

Today's Devotional is provided by Rose Herring

The Fragrance of Love

"You Christians are such hypocrites!

"You do all this stuff, lots of bad stuff.

"Selfish, mean things.

"Cussin...' "

"Y'all commit your little 'sins' or whatever, over and over again, even right up till the day you die.

"Then you pray to God for forgiveness and suddenly, bam!, you think you can just walk right into heaven..."

(Scoffing laughter.) "So, why not be a 'Christian' when it's so *EeeZee?*"

I remember someone saying that to me, very sarcastically, many, many years ago, and me thinking, "Well, yeah!"

I couldn't quite formulate my response at the time, though my heart knew the answer: Hell, yeah, that's right! (Sorry about the 'cussin').

And it's not hypocrisy. Let me be clear: It's not that simple.

Like a lot of people, I've done many things I'm not proud of, and I shudder over some of the memories.

Guilty. An open and shut case.

But while I've contemplated, said, and done a lot of wrong, I believe I've done some good. At least I hope so.



And in the end, when the tally is rung up, I'd like to think that the good will far outweigh the bad. But it really doesn't matter...

All because of Christ.

Because Jesus took that long, lonely walk to Calvary, carrying all our sins in his heart and on his bleeding, broken back. Because he then hung on the cross to die for ... us.

Furthermore, according to Scripture, because of what Jesus did, God doesn't see our sin. God will never see the ugliness that's in me (and you?).

For example, 2Cor.2:14-15 says, "...Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God..."

Wow!

Jesus wiped away, completely *washed* away all the crust and dirt, grease and grime, the stale, smelly, ugly stains of our lives so that God only sees our sweetness and beauty, innocence and goodness reflected off the image of God's beloved son, Jesus Christ. We are miraculously made clean and forever sweet-smelling to the Creator.

Imagine that!

That particular scripture reinforces the truth that we are saved through our triumphal (winning) relationship with Christ and therefore made legitimately whole and fit to be joint heirs, with Jesus, to God's Throne - in Heaven!

Yet, we still must do our part. We must believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths (Rom.10:9-10), honestly own up to our wrongdoing and truly repent. We must humbly ask forgiveness and, if we're able, make amends. The Book of Romans (5:1) says we are justified by faith and therefore have peace with God.

Jesus paid it all, said it all: "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do."

Thank you, Jesus.

Let us claim the Victory!
It's that simple. Lovely.
Breathe the clean, fresh air.

Oh, and by the way... Though once Guilty, now Forgiven!

Case closed.