

Now That Makes Scents!

OK, so I heard a word the other day for the first time. Olfaction. Maybe I've led a sheltered life (I know, we're all leading sheltered lives right now with this coronavirus thing!). I had heard the word olfactory, but not olfaction. Olfaction is a noun defined as, "the act of smelling." The olfactory sense, of course, is one of man's 5 senses, along with touch, taste, sight, and hearing.

Every human sense is an amazing picture of the creativity of God and the olfactory sense is certainly remarkable. I remember hearing one time that the most identifiable smell to humans is the smell of chocolate! Even as you read those words, that familiar smell may have knocked on the door of your brain which is now knocking on the door to your taste buds! By the way, if you love the smell of chocolate, there is no place like the Ghirardelli Chocolate Factory in San Francisco, California. It is the quintessential playground for chocolate lovers and I highly recommend a visit!

There are many other amazing facts about our sense of smell. For instance, a study in 2014 revealed that the human nose can detect at least 1 trillion different scents. Our "scent" cells are renewed every 30-60 days so, in effect, we get a new nose every month or two! Women have a better sense of smell than men. Humans have 5-6 million odor-detecting cells, but dogs have 220 million! One of the most evocative smells, which brings back memories of childhood for 85% of people, is the smell of crayons. It is amazing isn't it, how we remember people and places in our past by certain smells!

Another interesting fact is that our sense of smell gets bored easily. If you go into a bakery or florist, for example, you're very aware of the aroma that surrounds you, but by the time you reach the checkout you don't even notice it. Now that's too bad when the smell that surrounds you is fresh-baked bread, but there are times when not noticing a smell can be blessing!

For instance, a friend of mine formerly lived in Minnesota next to a paper plant. When family or friends would visit from out of town, they would comment on the horrible smell that hung over the neighborhood. But guess what! He couldn't even smell it! He had been immersed in it so long that his olfactory senses no longer detected it!

Sin can be like that in our life, too. At first, sin is painful. It offends our spiritual senses. It impacts our heart and hurts our conscience. If we continue in it, though, our senses become dull, our heart becomes calloused, and our conscience becomes seared. Over time, we become de"scents"itized to its stench, to the conviction it brings, and to its ensuing destruction in our life and the lives of our loved ones.

Keep your spiritual sense of smell alive and vibrant! Confess sin readily, for God is faithful to forgive and to restore!