

DO YOU SMELL THAT?

SCRIPTURE:

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12: 2).

MATERIALS LIST:

(1) Dust Mask/Gas Mask

MAIN MESSAGE:

Even though we live in this world, we are not be of the world.

SONG: "Purify Me Lord"

LESSON:

My brother and I were charged with the task of taking the garbage to the county dump. Back in those days, we did not have garbage service so we loaded up the truck each week and drove down the road to empty the garbage cans. This generally was not a particularly difficult task, perhaps it wasn't the most pleasant, but there were far harder jobs we could have done. Normally our garbage was not too terrible, but this was a special occasion: dad had gone fishing a few days before and put all the non-edible parts of the fish in the can.

There they had set for the better part of a week in the hot Florida sun. Imagine the odor we experienced when that can was opened. This was the kind of smell you not only experienced with you sense of smell, but also the sense of taste and, somehow the sense of touch as well. It was the kind of smell that made you want to shower after experiencing it, and consider giving up smell for at least a year. Looking back, I wonder why we never invested a few dollars in some dust masks to help curb this kind of odor from invading our nostrils.

While the smell of that week-old fish could not really harm us, there certainly are smells we should avoid. There are some things, like pollen in the spring, that could wreak havoc on the sinuses. It is those times a mask to help filter out smells and dust from the air. A dust mask can allow the user to be surrounded by bad smells and not be affected by them.

It is this concept we must keep in mind when reading Romans 12:2 because the Christian must live in the world we are to be a part of the world. The smell of the fish stayed at the dump because we got rid of the source. However if any of that fish juice had splattered on us we would have taken the smell with us. If we allow ourselves to look like the world then we are no different from the world.

PRAYER: Please help us to live like You even in this sinful world.