

Devotional Thoughts :: Careful - Poison!

Careful - Poison! - posted by Gwammy (), on: 2007/8/12 6:18

According to the dictionary, poison is a substance that causes injury, illness, or death; inhibits or retards reaction; has a harmful or dangerous effect. When one hears the word poison, one usually thinks of chemical substances such as arsenic, strychnine, opium, etc.

Actually we have several types of poison—that which causes injury, inhibits, cripples or is harmful to a greater or lesser degree. We have the poisons of the body, the poisons of the mind, and the poisons of the spirit.

Body poisons debilitate physical effectiveness. Mind poisons cripple constructive creativity and twist thought perception and imagination. Spirit poisons impede if not warp personal relationships with God and our fellow men and women. It is difficult to categorize here for spiritual poison can inhibit mental growth; mental poison can retard spiritual development; and physical poison, if strong enough, can stop the whole life process!

Now let's substitute the word pollution for poison. Pollution is basically contamination by noxious substances. The body is polluted through the various oil, water and air contaminants. The mind is polluted through noxious obscenity and pornography, and through random and indiscriminate curiosity; the spirit is polluted through hates and resentments.

We have read much through the years about pollution of body and mind, and necessarily so. But I would like to discuss a polluting agent of the spirit—and this is RESENTMENT.

Resentment of itself can be a necessary defense. C.J. Fox explains it well: "There is a spirit of resistance implanted by the deity in the heart of man proportioned to the size of the wrongs he is destined to endure." The key word here is PROPORTIONED. There are people who can take an innocent action or remark and develop it into a personal affront that requires a lifetime to avenge. There isn't a person on earth who at sometime or other in his or her life won't be hurt, frustrated or disappointed, but it takes character to evaluate and accept the situation for what it is and then forget it.

Actually resentment is the inability to forgive and forget. We've all met the poor soul to whom life is a very raw deal; the whole world is taking advantage of him or her; and on and on, until we wonder why the person clings so desperately to life. This person has enough self-pity to cover himself and any leniency and compassion he might get from others. Soon he becomes such a crashing bore that no one sticks around to hear about the terrible injustices that life has meted out to him, and the impositions of relatives, friends and strangers. Then there's more resentment and self-pity because the person feels ignored and slighted.

Dr. Maxwell Maltz, in his book PSYCHO-CYBERNETICS, points out the dilemma of this type of personality. "The resentful person turns over his reins to other people. They are allowed to dictate how he shall feel, how he shall act." This person is destined to be unhappy because he makes impossible demands on others and then feels put upon, angry, and bitter when others can't live up to his ultimatums.

Resentment is too quick to sit in judgment and too reluctant to overlook the sins, intended or not, of others. The bitter person tends mentally, if not verbally, to impose a debt on the transgressor (mostly unfair) that must be paid before the wrong-doer is restored to friendship and acceptance once again. It's a subtle and cruel form of emotional slavery, and it doesn't take much thought to see who is hurt most.

The honey bee, when it stings, brings temporary pain to its victim, but death to itself. That's the sum of it for us, too, when we refuse to forgive and forget: our spirit dies just a bit more until we are finally in the killing throes of bitterness and hate, and thus unable to see the good and constructive in anything or anyone.

Here's wise advice I once read, for any who would let resentment poison the spirit: "It has been said that a man, like a tree, is best measured after he has been cut down. Please reserve judgment. Time will soften your views and diminish your anger. Remember that hate, like acid, does more damage to the vessel in which it is stored than to the object on which it is poured" (Anonymous).

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