

Who Are You?

1. Review verses 1 and 2. In what way can Christ's love for us, exemplified in the cross, be seen as a sweet-smelling aroma? How can our own lives give off a similar aroma?
2. How are the sins listed in v. 3 related to each other? How are the sins in the next list (4) related to each other? How is each list contrary to the character of the Lord (1-2)? What kind of aroma do you think we give off if we do participate in any of these sins?
3. Both lists of sins are not "fitting" or "proper" for saints. Why is this the case? (Think about the meaning of the word "saint.") Do we usually think of sin in this way? Why or why not?
4. Verses 5-6 are very strongly worded. Do you think that Paul is exaggerating here? Why or why not? How should we look at joking about these sins, and how should we view our own possible participation in these sins? In what way might a believer be deceived (6)? Be specific.
5. The word "partake" (7) is the same word used in 3:6 to describe the Gentiles' participation in God's promises in Christ. But the word "participate" (11) is from the Greek word "koinoneo," close fellowship among believers. How could a believer's actions be viewed as fellowshiping with those who do not know the Lord? (12) Considering that Paul is addressing his readers as "saints" and as "light" (8), how do you think this "sharing" would be viewed in heaven?
6. We have a new list in verse 9. In what way is each "fruit" in this list the direct opposite of the sins in 3-4? In what ways does each fruit perfectly reflect God's self-revelation in His Son?
7. Why are we commanded to "find out" or "learn" what is "acceptable" or "pleasing" to God? (10) What does it look like to obey this command? Can you imagine a case where we might not know immediately what pleases Him? Why might we NOT want to find out what that is? In what way is that attitude related to the list of sins in verse 3?
8. We are clearly commanded to expose or rebuke the unfruitful works of darkness (11). What do you think this looks like practically? As you answer, consider the need for a believer to act in true love and humility, without explaining away or "taking the teeth out of" this command.
9. Skim verses 8-14, looking particularly at Paul's analogy of light and darkness in this section. How does Christ shine on us when we "awake" from our sins and trust Him? In what way can a believer participate with Christ in this "shining?" How should our own gratefulness for Christ's light, which shone into our own lives when we trusted Him, encourage us as we expose sin?
10. Consider the various terms used to describe believers in this week's passage. Which of these terms is most encouraging to you, and why? How can remembering this truth about yourself directly impact your life this week?