

The Aroma of Life or of Death

Decades ago I saw that a sure way for one to get wheels under their feet and a push toward the exit, is to repeat Jesus' serious call to follow Him. Presenting a belief system and church rules is one thing, but proclaiming Jesus as Lord and Master, and the way of the cross as His expectation, can be crossing a red line.

Even more lethal is to identify specific areas in life where His way stands in contrast to the way of the flesh, and to then urge Christians to repent of our present affections.

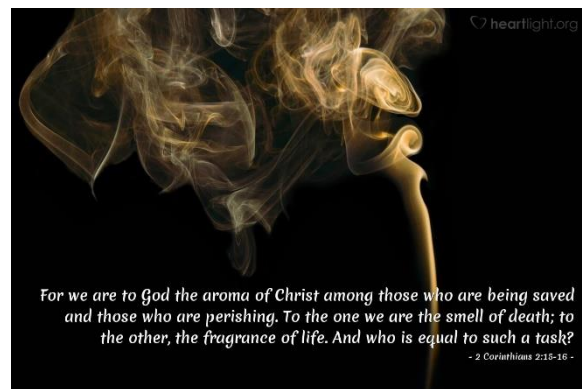
GOD SAYS. . .

"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." [Heb. 4:12](#) niv

Church, THAT is a problem for the flesh and one way to attempt to dull that sword is to hire preachers who don't say things that disturb our peace. Paul speaks of itching ears. [II Tim 4:3](#)

In [John 6:63](#) Jesus says that His words "are full of the Spirit and life." (niv) The message (logos) of scripture is spirit in nature and has a spiritual aroma, but it can be like garlic.

Paul writes of that in II Cor. 2:14-17 (<https://biblia.com/bible/niv2011/2-corinthians/2/14-17>). If you like garlic, the aroma is delightful, otherwise it is nasty. It's the same with the truths of the narrow gate, and the hidden treasure and fine pearls in the Kingdom of God. To some they speak life and to others death.



Declaring the strong claims of Christ upon the Christian's life can lead to the speaker being characterized as harsh and having a critical spirit, with the hope of shaming them into silence. We must judge our own hearts first, and speak truth in love, but we must also know that it is delightful to some and offensive to others.

Jesus told us to go and make disciples - not just church members. As Paul said, "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God." II Cor. 2:17 niv

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