

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE SAVOR OF CHRIST

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life.

II Corinthians 2:14-16

Tastes in food are quite different from one country to the next, among various cultures, and even among individuals in the same household. The foods that some count as delicacies others may consider garbage. Some cultures seem to thrive on the hottest of peppers while others delight in eating crawling things on a regular basis that seem completely bizarre to those in other lands. It is difficult to explain why tastes differ so much from one person to the other seeing that we are all cut from the same lump of clay. A man cannot make himself desire a certain kind of food and cannot escape from desiring foods that he likes.

There are certain kinds of foods that give off a strong odor when they are cooked. If one likes the particular food being cooked then that odor may be the most desired of fragrances. Yet the exact same odor may be completely odious to someone who does not share that desire for the same food. Its been a long time since I smelled any chittlin's being cooked, but it is an odor that I cannot forget. As a child my grandmother would cook chittlin's when we had "hog killin'". I did not care for chittlin's then and do not care for them now, especially now that I am fully aware of what they are. Yet those who have a hankerin' for a mess of chittlin's would consider the smell of them being cooked as a delightful harbinger of what was to come, while I would be ready to leave until the meal was over.

The word "savor" which is used here, literally means a fragrance or an odor. We usually use the word fragrance to describe a smell that appeals to us and the word odor to describe those which are less than pleasant. The scripture uses the words interchangeably. (see John 12:3; Phil.4:18) but does use a different word when the point is being clearly made that something is a particularly "sweet" or "completely satisfying" aroma. We see that in the passage before us. Paul uses the Greek word "euodia" to describe the complete acceptability of CHRIST to the FATHER, literally meaning a "a sweet or desirable fragrance".

Over and over again in the books of Leviticus and Numbers we read that the burnt offerings were a "sweet savor" unto the LORD. Now we know that the LORD had no regard to the burning of bulls and goats but that savor which was precious in HIS nostrils was the offering of CHRIST and each time that the high priest went into the Holy of Holies to offer a sacrifice it was but a type and picture of that SACRIFICIAL LAMB which was slain for us. With such GOD is well pleased and with nothing else is HE satisfied.

Paul describes the acceptability of the elect to the FATHER as being the sweet fragrance of CHRIST. All of our beauty is that wherein we are hidden in HIM. *"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* (Col 3:3) HE is our "righteousness" and "acceptability" with the FATHER. HE is well pleased with HIS SON who has undertaken our redemption

and is our beauty before the throne of GOD. So the elect are said to be *"a sweet savor of CHRIST"* unto GOD. All that CHRIST did, HE did to please the FATHER and all that HE did pleased the FATHER who has received HIM to sit at HIS right hand where HE ever liveth to make intercession for HIS people who have no other approach unto the FATHER.

The elect bride of CHRIST has been given all things in CHRIST and they are totally and completely acceptable unto the FATHER because they are seen to be in CHRIST and of CHRIST. HIS obedience is theirs. HIS righteousness is theirs. HIS blessing is theirs. HIS faith is theirs. HIS wisdom is theirs. HIS inheritance is theirs. HIS very life is theirs. *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom 8:32)*

Having said that we are *"unto GOD a sweet savor of CHRIST"*, Paul goes on to say that HE has made us an "odor" unto the whole world. HE has been pleased to put HIS handiwork on display in the world. *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* (Eph 2:10)

To those who are ordained unto condemnation we are an "odious smell" even the very stench of death. Yet unto those who are ordained unto eternal life we are a refreshing fragrance, for they are given (in GOD's time) a love and appreciation for the beautiful "perfume" of CHRIST HIMSELF. This savor is:

Completely the creation of GOD. Nothing makes one man different from another except the grace of GOD. *"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1Cor 4:7)* Except the LORD should show mercy to us we would all likewise perish. Yet it pleased the LORD to show mercy to whom HE would. Those which HE gave to CHRIST before the foundation of the world are the objects of that mercy. Until such time as it pleased HIM to give us a spiritual birth into the kingdom of GOD we were by nature the children of wrath even as others. We had no desire or taste for the things of HIS kingdom until HE created us in CHRIST, a new creature, desirous of eating the bread of that kingdom we once despised. Now our favorite food is that which HE prepares daily.

Completely the work of CHRIST. *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."* (Tit 3:5-7) All of our acceptance with the FATHER is the result of what CHRIST has accomplished in our behalf. *"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:"* (1Cor 1:30) We could no more produce some work that would make us acceptable in HIS sight than a man who is repulsed at the thought of eating a certain food could sit down and enjoy a meal of it. But thanks be unto GOD that HE is now unto us a sweet SAVOR even as HE has made us so in the sight of GOD who has always been pleased with HIS savor.

- 1 Christ and his cross is all our theme;
The mysteries that we speak
Are scandal in the Jew's esteem,
And folly to the Greek.
- 2 But souls enlightened from above
With joy receive the word;
They see what wisdom, power, and love
Shine in their dying Lord.
- 3 The vital savour of his name
Restores their fainting breath;
Believing, they rejoice in him,
The Antidote of death.

165 Gadsby's Hymns by Isaac Watts