cleanse them from their sins. That is speaking the truth in love as long as we’re not doing it in a hateful condemning way — As long as we are *hating the sin* but *loving the sinner*.

This is the key, Saints. You’re not going to change homosexuals by being nasty, hateful, and calling them everything but human beings. That will never win them to Christ. You’ve got to show them love. You do not fudge on the truth. You show them the Scriptures. You take them back to the creation and how God created them. Show them 1Corinthians 6:11 that says:

*“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind” (refers to homosexuals). “And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”*

We need wisdom to deal with these issues. For example, consider homosexuals today in our generation, who unlike most of us, have never been in church their whole lives. No one took them to Sunday school as kids. They have never read the Bible, and they don't have the faintest clue of what's in the Bible. All they know is what they heard somebody else, who may have twisted and *“wrested it to their own destruction”* said. All their lives they have been given the line, *“You can't help it; God made you this way.”* They've been told: *“Because God is love, He loves you just the way you are.”* And the inference is: *And He doesn't want you to change.* Yes, He loves them as they are, but let's qualify that: **He loves all sinners, but He's not going to leave them in their sin,** because He couldn't love them and leave them in their sin, or they will split Hell wide open. But they don't know that. Many don't know there really is a

Hell.

**But: It's not the same case for those who were raised in church.** It's not the same for those who know the truth and what the Scriptures say, but go into homosexuality. We deal with them differently, because *they know.* We give them the Word and the Scriptures they *already know,* and if their consciences aren't seared, they will be convicted by the Word.

It is common for those in the homosexual camp to try to manipulate the Old Testament and say, *“Well, in the O.T. you could be stoned for adultery.”* Or *“In the O.T. it was a sin to be near a woman when she had her monthly.”* They cite these verses to make it look like Bible-believers are off the wall, but they don't put them into the context; because they don't have a whole picture of the whole law. They bring these up to make Christians look weird, but you never hear them quote from the New Testament. *But those who have been raised in the truth know better.* They know better when they only quote the O.T. and never bother go to Romans 1:22-28, but we will.

*“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”* Vain is utterly foolish and profitless, and darkness

always refers to a lie, just as light refers to the truth.

*“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves.”* (This always refers to sexual lusts.) *“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator; who is blessed forever. Amen.”* The only way one can support homosexuality is to change the truth of God into a lie.

*“For this cause God gave them unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature; And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly (or indecent) and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.”* Like it or not, there is specific judgment on the sin of homosexuality, and we just read it here. They will receive “recompense that is meet” or a *commensurate judgment* for their sin.

*“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,*

*God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient”* (or improper, unnatural).

The only way for Christians who know the N.T. to go into homosexuality is to change the truth of God into a lie and to twist the Scriptures. Otherwise, they can’t do it. Their consciences wouldn’t let them. Once they decide to go that way, they cannot tolerate true Christians, because we remind them of their sin. And to them *we smell like a rotting corpse*, because we remind them of their eternal damnation, and they don’t want anything to do with it or with us.

The thing is, they are not willing to say to Christians. “Well, that’s your opinion, and just like me, you have a right in America (we’re not talking religiously, but as an America citizen) to your opinion.” No, they’re not tolerant of our opinion. Forget that it’s about the Bible. They’re not tolerant for *us* to have *our* opinion. They insist that their beliefs should become our beliefs. Therefore, they insist that they control what we watch on television; that they control what you can or cannot do in the military. *Now, it’s okay to be openly gay in the military, but do not be openly Christian!*

There’s no going back, Saints. We can’t change everything that’s been done these past six years to



promote the gay agenda in the military and the many states' same-sex marriage laws that have passed. The barn door is open and the horse is out, but now that we've let this happen, we've got to scramble, so that instead of worrying about reversing these, we fight to make sure they don't steal our religious and civil rights to speak what we believe and what the Bible says.

### **God's Will Not Always Done**

You may say that *with God all things are possible*, meaning God could change things. Yes, but God gives people the desires of their heart. He gave Israel a king when He didn't want them to have a king. He told Samuel, "*They didn't reject you, they rejected me.*" It was not that they didn't think he was a good prophet. They told Samuel, "You're a great prophet and you have served God all your life. We love you, but you're going to die soon, and when you die, what are we going to do? Your sons are evil, so give us a king." And God gave them the desire of their heart and sent leanness to their souls. He said, "*I gave them a king in my anger, and took him away in my wrath*" (Hos. 13:11).

Some people have the really wrong conception that if it happened, it was God's will. If this bad law passed, it was God's will. If this person got into office and

turned out to be a horrible mayor, governor, senator or President who always voted the wrong way, it must be God's will. Are we going to put stuff like that on God? Are we really going to say that it's God's will for everything to go the way the enemy wants? How can that be God's will? If He didn't stop it; if He let them get in office, it's because He gave the majority the desire of their hearts. If enough Christians would stand up and vote the right way, it wouldn't happen. God is not always going to intervene, but as with Israel, He will let people have what they want.

Those who do not accept the Bible want to silence the message, and in order to silence the message, they're trying to silence the messengers, those who preach and teach the Scriptures, and they call us rabid, intolerant agitators and monsters. They're looking for some fault they can latch onto to discredit us. If we get so riled up that we begin to speak hatefully, we're giving them something to work with, something that they can point to and say, "I told you they're haters." It's not just about homosexuality, but all the things we deal with: Pornography, the filth on television, the immorality and anti-Christian bias they present. In some work places if a woman wears a cross necklace, she can be called in for that and told not to wear it, because it's

offensive. It's offensive because it reminds them Jesus died on the cross for their sins, and they need to get saved.

We need to learn to speak the truth like Jesus did and like Stephen did. He was the first martyr of the church. He spoke with such wisdom, *"when they heard his words, they were cut to the heart"* (Acts 7:54). This means they were convicted, but conviction hardens those who do not want to obey the truth. They got so angry they not only stoned him, and it was legal to stone him in the context of their law, because they *"claimed he blasphemed"*, but they also *gnashed on him with their teeth*. I don't see anything in the law about biting people and gnashing on them with your teeth. That was pure rage. That was pure hatred. They could stand there in their holier-than-thou robes and throw stones and say, "You blasphemed the law", but when they ran up to him and began to chomp on him, that was demonic rage. And like Stephen, we've got to find a way in the face of that kind of hatred, when our human instinct is to rise up and give them back the same thing, to speak the truth in love. Otherwise, we fall into the snare of the enemy. We have let the enemy trick us and have done exactly what he wants us to do.

Recently we've had several break-ins at the church. We got photos of the burglar on camera,

and he was arrested. One brother who helped to catch him said that he prayed that the guy gets saved. He didn't say: "I hope someone shoots him and he goes to Hell." He said, "I hope he shows up in my Bible class at the city jail, so I can share Jesus with him, because Jesus said that we are to pray for our enemies." This exemplifies the attitude we should have. Even though he touched the house of God, holy ground, he's still a soul that Jesus died for. When a person is on drugs and demon possessed, he doesn't have theological understanding. If you've never been in church your whole life, you don't know anything about God, you do not have the fear of God on you. The youth of today don't have any fear of God, any knowledge of God, and they don't know any different. They are lost souls that need to be saved.

We're to be the perfume of life in Christ, but in reality, to those that are turned over, that are reprobate, who do not want to come to the knowledge of the truth, we smell like a rotten corpse. It is to those who are seeking truth, seeking God, and sometimes don't even know what they're seeking, we are the fragrance of life.

### **The Treasure in Earthen Vessels**

*"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God*

*and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus (means that we suffer with Him), that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh"* (2Cor.4:7-11).

Paul likened us to terracotta pots that we put flowers in. Because they break easily, they're cheap, but pots made of heavy ceramic can be costly. His point is: The potter in the city of Corinth was one of the busiest people in the whole town, because people were always breaking their pots. It only cost a few pennies to go to the potter and get more. He did not mean that we have no value and are worthless like those cheap little vessels, because once you put a treasure in the pot; once you put Estee Lauder in it, the value now is not about the pot. It's about *the treasure*.

Paul said we have this treasure, this anointing, this perfume in our vessels, and it's the excellent power of God. With this anointing of the excellent power of God we are able to withstand any opposition we face. At times we are troubled on every side,

wherever we turn. Just when you think you are over one battle, here comes another one. Here comes a devil out of one door, and you take care of him, and another door opens, and out comes another. *We are troubled on every hand, but we're not in distress*, because when you're in distress, you put out an SOS that says, "I'm going down; I'm sinking; it's all over." We never have to say that; we're never going down; we're never sinking, because we've got the anointing on the inside, and no matter how great the opposition against us, the anointing sustains us.

*We're perplexed, but we're not in despair.* We don't always understand everything that happens. Don't try to understand everything. Don't try to have a theological answer for every question, because sometimes when you don't know, you try to manufacture something that sounds theologically impressive, but it only gets you confused, off onto the wrong track, and missing the whole point. Sometimes God shows you, and sometimes He doesn't. He may show you up the road when it really doesn't matter anymore, because it worked out. You're not always going to know why things happen, except to know this: Jesus said in John 16:33, "*...In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the*

*world.” And Peter said, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour” (1Peter5:7-8).*

We are often perplexed, *but not in despair*, because to be in despair means to be hopeless. **A Christian is never hopeless!** You can be so discouraged, depressed, oppressed that you can barely keep going. Things can come along in life that punch you in the gut and leave you in a quandary, but you are never ever hopeless! In the midst of the worst time of your life, inside, deep down your spirit cries Psalms 43:5: *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God.”* **A Christian always has hope.**

*We are persecuted, but not forsaken.* The literal meaning is “to be hunted down.” This kind of relentless persecution is only going to intensify, because Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:12, *“If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him:”* Paul said that we fill up (complete) the sufferings of Christ : *“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake which is the church:”* (Col. 1:24). All that Jesus went through, we must add our portion to it. We’ve got to suffer with Him. Peter said, *“Arm yourselves with the mind that you’re going to suffer with*

*Christ.... But rejoice that you are partakers of Christ’s sufferings”* (1Peter 4:1 & 13).

And Paul made it without exemption: *“Yes, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”* (2Tim.3:12). *But we’re not forsaken*, because He said in Hebrews 13:5 *“...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*

*We’re cast down, but not destroyed.* This means to be literally knocked down. Sometimes you are blindsided, someone comes along and kicks you on the shin or knee cap and knocks you down. Your knee may hurt and you may hobble around, but you’re not going to die. Even if we’re knocked down because we’re bearing in our bodies the sufferings of Christ, we have the excellent power of God, the anointing in our earthen vessels.

The beautiful thing is, through all of this, we put out such a sweet fragrance of the love of God, that in the midst of all the liars, haters and backbiters, we may touch a seeker of truth. There may be someone whose soul is longing for something, and because you are filled with the love of Christ and the wisdom of God, *“you open your mouth with wisdom and on your tongue is the law of kindness”* (Pro.31:26). *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof”* (Pro.15:23). You know who to speak to, what



to speak, and how to speak it: *“A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!”* (Pro.18:21).

The Messiah said in Isaiah 50:4: *“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.”* The scripture says *“a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”* (Pro.25:11). Solomon described the words of the wise as *“goads and nails fashioned by master craftsmen”* (Ecc.12:11). He is referring to an expert carpenter who can build beautiful furniture and hide the nails and screws so all you see is the beauty of the work. Yet when you open the doors, it doesn’t all fall apart. It’s sturdy but beautified. That’s how God’s Word is in the lips of someone filled with His wisdom. Proverbs 15:25 says: *“Heaviness in the heart of man makes it stoop: but a good word makes it glad.”*

### **Smelling Sweet in a Stinky World**

People are drawn to us when we smell nice. This may be more to the ladies than to the men: In church service when we have the shaking of hands with one another, we like to hug one another too. When you hug someone who smells really nice, you’ll linger an extra second. If you’re like me, you’ll say, “You smell good. What are you wearing?” I want to know

so I can get it and smell good too. This is what we’re aiming for in the Spirit. We want the sweetness of Christ to emanate from us to others so that they want to linger around us. So they want to stay a moment and ask a question or two. They want to be around us, and they don’t even know why, but they’re picking up our spiritual scent. They’re picking up the fragrance of Christ and His anointing that is flowing out of us.

My favorite verses that speak of the anointing are 1 John 2:20 and 27: *“But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things..... But the anointing which ye have received of him abides in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but the same anointing teaches you all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”*

The word *unction* in verse 20 and *anointing* in verse 27 are the same Greek word: CHRISMA, which means “anything smeared on; an unguent or ointment.” Ladies spray on cologne, and some men put it on their hands and pat it on. You buy real perfume in a little vial and only use a small amount, for instance, putting a dab behind the ears. This illustrates what CHRISMA means. It’s the kind of fragrance that you *smear* on, and it literally refers back to the O.T. priests when they were anointed for office. They made a holy anointing oil with

spices, a special recipe that was forbidden for anyone other than the priests to wear. They weren't allowed to post the recipe on Facebook, so everyone could make their own and show up on the Sabbath with it on. Only the priests could wear it. *But that means us!* 1 Peter 2:9 says: "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*" The word *peculiar* means *treasure*. The world thinks we're peculiar in the odd and crazy way, but God thinks we're a peculiar treasure unto Him. We should go forth and show the *virtues* of Jesus Christ.

### How Then Shall We Live?

This is the question we must ask ourselves: Knowing that this Gospel is ordained for some to *life* and to others to *death*, how then shall we present it? The Gospel that we preach and live, to some will mean the *verdict of death*. To others, it will mean the *gift of eternal life*. The **same** Gospel brings different results to two different groups of people: One will be drawn to the sweetness, the fragrance of Jesus Christ, even when they find out they have to come out of the world and get rid of all their sin. It doesn't faze them, because they fall so in love with Jesus.

To the other, the same Gospel

will cause them to gnash their teeth against the truth, to ridicule it, seek to silence it, and if they do not have a radical change, they will be damned by it. As long as a person is breathing, there's always an opportunity to have a radical change, but God's in charge of that. It's our business to preach the Gospel "*to whosoever will*" (Rev.22:17), and we don't get to say, "Okay, you're good; you're in" or "I don't like you, so you're out." We just carry the fragrance of Christ to everyone everywhere. When you minister in the jails or out on the streets, or get around homeless persons who haven't had a shower in weeks, they can have body odor that's quite repulsive. If they smoke, they may smell like year-old nicotine mixed with alcohol, and you almost want to puke when you get close to them. You want to get away from them, but you look in that face and see the face of someone the devil has beat to pieces, and the compassion of Jesus Christ comes up out of you.

Several years ago a backslider came back to our church. This young man used to sing on the choir, was very active with the youth, and I loved him and was very close to him. But he backslid and went into homosexuality and from there he went into alcoholism. I think he was trying to deal with it. Sadly, he eventually died of AIDS. But one night he came to church after being away for many

years. Someone convinced him to come, and I think it was me. Every time he would get really down, he would call me because I would never beat him up. I always tried to get him back to God. That night he reeked with alcohol and nicotine. He smelled so bad that everyone seemed to leave empty pews around him. It was so sad, because this young man always used to smell nice and was so well groomed. Everyone was trying to be friendly but not get too close.

Then a sister walked up and grabbed him and pulled him to her breast and loved on him. I stood there convicted by the Holy Spirit and watched as she hugged him. I knew she had to smell him too, but she just loved on him. That really said something to me, and God dealt with my heart about it. After that I had to go and hug him too. It's the same way in the Spirit. Sometimes people just turn you off; especially when certain things get under your skin, but you've got to be careful to show the love of Christ, to let that anointing flow out of you, because this Gospel will bring life, or it will bring death. There's no middle ground. The fragrance of Messiah will bring the truth to those that want to know the truth.

God knows the ones who want to know the truth; He knows the ones that are ready to get saved, and He's going to let them cross our pathway, and we need to be ready. We all have to do our jobs.

No one can reach everybody. There are people you can reach that no one else in your circle can reach: On your job, in your family, wherever it may be; just show them the love of Christ and let His fragrance draw them in.

If you want to be an expert soul winner, read the Gospels over and over, and see how Jesus dealt with people. When He dealt with hypocrites, He did not mince words; He called them snakes, but when He dealt with sinners; even the worst-of-the-worst, He admonished them in love, and He won their souls. I want to be a soul winner. I love church people. I love every one of you. I love the saints. I love the believers, but I want to win the sinner. Don't you?

Jesus said we are the salt of the earth and light of the world (Mt. 5:13–16). And we are the fragrance of life and death in Him.