

Cupcake Theme: Crazy for Cupcakes (Sweet-smelling Savor)

DEVOTIONAL/LESSON STARTERS & WORKSHOP IDEAS

Add in your own points, illustrations, explanations, and relating Bible verses.

Something Smells Good!

- What smells good to you?
 - Flowers
 - Special foods
 - Perfume or cologne
 - Scented soap
 - New car
 - New book pages
 - Fresh cut grass
 - Spices
- What smells bad to you?
 - Body odor
 - Dead animals
 - Rotten Food
 - Bad Breath
 - Wet dog
 - Sewage
 - Manure
 - Exhaust fumes
- What scent are you leaving on the world?
 - By your speech
 - Would people think these are good or bad?
 - By your actions
 - Would people think these are good or bad?
- Ephesians 5:2
- 2 Corinthians 2:15, 16
- Philippians 4:18

Sweet Smelling Offerings

- God was pleased with Noah's offering.
 - Genesis 8:20-22
 - "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour;..." (verse 21)
- How pleased is the Lord with the aroma that we send forth?
- We should be leaving the sweet aroma of the fruit of the Spirit in the air.
 - Galatians 5:22, 23
 - 1 Corinthians 4:4-8
 - Ephesians 4:2
 - Ephesians 3:16, 17
 - John 15:1-8
 - Ephesians 5:8-11
- What are we offering to the Lord? Do you think He finds what we are offering Him a pleasing and sweet smelling?

Filled to Overflowing

- Ephesians 5:18
- Galatians 5 (whole chapter but verses 16-19 key verses)
- Filled cupcakes are wonderful things. There is the fruit, jam, cream, or whatever beautiful concoction someone took the time to bake down in the center of that thing!
- You bite into them and all that sweetness comes pouring out.
- As Christians we are to be filled with sweet things too and it all starts by being filled with the Holy Spirit.
- We have to allow the Lord to fill us because what we fill ourselves with just doesn't cut it. We come out as that bad "batch" of cupcakes.
- We suffer when we are poured out on the plate of life because maybe we are...
 - Deflated because we have lost our joy for the Lord
 - Dripping with worldliness
 - Gushing out unkind words
 - Runny because we watered down our Christian life
 - Hard because we became bitter

- Tart because we didn't add enough sweet words and deeds
- Lumpy because we held on to things that were hard for us and never moved on
- There is a whole range of things that can destroy our filling
- What is inside us matters!
- We need to break open with that fruit of the Spirit---best filling ever!

Bake Ahead Desserts

- Preparing your heart to share the love of Christ.
- You can't face the world without first spending time with the Lord by way of Bible reading and prayer.
- If you are going to have sweet words come out of your mouth, you have to prepare your heart first.
- The interaction you have with other people during the day is a result of how you have already prepared your heart.
 - Let's have soft answers ready.
 - Let's have kindness and helping hands at the ready.
 - Let's have sound wisdom ready to share.
 - Let's have God's Word on the tip of our tongues.

Hot Ovens, Half Baked Cakes, and Silly Doves

- Do a study of Hosea chapter 7.
- The Israelites had gotten so far away from serving God.
 - Heated like an oven (7:4)
 - Heart like an oven (7: 6)
 - A cake half turned (7:8)
 - Basically a cake not turned over and baked on the second side.
 - Not fit to eat.
 - Silly doves without heart (7:11)
- This passage is all about how the people basically fled from God and went after idols and sin.

- “Woe unto them! for they have fled from me:...” (7:13)
- The Israelites began chasing other things and worshipping idols. And look at how much they went through! Yet, they still kept getting farther and farther from serving God.
- They even “wailed” about their troubles (Hosea 7:14) but they didn’t cry to God about it. They just cried.
- What is so sad about this whole situation is that they got so swept up into sin that they didn’t even know it.
 - “Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth *it* not...”
- It is so easy to get caught up into sin by just slipping away a little bit at a time.
- In the end when we get caught up in sin...
 - We become HOT OVENS.
 - hot for other things that replace the Lord, just like the idols that Israel worshipped.
 - We become those HALF BAKED CAKES.
 - We hinder our efforts to accomplish anything for the Lord.
 - We become SILLY DOVES.
 - We fly about without any direction.

NOTE: Hosea 7 really is an interesting chapter to study. You may have to read through it several times to really focus on what was happening. We can learn so much from these Old Testament stories of how the children of Israel went through their highs and lows. We see the state of their hearts through their obedience and the times when they strayed from God.

Cold or Warm Desserts

- How are you giving and serving?
- With a cold or warm heart?
- 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7 (give cheerfully)
- Mark 12:42-44 (widow’s mite)
- Matthew 6:21 (where your treasure is)

The Cooling Rack

- Do you question, “Where is God?” when you feel like you can’t be used anymore?
- Or do you feel like you’ve lost your way?
- Circumstances in your life left you lonely, tired, and out of sorts?
- Not at the place in your Bible reading and prayer life that you would like to be?
- Feel like you want to be used for the Lord but the opportunities elude you?
- Feel like you are sitting on a cold rack just waiting, waiting, waiting?
- God hasn’t moved. He is still there.
- Give it over to the Lord.
 - Job 7:11
- Give thanks
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- God’s got this.
 - Jeremiah 29:11
- The Lord will give you strength.
 - Psalm 40:2; Philippians 4:13; 2 Chronicles 32:7

Workshop Topics

- *Experiencing a Sweet Tooth for the Word of God – Psalm 104:34; Psalm 119:103*
- *Craving the Sweet Stuff – Focusing in on the really desiring the Word of God. Psalm 119:24, 92, 97, 174; 1 Peter 1:2*
- *Delving into the Sweetness of the Word of God- Psalm 19:10*
- *Being an Everyday Gourmet – Having a discerning palate with what we choose to think about, look at, and participate in. (Philippians 4:8)*

- *Understanding the Impact of Sweet Words* – Proverbs 16:24
- *The Joy of Baking up Sweet Friendships* – Proverbs 18:24; Proverbs 17:17; Proverbs 27:9; Proverbs 27:6; Proverbs 27:10
- *Combining the Key Ingredients.* – We are all different in the body of Christ. We are all part of the ingredients. We have to be mixed together and serve alongside one another in order to bake up the perfect pièce de résistance that the Master Chef has planned. We don't taste well on our own. We are like a lone egg or a bag of flour left on the counter. We have to work together.
- *Adding a Dash of Fun* – Finding joy in your life. Getting excited about your faith.
- *Baking up some Love for the Unlovable* - Concentrating on forgiveness, breaking barriers, and loving with a Christ-like love. Learn to love others that aren't nice or never show any love themselves.
- *Stir it Up* – Stir up the gifts of God (2 Timothy 1:6). Be careful what you are mixing. Don't stir up controversy, anger, trouble, or even a hornet's nest! Stir up love, joy, and good works.

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