



Links Players

The Fragrant Aroma

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us, reveals the fragrance of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and those who are perishing...(2 Corinthians 2:14-15, NASB)

My wife was new to golf when we first dated in college. But she desired to learn more. She was not prepared for the smell emanating from the trunk of my stick-shift Oldsmobile F-85.

She is convinced the leather grips on my clubs produced that awful smell from sweat, heat, and cold, all combined in that small trunk space. It was an offensive aroma to her, but I could not smell it. I had grown used to the sweet fragrance of golf.

Many pleasing aromas bring back fond memories and create a strong sense of security—the fragrances of home: coffee, a crackling fire, pot roast, and fried chicken.

If you've traveled through Texas, you know we are proud of our barbeque. I don't want to pick a fight, but Texas barbeque is second to none. When you enter the restaurant, that sweet smell of pit-cooked barbeque is, well, to my mind, incomparable. They should sell that smell in new cars.

What does the scent of extravagant love smell like? Mary and Jesus know. Mary anoints and pours this love on Jesus from the broken alabaster jar of costly perfume.

The story is found in Mark 14 when Jesus was in Bethany at his friends' home just days before his death on the Cross. These were some of the last moments before His ultimate sacrifice for us. Jesus knew this was a pivotal time, and Mary did as well.

What would we have done? How extravagant is our love for Jesus? Would we have sold the perfume and given the money to the poor? Or would we have kept the cologne and told Jesus how much we love Him? Or would we have divided it—maybe 10% to the Lord and a percentage to the poor and kept the rest? Love is the issue.

Mary and Jesus both knew this was a time for extravagance. The Bible tells us that she did not anoint with a simple drop of perfume; Mary broke and poured the whole alabaster jar of priceless, sweet-smelling perfume on the head of Jesus. Can you imagine the aroma of that gift, so rich and excessive? Not just a drop, but the whole jar poured out in priceless love.

Now imagine the incomparable gift of Jesus' broken alabaster body for us a few days later. He could have sacrificed a dove or a ram and protected His life, but He was all in and gave everything. He actually poured out His life for us!

In his book, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire explains this well: "Through the heavy smell of sweat and blood, a hint of that fragrance must have arisen from His garment. And maybe, just maybe, that scent amid the stench of humanity rabbled around the cross gave the Savior the strength to say: 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

It is a reminder of the love that spilled from His broken alabaster body. So pure. So lovely. So truly extravagant. It was a vase he never regretted breaking. Nor did she." Nor should we!

Prayer: Jesus, we remain grateful for your extravagant love.

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Randy Wolff

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