

Hebrews 5:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Analysis

Solid food is for the 'mature' (Greek 'teleiōn' - complete/mature) who through practice have trained their 'senses' (Greek 'aisthētēria' - faculties) to discern good and evil. This emphasizes experiential learning - doctrine must be practiced to be truly learned. Reformed theology values both orthodoxy (right belief) and orthopraxy (right practice). The ability to discern requires exercising judgment repeatedly until it becomes habitual.

Historical Context

Jewish tradition emphasized training in discernment, especially regarding clean/unclean. The author applies this training principle to spiritual/moral discernment in the Christian life.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How have you 'trained' your spiritual senses to discern good and evil?

2. What role does practice play in moving from knowing truth intellectually to applying it wisely?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|----------------------------|-------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| τελείων | δέ | έστιν | ἡ | στερεὰ | τροφή | τῶν |
| of full age | But | belongeth to them that are | G3588 | strong | meat | G3588 |
| G5046 | G1161 | G2076 | | G4731 | G5160 | |
| διὰ | τὴν | ἔξιν | τὰ | αἰσθητήρια | γεγυμνασμένα | |
| even those who by reason | G3588 | of use | G3588 | their senses | exercised | |
| G1223 | | G1838 | | G145 | | G1128 |
| έχόντων | πρὸς | διάκρισιν | καλοῦ | τε | καὶ | κακοῦ |
| have | to | discern | good | both | and | evil |
| G2192 | G4314 | G1253 | G2570 | G5037 | G2532 | G2556 |

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 2:6 (Parallel theme): Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

1 Thessalonians 5:21 (Good): Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Ephesians 1:18 (Parallel theme): The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Isaiah 7:15 (Evil): Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

Ephesians 4:13 (Parallel theme): Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

1 Kings 3:9 (Good): Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

Philippians 3:15 (Parallel theme): Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Romans 14:1 (Parallel theme): Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

Genesis 3:5 (Evil): For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Psalms 119:103 (Parallel theme): How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

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