

The Messenger

A Ministry of Nahunta Friends Church

Skunks March 2026

Years ago, on a hot August day, I was driving down old 421 and encountered a dead skunk in my lane. It did not take long for that ripe smell to rush into the car. Impulsively, I slowed down and turned the fan on high. I soon realized that the car was being filled with that one-of-a-kind scent...so I turned the fan off. Now the aroma was trapped inside, placing me in the middle of a skunk cloud! To add to the dilemma, I had slowed down in my valiant fight against skunk gas and the smell had a chance to linger. I finally found deliverance by opening up all the windows in that old Pontiac and pretending to be at Daytona. Church bulletins and food wrappers were flying around in the back seat. In seconds the hot summer air was pushing that pungent smell away and I was able to continue my journey. I have learned how to respond to a dead skunk: open the windows and don't slow down!

As we move through each day, we never know what we will encounter. There are many unpleasant difficulties that could lay in our path. They may merely be aggravating inconveniences, or they may be disruptions that challenge us in a deeper way. In times like that, what is typically your first impulse? Is it anger? Blaming? withdrawal? or incessant worry? How much do these reactions actually help us deal with the discomfort of a frustrating moment? They often just serve to trap those negative emotions in the cabin of our thoughts where we rehearse them over and over. If the windows of our mind and spirit are closed, or at least distracted from the truth and promises of God, we can be stuck with the odor of a bad experience for days, months, or even years. Our natural impulses are not effective in fending off such irritations and can actually make them worse.

Instead, what if our initial response was to open the windows of our mind to allow the fresh air of Scripture to flow through? What if instead of impulse we began to sing a hymn or a worship song? What if in the midst of that disgusting moment we began to pray? We may find that the scent of the trial begins to fade. What if instead of parking our thoughts near the place of frustration, we focus on where we are going? What if in the moments we are disrupted by an unprovoked and unexpected trial, we keep our destination in mind? As followers of Christ, we have an identity, a purpose, and a destiny from God. When we surrender ourselves over to God's panoramic view of our life, the scent of a lifehurt is put into perspective and can begin to slip away. This is not about denial. Skunks stink. Sometimes life stinks, but God is good. When we allow His perspective and His promises to flow through our minds, He will transform our days, no matter what's in our path!

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