

Your house smells.

But to be fair so does mine.

It's the reason why coming home after being away is so sublime. It doesn't matter how comfortable the bed was somewhere else, or how warm the vacation was or how relaxing the vacation was, nothing beats the experience of coming home.

Why?

University-College of London published a study recently that found when you come home, whether you've been gone a day, a month or a year, your brain triggers dopamine receptors in your brain, specifically, the same dopamine receptors triggered by cannabinoid products. It's why you sleep better at home, why you're more relaxed and why life has a more euphoric quality.

Researchers theorize that it has to do with the smell. The smells that you notice and the smells that your brain notices are totally different. For example, if you have a cat, your house will smell like cat – but you won't notice it because your brain tells you that it belongs there. Your brain picks up the smell, and then ignores it, but it still registers.

It's the same with all the subtle smells layered across your house. The shampoo you use, or the soap you clean your laundry with. The perfume your wife wore, or the smell of children - your brain picks every single one of them up, and all the memories associated with them come back.

Why am I telling you this?

Because I believe we're wired for home.

I believe God built us to belong and programmed our brains to drive us toward home.

If you're wandering around, if you're aimless, if you're circling some place that you're not sure you are meant to be, hear Paul's words to the church in Ephesus this morning. Be Home

You are at home with God

We're not sure who Ephesians was actually written to. The earliest copies of the letter we call Ephesians, actually omit that part of the address line – and others seem to use it as a kind of code. In either case Paul is addressing concerns about what it means to be a follower of Jesus in a world that's not terribly conducive to following Jesus. As Paul is writing, Nero sat atop the Roman empire and had implemented mandatory worship of the divine emperor. By all

accounts, Nero was the God of this world. And so Christians were faced with a dilemma: how do we exist as citizens of the Roman Empire, but keep our consciences clean in worshipping God alone?

Paul's response is the letter we call Ephesians.

Not only are you members of the household of God, but citizens thereof. Your home isn't in the world and so you're not supposed to feel comfortable in it. The dopamine receptors in your brain aren't supposed to be firing when the world is being the world. The priorities of the world, money, fame, power, sex, these aren't the smells of home that followers of Jesus are wired for.

We know what home smells like. We're wired for it.

And here's why believing this matters:

Because central to the Gospel is the idea that so is everyone else. Whether they've never stepped foot inside the doors of a church before or they've turned their backs on it intentionally, we believe that every single person is created in the image of the same God and is wired for the same home. And so how you act as individuals and how we act as a church in the world matters because people are want to catch a whiff of home.

It's the same reason Paul wrote to the Corinthians that they are the aroma of Christ. The scent of home, even the faintest whiff, makes a difference.

You are a home for God

And at the same time as you are at home with God, Paul reminds us that you are a home for God. How you live matters.

Which is why events like CY are so critical to the faith formation of young people. To understand the reality that they aren't the church of the future, but are the church right here and now, is central to grasping the message of Paul to the Ephesians. Our Young people are the church today. And so I've invited a couple of them to come up and share a bit of what they hope to bring home with them from CY.