



## A Fragrant Aroma

We last saw how Paul commended the Philippian church for their generosity and support, and how they stood alone among all the churches in the region as the one who provided for the apostle in his gospel work and his physical needs while he was imprisoned. We pick up today with the continuation of this passage, where Paul wrote:

***But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*** Philippians 4:18-20 NASB

We learned a little about Epaphroditus in chapter 2 where Paul mentioned that he was a “brother and fellow worker” and that he almost died in service to the Philippians. Much like Timothy, Epaphroditus personally served and cared for Paul. Paul thanked the Philippians for sending a gift through his trusted friend that not only provided for all his needs, but also was “***a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.***”

Perhaps you’ve never thought of it before, but when we give of ourselves and our resources, our gift rises to heaven like a sweet fragrance to God. As we look through scripture, we see many places where God was pleased by the aroma of the sacrifice of His people. In the Old Testament, this was usually associated with a burnt offering (which quite literally had a pleasing smell), and in the New Testament we are told how our love, obedience, giving, and praises are pleasing aromas to God the Father through Christ our Lord.

***For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life.*** (2 Cor 2:15)

***Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*** (Eph 5:2)

***Through Him [Christ] then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*** (Heb. 13:15)



When we do such things, Paul promises that ***“God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”*** We must remember that this does not mean we get everything we want. As we learned before, God often does give us things we want, but sometimes He does not, however He promises to supply all our ***needs***. This is where we learn to be ***content in every circumstance*** (cf: Phil 4:11) and surrender our will to God in every stage of life, trusting that our heavenly Father always knows best.

Paul finishes this encouraging exhortation with, ***“now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”***

This is what it is all about! We weren't saved to get a free pass out of hell or because Jesus is lonely in heaven. Our created purpose was and is to bring glory to God. On earth we are privileged to bring Him glory through our love, obedience, and sacrifice. Just as Christ lived in perfect obedience to the Father (cf: Rom. 5:19, Phil. 2:8, Heb 5:8, etc.), we too should do the same, and I expect that purpose will continue into eternity as we bring glory to God ***forever and ever***.

Each day the Lord grants us life is yet another opportunity to shine as lights in our dark world, not only reflecting Christ and His goodness in our thoughts and actions, but giving sacrificially to those in need, which honors and glorifies our God and Savior Who sits forever on the throne in heaven.

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