

Spiritual Perception - Chapter 3

This age thinks better of a gilded fool than of a threadbare saint in wisdom's school.

Thomas Dekker 16 century Dramatist

- 1) Masks help us hide our true identity.
- 2) Our standing in life according to St. John Chrysostom depends on our virtues:
 - i) Our character is who we really are.
- 3) We often don't see our neighbors for who they are.
 - i) But as reflections of our prejudices?
- 4) St. Dorothea of Gaza likened life like a circle.
 - i) The closer people become the closer we get to God.
- 5) Before asking how you perceive your neighbor as how you perceive God.
 - a) If we see something of God we will be able to recognize him in our neighbor.
- 6) Iraneus stated that: The Glory of God is a human fully alive, and the life of a human being is the vision of God.
- 7) To see God is the final Goal ... We prepare our whole lives for it.
- 8) Our ability to perceive God and others spiritually is an important facet of the divine image in us.
- 9) The NOUS (greek) or intellectus (latin) A spiritual intellect that is able to perceive spiritual realities. It is related to the image Free choice, and virtue.
- 10) Many neglect the Nous, not knowing they possess it.
- 11) In Genesis 2:7 God molded the human body from the earth and breathes into it his own breath.
- 12) We were created with "divine and intellectual essences" and earthly elements.
 - i) two distinct levels of reality.
 - (1) One the invisible and spiritual reality of the heavens the other of the earth.
- 13) We live on earth with the same intellect as the Angels have in heaven,
- 14) Both Angels and man can get to know God.
 - i) By knowing Him we can Glorify Him.
- 15) St. Gregory stated by Glorifying God together, we will become united with each other and can thus unite the heavenly and earthly worlds of which each is a part.
- 16) St. Gregory: When people glorify God in this way they look upon Him and He nourishes them.

- a) As food nourishes the body God nourishes the spiritual mind.
- 17) Like is know by like.
- a) The eye can see light since it has light in it.
- 18) When we look at nature what do we see?
- a) Use your Nous to look upon nature.
- 19) Why don't we not see God?
- 20) We live in darkness and we have turned our eyes away from God creating instead false idols for ourselves instead of truth.
- 21) God did not hide from man nor did he only reveal Himself in one way.
- i) God gave us the Hebrew Bible, the Law and the Prophets.
 - ii) Athanasios called this "a sacred school of the knowledge of God and the conduct of the spiritual life for the whole world"
 - iii) Man would not accept the message: Athanasios called this "the dehumanizing of humankind"
- 22) Because of this we have fallen victim to spiritual delusions.
- 23) God not wanting to see his creature disintegrate into death sent the incarnation of the Word, an educator.
- i) The one who comes to us at our level.
- 24) By seeing what Christ says and does we can see and perceive God in action.
- i) By knowing the Son we can come to know the Father.
- 25) Through viewing and knowing Christ we can begin to see our fallibilities.
- i) This reawakens our capacity to see spiritual things
- 26) The practical application of this is that we can begin to see people in a different light not allowing the flesh but the spirit to guide us.
- 27) By knowing God maybe we can see the patience, kindness, generosity wisdom, that come from God in our brothers and sisters
- 28) It is easy for us to see the bad in people, this brings us back to the mask.
- 29) Through prayer we can overcome this and see people by using our nous and our kindness.