



*“But thanks be to God! For through what Christ has done, he has triumphed over us so that now wherever we go he uses us to tell others about the Lord and to spread the Gospel like a sweet perfume.*

*As far as God is concerned there is a sweet, wholesome fragrance in our lives.*

*It is the fragrance of Christ within us, an aroma to both the saved and the unsaved all around us. To those who are not being saved, we seem a fearful smell of death and doom, while to those who know Christ we are a life-giving perfume. But who is adequate for such a task as this?” 2 Corinthians 2:14-16, Living Bible*

## RELEASE THE FRAGRANCE THAT HAS BEEN LOCKED UP

Mary of Bethany broke open her alabaster box to anoint Jesus. She took the opportunity to give her greatest love offering, outclassing all the others who surrounded him. Uninvited, but unstoppable, she was bold and courageous to worship him in the midst of others who: withheld what they should have given; earmarked her giving as wasteful instead of extravagant; desired to misappropriate her gift once it was in their hands; or discredited her because she was publicly known for her unbecoming lifestyle. Jesus not only acknowledged her gift to prepare him for burial, but he also appreciated her as valuable, acceptable, desirable, and purposeful in the presence of her enemies. Jesus publicly defended and honored her by extending acceptance and approval beyond her life span for her reasonable service i.e., worship. Passionately, she went through the open door to release the fragrance of her worship that filled the heart of Jesus. When she did, he could not ignore her offering as well as her opposition. Jesus responded, “Let her alone. Why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work for me, ...wherever the gospel is preached, what she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her,” Mark 14:6, 9. Read Matthew 26:6-13; Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-8. Validated by Jesus, the fragrance of your worship flows unhindered to activate your promotion.

## WHEN GOD ENJOYS WHAT HE SMELLS HE VOWS A COVENANT

Genesis 8:21 records what God said after Noah offered a burnt offering willingly and freely. “And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.” As living sacrifices, what we offer readily cannot die. It remains an eternal torch carrying a sweet-smelling savor as we present ourselves holy and acceptable to serve the Lord's purpose. Can you imagine what God says when you give your free-will worship to him? I love you with an everlasting love that will never, ever fail you. This is God and I approve this message.

## GO GET WHAT IS YOURS, CAN'T YOU SMELL VICTORY IN THE AIR?

Joshua 6th chapter recalls the walls of Jericho tumbling down as an amazing phenomenon. The children of Israel were to take the city, its king, and its army God had given them. Their assignment was to walk around the city one time for 6 days without making a sound; then on the seventh day walk around the city 7 times, blow their trumpets then shout when commanded. The walls fell down flat so they could walk straight into the city unhindered by any rubble. One of the Hebrew definitions for Jericho is fragrant. The shout opened up Jericho to them so what belonged to them could not remain under lock and key. They received their breakthrough without any breach. While God's part was to produce the miracle; their part was to be obedient—to do exactly the right thing, in the right way, at the right time. Although the directive was odd for any military campaign, it was still within reach i.e., possible for Israel to accomplish without any missteps. The reward of obedience is simply this: the Lord will fight for you so you will have no need to fight for yourself. All the first spoils of war were to be offered to the Lord as a sweet fragrance. However, Achan was noncompliant. Knowingly, he took what was reserved for God alone, which triggered Israel to lose the subsequent battle at Ai after the initial victory. Whenever we reject the word of the Lord, we also authorize our being defeated, therefore unseated. I Samuel 15:22 serves as a reminder, “... Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” Obedience from your heart sends up an irresistible aroma that always makes victory sweet.

## Thought for Transformation

*What inspired the theme for this month is this: while I was praying the Lord took me to the woman with the alabaster box in Mark 14:3-9. Not only did I hear the word “validate” but I felt it like he had branded me. I believe I received the Heavenly Father's blessing—one that resonated: it doesn't matter if others reject me, what he thought of me was far more important because he knows what he deposited in me. Remember others cannot even see your heart from the outside so they are missing the part God takes pleasure in receiving from you. Live fully endorsed by our Heavenly Father!*

## Treasure or Trash, You Choose

*“A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth,” Proverbs 17:8. The only way we can really enjoy others fully is to look through the eyes of Jesus. Keep turning the gift in front of you to see hidden treasure, not smelly trash.*

## Follow Your Nose

*While tasting the victory Jesus won, you can also smell the unmistakable aroma of triumph even at a distance. “He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting,” Job 39:25.*