

Thanksgiving

November 27/28, 2024 at St. Matthew, Port Washington, WI

Thank God for your Nose

You arrived at 9:00, right on the nose.

Keep your nose to the grindstone.

That rich man has his nose in the air.

She said she'd be back after she went to powder her nose.

Keep your nose out of my business.

Why can't you find it? It's right under your nose.

The nose knows.

Other students may get in trouble, but you keep your nose clean.

The nose is more prominent in our culture than you might realize. It does much more than just smell things and give you a place for your glasses to set. There are all types of shapes and sizes for noses. But all noses have common features. The top part of the nose is bone. But then it transitions to softer and softer cartilage so that you can wiggle the end of your nose. The middle and end cartilage interlock, one scrolling upwards and one scrolling inwards. Without this reinforcing structure, your nose would collapse and close up every time you inhaled through your nose. There is SO MUCH detail in the nose that we literally overlook.

The outside of your nose, however, is just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. Behind the nose is the sinus cavity, or space. The nasal cavity acts like a sound chamber that modifies and amplifies speech. Without the nasal cavity, everything we say or sing would sound "nasally."

Maybe this silly children's video will help you understand more about the nose.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzOSzX_HXE4

At the tip of your nose and between your nose and the sinus cavity, the air passageway narrows. The bottom of your nose is narrower than the inside of your nose. There is also narrow gap getting into the sinus cavity. It forces the air you breath in to speed up. Once it gets into the sinus cavity, then, the air spreads out quickly so that the air comes into contact with the olfactory nerves on the top side of the sinus cavity. That way, you can smell. Each nose has two nostrils divided by a septum. If your nose was not divided into two nostrils, you would be able to smell, but

you would not know from which direction the odor was coming from. Some say that we can detect 50,000 different smells, but that number varies because you can train yourself to detect very slight differences in odors. And how the olfactory nerves send signals to the brain so that you can actually notice if the pumpkin pie is burning is a complex system that scientists are still trying to figure out. And once a smell gets to your brain, it can trigger all sorts of memories, like your mother baking Christmas cookies when you were a child.

There are several arteries which supply blood to different parts of the nose. Evolutionists can not figure out how that happened. You can't have arteries in place unless the nose is in place. And you can't have a nose unless the arteries are already in place. Sadly, since they do not know about the Amazing Creator, they have to think that the detailed nose and the intricate arteries randomly evolved at the same time and just happened to meet up perfectly. That's like saying that two blind men walking through a hundred miles of forest would just happen to walk right into each other. But the connections between arteries and the nose are even more complicated than that.

Some evolutionists suggest that noses evolved because early humans used to live in a cold climate so they grew noses to warm up the air before it got to their lungs. But other evolutionists say that humans evolved in warm places like Africa where they would not need to warm up the air. They can not agree and they do not know. How sad. We rejoice to know that we have a loving Creator God who not only created the whole universe, our solar system, our earth, our bodies, but also our intricate noses.

We could dig deeper into our noses, so to speak, but I think you get the idea that our noses are reminders that there is an intelligent designer who put our bodies together. He also loves us. We do not NEED a nose to live. There are some creatures that do not have a nose and they survive just fine. Nor, do we need to be able to smell to survive. But what a blessing our nose is. We get to smell a flower or bread baking in the oven. And, by the way, when a child is growing inside its mother, all of the parts of the nose start coming together when a baby is just four weeks old. That growing fetus is a human being with a nose.

Did you know that God has a nose? Well, not really, but kinda sorta. The Hebrew language has one word for both "nose" and "anger." The idea is that when you are angry, your nose flares. Think of a bull that's angry

and ready to charge. His nostrils flare. The Bible is very clear that God has a nose, that is, he gets angry. When the Israelites sinned and worshiped a golden calf, Moses explained (Dt 9:19), **“I feared the anger [nose] and wrath of the LORD, for he was angry enough with you to destroy you.”** When the Jews in Jerusalem rejected the Lord, he said through his prophet Jeremiah (7:20), **“My anger [nose] and my wrath will be poured out on this place.”** Through the prophet Jeremiah he said to sinful Jews (Jer 15:14), **“My anger [nose] will kindle a fire that will burn against you.”**

We simply have to get rid of the notion that our sins are not a big deal, as if they were small bumps on our road through life. Sin is like a huge brick wall that would end our lives and send us to eternal suffering in hell. Sin is deadly serious. We dare not shrug off our sins as insignificant. “Nothing bad happened to me the last time I committed this sin, so I can do it again.” Or, “I’m not as bad as others.” Or, “God knows I’m trying.” Or, “I can’t be perfect, so why even try?” Etc. When God created the world, he established how things should go. Adam & Eve had a moral standard. Anything that goes against the way God established things is rebellion against God. It’s thumbing our nose at God. We call that sin. The Lord’s nose flares with anger when we sin. The author of Hebrews explained (He 10:31), **“It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”** If you want to understand the seriousness of sin and God’s anger, look at Jesus hanging on the cross, his back ripped to shreds, his face swollen, blood everywhere, gasping for each breath and screaming from the bottom of his heart (Mk 15:34), **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”** Yes, God gets angry about sin.

Jesus came into this world to be our Savior from sin. He was born on that first Christmas and – while still remaining fully God – also became fully human. He had flesh and blood and bones and a nose just like you. He was like you in every way except without sin. All of our sins, though, were blamed on him as he hung on the cross and God vented all of his anger for all sins of all time of all people on Jesus. Just like a soldier throwing his body on a grenade to save his comrades, Jesus put his body between us and God’s anger. Before he gave up his life, though, Jesus announced to the whole world and you (Jn 19:20), **“It is finished.”** It’s done. God will not vent his anger on you because he already vented his anger on Jesus. Your sins are forgiven and you can look forward to heaven where everything will be perfect forever.

That gives us an even greater reason to be thankful than just having a nose. May this Thanksgiving holiday, as we pause from our normal routines for a bit, give you a reason to pause and give thanks to the Lord with even greater appreciation. May the gift of salvation from sin give you reason to resist temptation and stay away from sin. We don’t want to make God angry. Think for a moment, where in your life can you improve? Can you be more careful with your language? Can you keep indecent things off your screens? Can you show greater loving concern to those around you, especially your family and spouse? Can you pray more and spend more time with God’s Word? With the power of God in you through faith, you can. In the Old Testament temple, the priests regularly burned incense which symbolized our prayers going up to God. Just like we smile to smell turkey and stuffing, the Lord is glad to “smell” your prayers as well as all the loving things you do for one another. St. Paul explained that showing your thankfulness to God by showing love to God and others is a (Philippians 4:18), **“fragrant offering”** to God. Your works of faith smell good to God.

So, this Thanksgiving, and every day, give thanks to God for your nose, but especially give thanks to God for your salvation through Jesus. Amen.