

Dear reader's,

Below is an email Mrs. Knight sent me concerning my previous newsletter (posted with permission). I liked it and I hope you enjoy it too!

I have considered this question many times. Some of my thoughts are: I believe part of the problem is that the tree was of the knowledge of good AND evil, the holy and the profane. YHVH always makes a clear definition between the two and commands us not to mix them. (not to sow different kinds of seeds together, not to mix threads of wool and linen in fabrics, women and men not to wear each other's clothing, not to eat unclean animals, etc.). He is quite clear about His feelings in this regard. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God." 2 Cor. 6:14-16a

"I want you to be wise (knowledgeable) in what is good, and simple (ignorant) concerning evil." Rom. 16:19b

"You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons." 1 Cor. 10:21

I think He makes it clear that we are to seek after the knowledge of good things, and shun the knowledge of evil. But we, being the dumb, carnal humans we are, too often crave to know about these very things. Why do we break our necks to see when we pass by a bad car wreck? Why is pornography such a temptation? Why do I find myself absentmindedly looking at those dumb tabloids at the check-out at the store, reading all about the latest garbage with Britney, Jennifer, & Angelina? I don't even like that stuff, and yet my eyes are drawn to it if I don't purposely avert them. It is the constant pull of this flesh, which wars against the spirit. I believe our mission in this life is to learn to walk in the spirit and overcome that constant pull. This is His will for us. If we walk in the spirit, we no longer fulfill the lusts of our flesh. We are then under grace and not under the law. Does this mean we no longer obey the law? Of course not. How silly! On the contrary, we obey the law AND THEN SOME. What has changed is our motive for obedience. We are no longer obeying out of fear and from force (because we are "under the law"), but out of love and gratitude, voluntarily submitting because we are in unity with Him and His will has become our will. What a goal!

I know you've probably heard this story, but it has helped me so much I will share it with you in case you haven't heard it.

There was a man whose dog had 2 puppies, a black one and a white one. He took the puppies to the vet and asked the vet,

"Can you tell me which of these two puppies will grow to be the biggest and strongest?" The vet said, "Yes, of course I can.

The answer is: ***the one you feed the most.***" The spiritual analogy, of course, is this: which will prevail in our

lives, our  
flesh or our spirit? The answer lies in which one we "feed" the most.

I will leave you with one answer as to how we "feed" our spirit: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are **true**, whatever things are **noble**, whatever things are **just**, whatever things are **pure**, whatever things are **lovely**, whatever things are **of good report**, if there is any **virtue** and if there is anything **praiseworthy** -- *meditate on these things.*" Phil. 4:8

"How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word." Ps. 119:9  
*By Mrs. Knight*

## Making good decisions *by Matthew Day*

Here I have outlined some untested steps to making good decisions. These steps do not have the experience of an adult behind them, so use them at your own risk.

1:Realize that you have a choice. I think that fewer things would seem impossible if we realized that we don't have to do it the first way that we think. If you don't realize that you have a choice, you will just end up going the way the current takes you.

2:Identify all of the choices available. You can run into the same problem here as in the preceding step. Don't settle for "It will do." Think about it a while (assuming that you have time to think) and check for other better options.

3:Determine what each decision will feed. This is referring to the analogy in Mrs. Knight's article. Some additional notes: Whatever you feed will be satisfied for the moment, but will come back later even fatter (thus hungrier). So, if you feed pride, for example, you are setting yourself up for a stronger temptation later. On the other hand, if you feed a good quality like generosity, it should be easier to do the right thing the next time. At least that is my theory.

4:Discover the direct results of each decision. Good intentions don't always give good results. For example, say you gave a peanut butter cookie to someone who was allergic to peanuts. Your intentions may have been good, but if you could have obtained a knowledge of this allergy beforehand, you could have been saved the person receiving the gift from an allergic reaction. Find out as much as you can that might affect the consequences of your decision.

5:Pray and seek advice. This is a very important step, because (1) God does answer prayers and He knows right from wrong better than anyone else and (2) other people may see your situation differently and come up with suggestions you never would have thought of.

6:Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4. With new information it is important to review these steps. Why do I also have you do these steps before? This way, the overwhelming power of prayer and advice don't prevent you from thinking of things that only you would think of.

7:Make a decision. Now that you are long past your deadline... just kidding. After doing the previous steps in a timely manner, it is time to decide. If you have a lot of choices, the process of elimination might help. But failure to do this step could be disastrous. The undecided will get nowhere.

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.  
Revelation 3:16

8:Review your decision. This is not the same as having second thoughts. Once a decision has been made, you must accept it. But after you have made your decision and have seen the results of it, you can use that information to help you make future decisions.

Feedback is encouraged (especially from those of you who disagree with me).

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