
Heart and Soul ... A Weekly Meditation

January 25, 2015

When the Soul Becomes Drowsy

“They are people who lack all sense of right and wrong.”
Ephesians 4:19 (Common English Bible)

Imagine that most unfortunate condition! To be incapable of discerning what is right from what is wrong. It is a moral condition; a result when the capital of noble awareness and aspirations begins to shrink and a person is brought into a state of spiritual bankruptcy. The ability to distinguish between right and wrong is less mental discernment than it is a moral sense. It is the spiritual palate which tests and discriminates the moral qualities of thoughts and actions. Indeed, Job, from the pages of the Old Testament, used this very figure of speech when he asked, “Can my mouth not recognize disaster?” (Job 6:30 CEB) Job knew wrong by its taste. He detected and found it distasteful, as the physical palate detects and rejects food that has spoiled.

A fine palate can lose its power of discernment. Particularly when the body is ill, the power of taste is often diminished or lost altogether. Certain medications used to treat physical symptoms can also result in the loss of taste. The person finds that all foods taste similar or there is no taste at all. Such people find they are incompetent to appreciate the delicate flavors once enjoyed of excellent cuisine. So let that same person neglect his spiritual condition and there is a similar result to the moral palate. Good and bad, right and wrong become mingled into a common insensitivity.

Attention to God is the oxygen of a vital, life-giving faith. Neglect the spiritual palate and the soul becomes drowsy. Then it becomes numb. After some time any feeling of God is suffocated. Unable to distinguish one value from another, such people are driven by impulse. The dangerous result is that people turn themselves over to doing whatever feels good and to practicing every sort of corruption along with greed. Sin does it. Prayerlessness does it. Neglecting to regularly read God’s Word and to meditate on it does it. God eventually seems absent.

The glory of our Savior is that he has defeated death – the physical kind. Placed in a tomb for three days, Jesus rose again and drew fresh breath into his lungs. Similarly, Jesus can fill our spiritual lungs with new breath and vitalize our spiritual nature. Jesus can restore a faith that has withered from neglect and restore sensitivity to our spiritual palate. A person who has lost all moral discernment can – by turning again to God – recover all sense of right and wrong and know the pulse, and taste, of life as God intends.

Prayer: Abundant God, You cause water to flow in desert places and bring life from parched ground. Release within my soul the springs of life-giving waters that I may always discern Your most perfect will and taste and see that You are good.

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