



Title: Grasping God's Anointing

Theme: A Recipe for the Anointing of the Holy Spirit

"So he said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit' says the Lord Almighty.'" (Zechariah 4:6)

A foundational truth for the church of Jesus Christ today

Our text found in Zechariah chapter four is a vision of comfort to a people whom were in great need of God's mighty empowerment. It is important to remember that the main purpose of the vision was to encourage the two leaders, Joshua and Zerubbabel in the work of rebuilding the temple by reminding them of their Divine resources. God spoke to Zechariah in this vision about how the holy things of God will be done. It is a vision of much encouragement to the people of God and lays a foundational truth for the church of Jesus Christ today.

God anointed two men to do an overwhelming task at the close of the seventy-year Babylonian captivity of the Israelites. One was Joshua, the high priest in Judah and the other was Zerubbabel, the first governor of Judah. They were anointed of God to re-establish the Temple and true worship between 538 – 516 BC. (Hag 1:1, 12, 14; 2:4; Zech. 3:1, 3, 6, 8 – 9; 6:11). Zerubbabel's name means, "Yahweh's personal residence among His people." Meaning that he was God's anointed servant sent to accomplish a certain task.

The promise to the obedient church of Jesus Christ

I would propose to you that any church who is surrendered to the complete will of God and is striving to walk in obedience to His written Word, has this encouragement, "...Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord Almighty." The promise to the obedient church of Jesus Christ is that you "...will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Dr. Kenneth L. Baker wrote it wonderfully, "Only if His Spirit governs every detail can a service be glorifying to Him." Henry T. Blackaby said it powerfully and truthfully, "The church of Jesus Christ must understand their need of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the Great Commission." I would like to add this; the Holy Spirit is as much available to us today as He was to the early church and we need only to receive Him by faith and through obedience to God's Word.

What should be in the heart of the child of God who is "Grasping for the Anointing of God's Holy Spirit?" Is there a "Recipe for the Anointing of the Holy Spirit" that will enable the born again believer to walk in the empowerment that Joshua and Zerubbabel did?

It is a necessity that we allow the Holy Spirit to place deep within our hearts and mind some spiritual truths

Every Christian needs God's power in his life and upon the ministry that God has called him to work in or else his efforts will be completely of the flesh. Exodus 30: 22 – 33 holds the ingredients that should be in the heart of the child of God who is “Grasping for God's Anointing.” These passages of Scripture tell of the special anointing oil which was to be used upon men or things which were to be set apart for God's use. This oil may be referred to as the sweetness of Holy anointing oil. This oil had infused into it the essence of four principal spices which included myrrh, cinnamon, fragrant cane, and cassia.

The recipe for this oil gives a picture of what we need in our hearts to enjoy God's anointing. Therefore, it is a necessity that we allow the Holy Spirit to place deep within our hearts and minds the spiritual truths to these ingredients and pray that the Lord will once again birth these principals back into the heart of the church.

A principal fragrant is a life that is dying to self

We must begin with a simple understanding of the anointing with oil from Exodus 30. It is for the setting apart for God's use. It is also important to note that the anointing with oil was symbolizing the Holy Spirit. You see there must be a mixture of these principals in our lives, if we are going to express a life and ministry that has God's Holy Spirit working through it. The first principal fragrant is a life that is dying to self.

The first ingredient in making God's special anointing oil was liquid Myrrh. Myrrh was used to prepare bodies for burial. We are taught in order to get its beautiful sweetness it has to be crushed. Every great ministry that is long lasting and has great value has been birthed through someone who has died to self. They were asked by God to let something go that was special to them, in order to prepare for the work of the Lord.

Myrrh speaks of death. There is no anointing of the Holy Spirit without death to self and the love of the world. If we want to know the Lord and have God's anointing we have to die first to ourselves. The old man must be put to death. We must die to our own agendas, which includes dreams and desires, not born from a surrendered heart to the Lord Jesus. Christians cannot depend upon their own strength, abilities and resources. The Christian who is willing to allow the Holy Spirit to bring him to dying to self through prayerful reading of God's Word, is a prime prospect for God's anointing, or being set apart for a special task with the Lord.

Dr. George Rawlinson tells us that liquid myrrh can be translated as pure myrrh or literally “myrrh of freedom.” Dying to self literally brings freedom and liberty, not bondage. Therefore, the true way to having freedom and liberty and to being used of God is to first die to self.

Every anointed man of God who has been truly set apart for God has been given the opportunity by the Lord to give up something very special in his life to serve Him. Some have given up sports, fishing, good jobs and careers. Many a great missionary has given up mothers and fathers to go and serve in third world countries. These great servants of the Lord have God's anointing.

What sacrifices are you making or have made to be trained for the Lord's work? How are you allowing the Lord to continue to work in your life, exposing attitudes of self and cleansing of the world out of your heart? Is the "Old Man" dead within you, have you been made a new creation in Christ Jesus? Are you walking in step with the Holy Spirit?

An aroma pleasing to the Lord

The second ingredient to obtaining the anointing oil special to God was fragrant cinnamon. Cinnamon is obtained from the inner bark from young branches of the evergreen tree found often in Sri Lanka. Cinnamon oil is distilled out of these branches and is used for food, perfume, and drugs. It brought a pleasant flavor to everything it was added to and gave off a very pleasant smell. Its fragrance was beautiful in the Tabernacle because it counteracted the stench of animal sacrifices and human odors.

A term you read often in the Bible is "an aroma pleasing to the Lord." God wants sacrifices that are a pleasing aroma, and this is done by 1.) Offering our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. (Romans 12:1, 2) 2.) By obeying the Word's of Christ. (John 15:10; Matthew 3:17) Having a passion for Christ, and being victorious in Christ, thus, becoming a sweet fragrance to God, and 3.) By conducting ministries that are gripped with a passion for Christ, and are victorious in Christ, thus, becoming a sweet fragrance to God.

The apostle Paul wrote about being ministers of the New Covenant in 2 Corinthians 2:15 – 17, "For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task? Unlike so many, we do not peddle the Word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God."

There are several points worth mentioning to those with ears to hear and hearts to obey. The minister and church that is a sweet fragrance to God are those who are about their Father's business. They spread the message of Christ to both the church and the perishing. They are teaching the Word of truth through careful instruction to the children of God and they are making ways to get the word of God out to those in the world. This type of servant hood to the Lord is acceptable, pleasing, enjoyable, satisfying, fulfilling, precious, and worthy of the anointing of God's Holy Spirit.

Paul says "unlike so many." Those who desire and get His anointing are those who do not peddle the Word of God for profit. The Greek word for "peddle" (*kapeleuontes*) can also be translated as "corrupt." Meaning to corrupt the Word of God. It is taken from an old word, meaning "huckster." A huckster is defined as one who is a hawker, or a trickery fellow. It is used here as one who peddles

for personal gain. It can also mean to adulterate, to whittle down, to contaminate, to tamper with the Word of God. The Practical Word Studies of the New Testament gives us this application, "...it is to mix other things into the Word of God and the gospel such as, personal ideas, speculations, the latest religious fads or novel ideas."

The Pastor and congregation that enjoy the anointing of the Holy Spirit speak before God with "sincerity." The word "sincere" here means that the pastor and church have pure, unadulterated hearts. The practical application is that their motives have been shaken and rolled through a sieve. They will be unstained and untainted when inspected.

This type of Christian church will not be respected because of profession or for any other reason. This church is respected because the aroma of Holy Spirit fruit is seen as spiritual gifts are exercised under the key fruit of sacrificial love. God's anointing is upon those who offer up the sweet aroma of Christ-like character.

What purpose do you have as you do ministry, is it to gain numbers or make true disciples of Christ? Can your ministry withstand close inspections? Do you joyfully allow your ministry to be examined for sincerity?

The third ingredient that made the special anointing oil was fragrant cane. The more you beat it the better it smells

The third ingredient that made the special anointing oil for those people who were or things which were set apart for service to God was fragrant cane. The Calamus plant is a fragrant ginger-grass often found in central India and grows in miry soil. To get the plant to put off its strong, spicy, aromatic scent, it has to be beaten. The more you beat it the better it smells. This sweet cane is a valuable item in Palestine. (Song of Song 4:14; Jeremiah 6:20; Ezekiel 27:19) The juice of this sweet cane was highly esteemed for sweetening foods and drinks.

The application here for receiving God's anointing is that the pastor or Christian is often taken through the school of hard knocks, thus God is able to fashion the character desired in the man or woman being set apart for a certain task. Every child of God has to grow in his ministry. The higher in leadership God is going to put someone, the hotter and harder the trial becomes in order to build faith and Biblical integrity. Before God sends His children out to do battle, He makes sure that they fully understand that they are more than conquerors; they are being conformed into the image of His Son. Romans 8: 28-29 says clearly, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been call according to His purpose. For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son..."

In the shaping of this Christ-like character, God first takes the child of God through an "Integrity Check." These integrity checks test the inner convictions against outward actions. This reveals inconsistencies in a child of God's life, forces them to make a choice about surrendering those shortcomings over to the Lord.

God also has "Obedience Checks." These test a Christians desire and

willingness to respond to the truth of God's Word and it will call for action. To correctly respond to this check brings greater depth in Christian character.

Then there is the test of responding to "Spiritual Authority." Spiritual authority is the direct result of God doing a greater work in the deeper areas of a Christian's life. Dr. J Robert Clinton wrote, "Spiritual authority is the source of true credibility in leadership." This is the area that separates true Holy Spirit anointed churches from churches that have only a form of godliness. Every ministry that has Holy Spirit anointing, that is truly "set apart" for God has leadership who are respectful and surrendered to spiritual authority. Every church that has God's anointing has a congregation who has respect and is surrendered to spiritual leadership. The Holy Spirit only anoints those who can be led with a joyful heart.

God also has "Word Checks." This test a Christian's ability to hear the voice of God as the Holy Spirit brings revelation and illumination through the written Word. Effective ministry flows out of abiding in Christ. These word checks test and see if a Christian can pray through the task he claims he has received from God. If he or she can, then God will most certainly set him apart for some special task.

Joseph, the eleventh son of the patriarch Jacob, was a man set apart for a specific task for God. He was taken through these four character-shaping test, thus he had God's anointing, the setting apart for service to God. Even Joseph's name is reflective of his role in God's plan for the nation of Israel, for Joseph was God's agent for preserving and prospering the nation in Egypt during a famine in Canaan. His name means "may God add."

Have you allowed the Lord to take you through the school of hard knocks? What position in the ministry do you feel called to go into and are you willing to be prepared like the apostle Paul was? Are you letting the trials that God takes you through conform you into the image of Christ? If you do, God will add to your ministry.

The more we allow God to break our hearts for His righteousness, to scrape way and purify our hearts, the sweeter the aroma of life we will be to Him and the more valuable we will be in the building of the kingdom of God.

The fourth ingredient that was used for the special anointing oil was Cassia. Cassia is a spice that grows only at elevations above 8,000 feet. You have to get up on the mountain to get it. It comes from the bark of a shrub native to the East Indies and is valuable in trade to Palestine. It was a very sought-after commodity in Damascus trade, according to Ezekiel 27:19.

The application here today is the anointing we need from God must be sought after and be as precious to us as it was to Christ. One pastor wrote, "Cassia means to split, to scrape off, to purge as it was from the bark of Blume Shrub tree." The symbolic meaning is that the more we allow God to break our hearts for His righteousness, to scrape away and purify our hearts, the sweeter

the aroma of life we will be to Him and the more valuable we will be in the building of the kingdom of God. Cassia symbolizes the purifying effect of the anointing of God upon your life and there are no shortcuts to the anointing, we have to pray, be fed and washed by the Word of God. Jesus lived in the anointing of the Holy Spirit and from that He maintained a close walk with His Father. He was in prayer and lived by the Word of God.

The foundational church is the child of God who “confesses” (onomazo) meaning he puts into practice what he professes.

In 2 Timothy we read of workman approved by God. The Bible says “... God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and, ‘Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.’ In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.” (2 Timothy 2:19-21)

The foundation here is the child of God who “confesses” (*onomazo*) meaning to put into practice what he professes. This church consists of those who belong to God, who have given themselves to Him in such a way that they no longer possess themselves and the world no longer possesses them, but the Lord indwells them and they have dedicated themselves to the righteousness of God. It must be noted; this does not mean that Christians must be perfect before receiving God’s anointing. However, they will be seen as a people who are hungering for the righteousness and holiness of God.

The most common fruit in their lives will be the fruit of the Holy Spirit, walking under the anointing because they have:

1.) Allowed the Holy Spirit to apply myrrh to the heart. They are dying to self, dying to their own agenda, to their own dreams and are now surrendered to God’s will for them. No matter what that might be.

2.) They have allowed the Holy Spirit to apply the fragrance of cinnamon oil. They offer their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. They obey the teaching of Christ and their passion is for Christ and that makes them a sweet fragrance to God.

3.) They have allowed the Holy Spirit to apply “fragrant cane.” The more and the harder the trials are, the more they come out smelling like a rose. They know and live the truths found in Romans “...in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son...” (Romans 8:28-29)

They have come to know the joy of God’s “Integrity Checks,” “Obedience Checks,” and “Word Checks.” These are what conforms them into the “Image of Christ.”

4.) They have allowed the Holy Spirit to apply the fragrance of Cassia. Their hearts have been split open by the hammer of God’s Word, the written Word is washing them because they know that the Word of God not only takes

out soiled spots, but also will keep the heart from remaining dirty. They also hunger for the righteousness of God....(Jeremiah 23:29; Ephesians 5:26; Matthew 5:6) They are a very precious commodity in the building of the kingdom of God.

All the ingredients we read about in Exodus were mixed with olive oil and the mixture was called "holy." The child of God who applies these four truths under the influence and power of the Holy Spirit of God into his life will be called holy by the Lord Jesus Christ, set apart for good works unto Him.

One such child of God is Matthew Ward: Matthew Ward is living proof that God uses circumstances to mold hearts for His service. In January of 1994, Matthew Ward was diagnosed with not one, but three types of cancer. The word "cancer" had become all too familiar to him many years before. By age 12, Matthew had lost his mother to a brain tumor and his father to leukemia. For two frightening and uncertain years, Matthew battled the disease and ultimately experienced full remission.

One resource writes, "Now considered 'cancer-free,' Matthew is convinced that God used his ordeal to move and prepare him for a new ministry: using his voice to melt walls of disbelief, discouragement, bitterness, and doubt within the body of Christ. For Matthew, the music ministry is about reaching out through the power of God to heal and restore broken lives. His songs are carefully prayed over and handpicked for the express purpose of reaching to all who wish to have [God's anointing] upon their lives."

Matthew Ward writes, "After my bout with cancer in 1994, the Lord began a work in my spirit, showing me new avenues to explore regarding ministry in music. He would make a clear path for me to reach in and help those who are hurting mentally, spiritually and physically. My Redeemer CD project was inspired largely by my physical experiences as a cancer patient... It is a direct reflection of the power of God to reach into places you think He simply won't. It represents God's heart toward me while I was going through one of the toughest things I've ever had to face."

Another source writes about the ministry of Matthew Ward, "Ultimately, this is what Matthew Ward's ministry is all about: finding God's strength to carry on through the pain and uncertainties of life, praising and worshiping Christ from the deepest resources of our beings, and by faith learning to live again."

All Christians must remember that they can become God's anointed. They do not need to be a proclaimer of God's Word nor a music minister. They need only to be a willing vessel wanting to be molded, literally allowing the Holy Spirit of God to apply myrrh, fragrant cinnamon, fragrant cane and Cassia to their spiritual hearts.

Let us Pray!