

"The heart wants what it wants."

Our actions are justified or condemned, not by appealing to external authorities, others' opinions, or eventual consequences, but by appealing to the internal authority of “my heart”.

A.J. Swoboda, Theology
Professor at Bushnell Univ.

“History is important. Part of American identity is that our history entails throwing aside the reign of a distant king. A rebellion of British citizens against “taxation without representation” eventually would become what we know

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as the United States of America. America's formative identity was forged by rebellion. This history of rebellion also set into motion within just about every American a certain attitude, outlook, and perspective on life.

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America exists because it rejected external authority. Years ago, I happened upon the story of John Guest. Guest was a well-known British evangelist who came to America in the late 1960s to deliver a series of evangelistic talks.

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During this visit, Guest stopped at some of the earliest American colonial sites. Just outside Philadelphia, Guest entered a gift shop and encountered a host of signs showcasing the spirit of the early American revolution.

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“No taxation without representation.” “Don’t tread on me.” Still, one particular sign caught Guest’s attention: “We serve no sovereign here.” Guest later reflected on that sign: [That] sign stopped me in my tracks.

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I had left my native land and come across the Atlantic Ocean in response to a call, a vocation to be a minister of the gospel, to proclaim the kingdom of God. But on seeing this sign, I was filled with fear and consternation.

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I thought, “How can I possibly preach the kingdom of God to people who have a profound aversion to sovereignty?”
Guest was onto something important.

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We are a nation who has rejected the very notion of the sovereign king who directs our affairs from afar. We rebelled. We protested. We dismantled. We deconstructed. We did away with anyone who told us what we must do.”

**Charles Taylor,
Canadian Philosopher**

“...each one of us has his/her own way of realizing our humanity, and that it is important to find and live out one’s own,

Charles Taylor, Canadian Philosopher

as against surrendering to conformity with a model imposed on us from outside, by society, or the previous generation, or religious or political authority.”

The Age of Authenticity

Life's key
is to live free
according to me.

Cast off everything imposed from:

1. The Outside
2. Society
3. Previous Generations
4. Religious or Political Authorities

Walter Liefeld, Prof Emeritus of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

“[Theological] Eclecticism is a way of looking at religion and beliefs in which one is not committed to any one religious organization or belief system, but instead chooses aspects of these at will.

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Any teaching or ethical yardstick that is personally appealing is considered valid. Thus, many Catholics today accept traditional Catholic teachings about Mary but dismiss Catholic teachings on birth control. Religious authority... is dismissed.”

Galatians 5:16-17

Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is **opposed** to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is **opposed** to the flesh;

Galatians 5:16-17

for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

The heart wants what it wants,
and the Spirit wants what it wants
Who will win you?

Aristotle's Pattern of Character Transformation

1. Establish the goal (*telos*).
2. Grow necessary virtues to get there.
3. Do this through moral training.

John 8:31-32

“You are truly My disciples if you remain faithful to My teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Matthew 16:24

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

Augustine's Disordered Loves

Our problem is that we either

(1) Love the wrong things

(2) Love the right things in the wrong order

C.S. Lewis

“You can’t get second things by putting them first. You get second things only by putting first things first.”

Augustine's Confessions

“I had my back toward the light, and my face toward the things on which the light falls... I have learnt to love you [God] late, beauty at once so ancient and so new!

Augustine's Confessions

In my unlovely state I plunged into those lovely created things which you made.”

Augustine – Humans are image bearers created to love God and each other. Therefore, when we love the wrong things or the right things out of order, we suffer.

Freud – Humans are animals driven primarily by desire for pleasure. Therefore, when our desires are repressed, even for good of family or community, we suffer.

“This above all—to thine own self be true...”
(Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 3, Line 78)

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Galatians 5:19-23a

Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.

Galatians 5:19-23a

I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:23b-26

There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Step #3 - "Be guided by the Spirit"

5:25 - If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Inspired Scripture Controlled Conscience Spiritual People



x Prayer

x Commitment



Prayerful
Daily Reading
of the Scripture

+

Regular
Contemplative
Introspection

+

Longstanding
Relationships with
a Spiritual Family

Step #2 – “Crucify the flesh with its passions and desires”

5:24 – And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Colossians 3:5-11

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.

Colossians 3:5-11

These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth.

Colossians 3:5-11

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.

Colossians 3:5-11

In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

Romans 8:12-13

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Step #1 – Receive the Spirit.

Acts 2:37-38

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles,
“Brothers, what should we do?”

Acts 2:37-38

Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:23b – There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:18 – But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.