

# THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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## ***“The Aroma Of Thanksgiving”***

**By Steve Niemeier**

This weekend is traditionally called “Thanksgiving” as it is for us to remember those folks who settled in this country many years ago. It seems they had a Thanksgiving meal together to be thankful for their safe journey to the land.

Many across these great United States will gather with family and friends to take time to be thankful and to enjoy one another’s company. Many will talk about how good we have it here in the states and yet many who say that have never seen the “other side” to make an honest evaluation. Mostly we compare it to the “riches” of the world without giving thought to the ‘spiritual’ issues of this life.

Homes and apartments across this land will be filled with the sweet aroma that arises from the kitchen area. Pies will be baked, turkeys will be cooked, and hams will also be baked as all the trimmings will be prepared for the meal. The meal is the center point it seems and all activities on Thanksgiving Day center on this meal. The aroma is sweet and enticing leading us to hunger for what is being prepared.

Have we taken the time to think about the sweet smelling aroma that God wants to smell? Paul tells the Ephesians (Eph. 5:2) *“And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”* In II Corinthians 2:16 Paul says *“For we are to God the fragrance of Christ*

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*among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.”*

It is good to reflect and give thanks for the blessings that we have on this earth. After visiting a third World Country and coming back to this great nation leaves one wondering “How am I so fortunate to live my one life on this earth in a country so blessed?” Yet, in getting “settled” back in to the flow of things I can’t help but see how it seems we have lost touch with reality as we go about our lives as if we will be here forever. The things we are stressed over, the things we get frustrated with, the anger we display toward one another, the lack of brotherly love we exhibit. These things and the inventions of man that we spend dollars upon dollars on seem to engulf this one life on earth that the Lord has given as gift. Can this be a sweet smell of thanksgiving to Him?

All of us have defining moments in our lives. My life has had these also. We remember the day we were baptized into Christ. If we are married we remember our wedding day. If we have children we remember the day they were born. Defining moments form our lives. A defining moment that will never leave my memory is the aroma of thanksgiving that God allowed me to see the real meaning of life on this earth. I have a lot to learn about it even though I am threescore years old. To take a deep breath and realize that a soul carries no color but an aroma – the soul longing for God through obedience in Christ is a sweet smelling aroma – the soul refusing to yield to God through Christ an aroma of “unthankfulness” for the grace of God.

None of us knows what the future holds for any of us on the face of this earth. As a result of this fact isn’t it a wise thing to stop and reflect on what we do know? We know that our time in this life is limited. It will pass by swiftly. How we redeem this time is so important to the whole meaning of life eternally. Have we taken the time to stop and smell the aroma of thanksgiving? Not only of the physical blessings from God – but the true meaning of life –

the spiritual blessings He has bestowed upon us. If we will do this our lives will be defined as a sweet smelling aroma just as the fragrance of Christ.

### ***“I Lost A Friend”***

**By Steve Niemeier**

We have heard many men and women talk about their mother in laws in very negative terms. Very seldom do we hear of them calling them “a good friend”. The trip to Sierra Leone was quite an experience that will forever be embedded in my mind. The Lord giving the increase, the sights, sounds and smells of a third world country, the people that became my new friends and brothers and sisters in Christ. Yet, the trip also brought feelings that I have never felt before. You see, I lost a friend during the trip.

The friend was my mother in law. She was my friend even though she was also a mother in law to me. She was my sister in Christ also. My friend lost her husband over 41 years ago – but never lost her faith in God. She lost a son over two years ago – but never lost her faith in God. She lost a great granddaughter earlier this year – but never lost her faith in God. She lived alone and at times seemed forgotten by her siblings – but never lost her faith in God. She lived on a very small amount of money each month – yet never lost her faith in God.

While dealing with the perils of this life and what was thrown her way she stayed faithful to the Lord. When things were difficult for me she was full of encouragement. When a decision was made for me to take a trip to Moldova or Sierra Leone never did she say “don’t go”. She would tell me that I needed to take time to enjoy the journey of this life.

For over 41 years she would welcome me to her home and always have a hug to welcome me and a hug when I would leave. She was full of good works and she set an example for my children of what a Christian woman is to be like. She certainly will be missed for she gave more than she ever received. You see she was my friend for she gave me permission to marry her youngest daughter and never told me she regretted having done so. My

friend will be missed here on earth but in Abrahams bosom she is now getting the rest she so deserved.