

Break Free...

*A Thought for the Week From Patrick Kemper at
No Strongholds Ministries*

Week 12

Five Spiritual Senses

2 Corinthians 5:5-8 (TLB)

- ⁵ *This is what God has prepared for us, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.*
⁶ *Now we look forward with confidence to our heavenly bodies, realizing that every moment we spend in these earthly bodies is time spent away from our eternal home in heaven with Jesus.*
⁷ *We know these things are true by believing, not by seeing.*
⁸ *And we are not afraid but are quite content to die, for then we will be at home with the Lord.*

Do you ever find yourself asking God for help to continue trusting when you cannot see what is happening – when you cannot see how your situation is going to end?

The Bible tells us that we are supposed to put all our faith in the words of a book and bank our eternity without having seen, or touched Him, the way others did 2,000 years ago. Are there times when it is hard to be completely confident God is still there, rooting for you, watching over you and protecting you – especially when you cannot see Him?

We live in a world where our functionality and our feelings are greatly influenced by our senses. For many, vision dominates much of a person's (perceived) ability to function, but does that mean that if there is no vision, there is no ability to lead a productive life?

Of course not.

There are tens of thousands (probably hundreds of thousands) of people across the world who live in the perpetual dark of blindness, but lead normal, productive, extraordinary lives. Some far supersede the accomplishments of those who have sight. How do they do it? They choose to develop the other senses they do have and use them to navigate the world in which they live. They maximize what is available instead of complaining about what might be missing, or impaired.

During my praise time today, I was listening to a song entitled, *All Hail the King!* I got caught up in the idea of standing in God's throne room, listening to millions of voices, wondering what that will look like the first time I get to see it.

Then I got to thinking. Maybe I have it all wrong.

What if, when we get to heaven, when we stand in the presence of God experiencing true majesty, it is not experienced with visual means?

God created us as spirits, in His image. The war raging around us, in the spiritual realm, is not seen with our eyes but we certainly do still experience it.

Is it possible we have other spiritual senses that, when developed, would equip us to function more effectively in a world where sight is perceived as necessary for optimum navigation?

I believe we do.

And just like the physical senses we use everyday (in the form of sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing), if we just rely on one or two, the experiences of our existence will be far less enjoyable (and productive) than if we develop (and use) them all.

So, what are these other spiritual senses? Think about the following possibilities as you consider the current issues of your life.

Listening (to understand) – What is God (or someone else) *really* saying, as opposed to what you are hearing? Have you let preconceived notions color the situation? Have you made the situation what it is? Are you keeping yourself from being helpful/productive by inserting too many of your own preferences/peculiarities? Work on removing *you* from the situation to discover the truth about how it would be addressed if *you* were not a variable.

Obedience – What are you being told to do in that situation? It is extremely rare to find ourselves without options appropriate for resolving a situation. We, more often, struggle with deciding between better and best, or who should benefit most from the situation. What are you allowing to stand in the way of moving towards what you are being told to do? What will it take for you to *just run* when God reveals what He wants you to do?

Relating (Feeling Empathy/Sympathy) – Can you truly relate (why or how, and is this a good time to share what God did for you through your personal experience)? How would you like for someone to respond if you were in that exact situation for the first time?

Sacrifice – Is there a selfless/productive sacrifice (time, effort, energy, emotion, money) that can be made here? Never sacrifice your own walk (or your family) on the altar of ministry - walk within the boundaries you have established.

Servitude – Servants respond without arguing. They complete the task without questioning. Servants do, because that is what servants are *supposed* to do... and a smart servant will make sure it is done correctly to avoid repercussions. If we are to live with a servant's heart, we need to be more interested in resolving situations, and helping others win, than getting our way (or pointing out their flaws and failures to make us feel better about ourselves). Servitude and sacrifice, many times, will work together the way smelling and tasting do.

If we will choose to develop and rely on these senses instead of reacting only to what we can (or whining about what we cannot) see, we will experience life on a completely different level. Life with vision is wonderful, but would be majorly handicapped if we were unable to hear, touch, taste or smell.

Application

Why do we choose to live (we, as spirits) without all the senses that will open up a completely different world of success, peace, connection and dependence on the One who created us? Is it possible this dependence on sight is the great distraction keeping us from functioning at a level where we were meant to thrive? Could our obsession with functioning by sight be the kryptonite for living in the super power that is the Holy Spirit?

2 Corinthians 5:6-7 (NIV)

⁶ *Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.*

⁷ *We live by faith, not by sight.*

Take a few minutes to consider how developing each of these spiritual senses will affect the way you accept, approach and address the issues that present themselves in the physical world in which you live.

What will the mastering of *Listening to Understand* (removing yourself from the situation to discover a solution), *Obedience*, *Relating*, *Sacrifice* and *Servitude* do to your ability to navigate your physical, and spiritual, life?

How might the development of these senses enhance your experience if you arrive in eternity and discover that vision (through the use of a pair of eyes) is no longer an option? How at home will you be if you never developed these other senses?

Look at what Jesus told Thomas in John 20:29:

John 20:29 (TLB)

²⁹ *Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. But blessed are those who haven't seen me and believe anyway."*

Will you continue to handicap yourself by demanding to see (in order to believe), or are you willing to accept spiritual blindness (for now) and choose to sharpen other senses to be as highly functioning as possible?

Homework for the Week...

1.) Where do you live... using what senses? Are you currently using any spiritual senses in your daily life? Which ones are the most refined, and which ones need some attention? Ask God to reveal where you need to spend some time developing your spiritual senses. In your own writing, what methods will you use to begin accomplishing this? Who can you contact to help you? Be specific.

2.) Mid-week check. List the opportunities you have had and how you responded (this is your obedience indicator). If you are still posting a doughnut, more than likely you weren't all that truthful when you asked God for chances to respond and improve. Check your heart; be authentic. Ask God to show you the way through what is blocking you from submitting in obedience.

3.) How are you doing compared to the way you started the week? If you still need improvement, refuse to move on to the next session. Stay here, submit, and choose to be obedient no matter what it takes. Explain how you have improved, or make a commitment to continue working. When you are operating in obedience in this area of your life... turn the page and move to the next session.
