

'Body Odour': Part III Fragrance of Love

I recall again the feedback I received from my manager a few months ago: "You are doing a great job and are assertive. However, some think you come across sometimes as being aggressive..." That delicate balance; that thin line, again! Assertive or aggressive? Confident or proud/cocky?

Anyway, feedback is what it is – calling attention to how you are perceived by others. And perception, they say, is reality! So, where I work, while I wanted to diffuse the fragrance of Christ and His knowledge, which includes the Holy Spirit fruit -- elements of gentleness and meekness, I was emitting the foul odour of aggressiveness. Had I made the Kingdom of God 'far' for someone, for the recipients of my aggressive behaviour; made Jesus Christ and His life that I profess to live, unattractive to someone?

I had failed to diffuse the fragrance of gentleness which is in me by the Holy Spirit Who indwells me, Who fills and re-fills me as I thirst and hunger for Him. If He is in me indeed, I need to be producing a certain kind of fruit and diffusing certain kinds of fragrance. The fruit of God's agape, unconditional love; the fragrance of His love; for, as the Holy Scriptures say, God's love has been shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit. And as some have interpreted, the fruit of the Holy Spirit is ONE – LOVE! And it manifests in (the elements of) joy, peace, patience/longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith/faithfulness, meekness, temperance/self-control.

When I and you are fruitful by diffusing the fragrance of love, we make the Kingdom of God 'near' to people, indeed...

In a Bible Study on Love some time ago, I personalized the great Scripture on Love, 1 Corinthians Chapter 13, for all attendees, including myself. Here is how mine read (and you can substitute your name for mine, to see how it speaks to you personally):

"1 If ANAYO speaks with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but doesn't love, ANAYO is nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. 2 If ANAYO speaks God's Word with power, revealing all His mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if ANAYO has faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but ANAYO doesn't love, ANAYO is nothing. 3-7 If ANAYO gives everything ANAYO owns to the poor and even goes to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but ANAYO doesn't love, ANAYO has gotten nowhere. So, no matter what ANAYO says, what ANAYO believes, and what ANAYO does, ANAYO is bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up.
Love cares more for others than for self.
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.
Love doesn't strut,
Doesn't have a swelled head,
Doesn't force itself on others,
Isn't always "me first,"
Doesn't fly off the handle,
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,
Doesn't revel when others grovel,
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,

Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end.

8-10 Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. We know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about God is always incomplete... 13 But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love."

(The Message translation)

Kindly feel free to contribute to this by return comments, as we 'sharpen' ourselves together.

And, as you and I diffuse the fragrance of love, may the REST of our lives be the BEST, in Jesus' name. Amen!

Prophetic word: Jesus made Himself of no reputation ... nothing; took the form of a servant, became obedient even unto death. Dare His followers follow in these His Steps? Dare today and henceforth to practice being of no reputation, humble and obedient to God even unto death. And experience the 'wherefore': God's kind of promotion; exaltation ... says the Spirit of the Lord

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