

The Inscrutable Question: Lack of Social Skills & Pubescent Anarchy in Chicago; Spiritual Autonomy: People & Thought Testing

Further warnings of an encroaching anarchy by children can be found in:

“School Brawl in Chicago Highlights Problem of Child Violence,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 6 April 2002, sec. A:

<http://home.post-dispatch.com/channel/pdweb.nsf/text/86256A0E0068FE5086256B930037837C>

- 41) Attainment of spiritual self-esteem results in the first stage of experiential sanctification and the beginning stages of glorifying Jesus Christ. The first of these three progressive stages of the advance is described in:

Galatians 4:19 - My little children, of whom I keep on laboring as a woman in labor until Christ is formed in you—

- 42) “Christ formed in you” is spiritual self-esteem and the first level of growth that allows the believer to become an effective witness for the Prosecution in the appeal trial. Advances on these things occur in the next stage of the sophisticated spiritual life:

2- Stage 2: Spiritual Autonomy:

- 1) As the positive believer advances through the sophisticated spiritual life he takes the assets learned and facilitated in the previous stage with him and they become amplified in the succeeding stage.
- 2) The concept of mental stability becomes even more pronounced. The word autonomy means “the quality or state of being self-governing; freedom from external control or influence; independence.”
- 3) This does not imply that the person has learned all the doctrine that is in the Bible. Neither does it imply that he has stopped sinning. This would be the false doctrine of sanctification that emerged from the theology of Theodore Bèza and the teachings of those who subscribed to his false doctrines of limited atonement and assurance by works. It does not even suggest that this believer has accomplished that legitimate level of spiritual advance called experiential sanctification.
- 4) What this person is able to do is live his own life from cognitive independence without the need to rely on others when under extreme pressure. He has the doctrine to face, endure, and resolve problems from a high inventory of ideas in his own soul.
- 5) However, from experience gained in Stage 1 under providential preventive suffering, he has learned to lean on biblical problem-solving devices rather than people and to apply divine viewpoint rather than human viewpoint. He has learned that doctrine works. He has developed a relationship with God by means of reciprocity. He has learned to coexist with his fellow man through unconditional love.
- 6) Spiritual growth has taken him to the level of cognitive independence. He is now spiritually self-sustaining. He is now in control of his own life and has become grace oriented enough to allow other people to control theirs.
- 7) It is here that the tandem problem-solving devices of personal love for God and unconditional love for mankind create an advanced capacity for life.
- 8) Here the believer is beginning to live as Christ lived in the Incarnation in the sense that he has learned to follow the Lord’s prototype examples in problem-solving.



- 9) No matter what circumstances challenged our Lord, He never lost the happiness that He shared with God. Even while being judged for our sins He maintained this perfect happiness.

Hebrews 12:2 - Concentrating on Jesus [**occupation with Christ**], the Originator and Perfector of our doctrine, Who because of His exhibited happiness [**Sharing the happiness of God: problem-solving device #9**] He endured the cross, disregarding the shame. Then He sat down and He remains seated in the highest place of honor at the right hand of the throne of God.

- 10) For the believer, spiritual autonomy and the doctrine acquired at this level enables him to face all four categories of momentum testing. We will note some brief definitions since you are familiar with these testings if not from personal experience at least from our studies. The four are:

1. People Testing: This is a challenge on two fronts: (1) from those you call your friends and (2) from those you call your enemies. Both often have the power to control the believer's life if he does not stand fast with his spiritual autonomy.

Spiritual autonomy was achieved because the believer placed emphasis on God and His word rather than people and human viewpoint. The way to pass people testing is to maintain spiritual autonomy.

Too often we are swayed into doing legitimate things but when they become distractions to spiritual growth the believer has been neutralized in his advance.

One of the major battles in spiritual adulthood is not sin as much as it is the temptations that seek to lure you into human good and evil. Friends get you involved in doing human good. Your enemies get you into evil.

Failure in this area of people testing causes the believer to entertain the mental attitude sins of anger, bitterness, vindictiveness, and implacability. Unchecked, these lead to self-induced misery. In this state he is inclined to solve problems from human viewpoint such as shouting, revenge tactics, and even violence.

2. Thought Testing: The most dangerous battle in the Invisible War is the invasion of your thought by those who seek to neutralize your testimony before the appeal trial. Those who fail thought testing become enamored with human viewpoint, human good, and evil.

Pressure brings out the real person. As a man thinks so is he. As a man is, so he will be under pressure.

The soul is the true battlefield and the believer must learn to defend his soul under the assault of thought testing. Success comes when he passes thought testing and continues the advance by constantly renovating his soul.

Romans 12:2 - Stop being conformed to this world but be transformed by the renovation of your thinking that you may prove what the will of God is: namely, the good and the well-pleasing and the complete.