

THE ELEVATOR SYNDROME

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (Matthew 6:22-24)

An occupant being transported via the mechanics of an elevator system feels a sensation in both directions of travel of the elevator—going up or going down. Likewise, an automobile occupant will experience the feelings of acceleration as well as deceleration of the vehicle.

Consider that God could have designed mankind's need for caloric intake (food) as a necessary fuel to be totally tasteless and devoid of any appetite stimulus. However, God's biological design of the human involved giving foods distinctive tastes and flavors and his need for the intake of such foods to be appetite-driven. Man was given the ability to enjoy the vital process of eating.

In the spiritual realm, an individual will also undergo certain sensations when experiencing a newly discovered truth—we call this experience "revelation." Since our Creator designed man to be both an intellectual and an emotional creature, it, therefore, stands to reason that an intellectual encounter is usually accompanied by an emotional spark as well. This unique triggering combination of intellect and emotion is instrumental in the learning process of man—it encourages the quest for knowledge and truth.

The things we learn experientially have a far more lasting effect than those things that merely go no deeper than the retina level. What we truly know has a direct relation to how we feel.

With the above being easily understood, there is, however, the need for certain warnings in the application of those principles. While the need of food intake is necessary for our survival, we also must acknowledge that not all edibles are beneficial to our well-being; some, as a matter of fact, can be detrimental to our health, even deadly, regardless of their taste. Likewise, not all experiential knowledge is profitable to us, regardless of the sensations it may produce.

In other words, as with the elevator, we must determine whether we are going up or going down. In the spiritual realm, going up is always the goal. To experience “a sensation” without determining “our direction” is very unwise!

It becomes apparent that God not only also gave us the ability to be selective in what we ingest as food but also what we digest as knowledge. Error is always dangerous, but it isn't always obvious. Its most sinister forms require careful discernment. That's why Paul included a negative command when instructing Christians to be discerning: “Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; *abstain from every form of evil*” (1 Thess 5:21-22).

The word translated “abstain” is a very strong verb, *apechō*, meaning to “hold oneself back,” “keep away from,” or “shun.” It is the same word used in 1 Thess 4:3, “abstain from sexual immorality,” and 1 Peter 2:11, “abstain from fleshly lusts.” Certainly, those things are accompanied by sensations. The primary reference is directed at erroneous teaching—false doctrine. Having examined everything in the light of God's Word, and among those of like faith, when something that does not measure up—something that is untrue, erroneous, or contrary to sound doctrine—shun it—regardless of how you feel. Spiritual vertigo can be deadly!

There are sensations associated with revelation among those individuals coming out of darkness into His marvelous Light, and conversely, there are sensations among those who leave the effluence of truth and reverse their trajectory into darkness.

Since each condition experiences a sensation, one must be careful to ascertain what kind of sensation they are experiencing because sensation alone is not conclusive enough to be a stamp of God's approval. Is the sensation a going down or a going up sensation?

Some may have surmised that those who lose their mooring and drift away from truth and holiness experience no sensation that acts as a propellant for their actions, but this may be an erroneous conclusion. Just as a revelation of Truth possesses a soul-felt sensation, spiritual error also stimulates via a sensation; however, it stimulates the ego and the carnal appetite, and this stimulus can be mistaken as divine when it is, in reality, devastating.

Light always leads to more light, but error most assuredly ends in darkness... and how great is that darkness! This is reverse revelation or diminishing of revelation – going down instead of going up.

This scenario is exhibited in those who backslide with gusto, totally unaware of their slide, who seem to have great energy and drive in their untoward direction from truth and holiness. They suddenly and inexplicably announce that they have found “new light” and rush headlong into error. This is the tragedy of deception; it is also fueled by sensation!

When, ultimately, the elevator door opens at your journey's end, will you exit at a higher level or a lower level than when you entered life's elevator?

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