

**Awareness**  
by Hendrik Joubert

You may find it somewhat amusing to search for a simple definition of the concept *awareness*. This is especially true when one encounters those explanations offered by the discipline or perhaps indiscipline of *philosophy*. One quickly becomes aware that *ego* seems to be the center of attention. Efforts to assure others that this is not the case only seem to confirm the *idea of self importance* – humility is a challenge for each of us.

*Confused thinking and foolish reasoning* is not limited to the area of philosophical thought. Just when we *cannot understand* how a brother or sister could be trapped in a particular sin, it is with humility that we become *aware* of our own flaws so that we *understand* the practical wisdom contained in the statement: ***Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*** (Galatians 6:1 NKJV)

The difficulty with which we forgive those who harm us helps us in a significant way to have an *appreciation* for the forgiveness which comes from God. We do not forgive as easily as we *assume* our own forgiveness. We are not as bad as they are – another way we may express our lack of humility and *understanding* of the seriousness of our own sins. It took the death of the Son of God *to pay for MY sins*, and not THEIR sins. (Luke 13:1-3; Matthew 18:23-35)

We may find more than one way to excuse our righteous wrath express towards the depraved who sinned against us and who will not repent. We do not even consider the fact that the sin we accuse them of may be *present only in our mind*. Then again it may be a *subconscious* or even *conscious awareness* of our own sins which makes it difficult for us to pass over the *perceived* mistakes of others. We do not want to entertain the thought of their innocence as this will increase our personal guilt. (Matthew 18:23-35)

*Ignoring* the possibility of their innocence may allow us to pile on them our own sins – we cannot forgive because they will not own up to what we accuse them of, and repent. We may even *feel relieved* that we cannot forgive them because of *their attitude*. Our inability to forgive inhibits our *awareness* of our own sins in order that we may repent towards God and receive forgiveness. (Luke 13:1-3)

An old friend in Christ and I often spoke of how older preachers would excuse themselves when they lose their children to the world, or to false doctrine. We committed to the fact that we will not attempt to escape this truth: ***Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.*** (Proverbs 22:6 NKJV) Rather than *accepting* that our training was flawed – perhaps not by what we said as much as by how we *expressed* our own respect for the word of God – we will look towards what *they did* which caused them to prove this statement coming from God to not be true. We did a perfectly good job...well not quite perfectly...but they...

This does not mean that as adults they will not be judged for their actions; that they could pile their sins retrospectively. The world accepts for a fact that abused children *will* abuse as adults. If, even as a child, I developed a keen awareness of the flaws of my parents, why am I not able to keep from duplicating those mistakes? The self-control it takes makes blaming others easier. Society trains us to pass the buck – we are never (completely) to blame for our foolishness and our sins. *The devil made me do it.*

In **1Corinthians 3:12-15** we find an interesting discussion of the responsibilities of us all in this regard. Each one of us should take care as to how we build on the foundation, which is Jesus Christ – ***the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is...*** We learn also that though our work may burn up when tested, we may stand individually if we live up to our test – ***but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.***

The passing of the buck is therefore eliminated in both directions – ultimately I will have to take responsibility for my own actions. Consider (in this context) the statement: ***Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.*** (Romans 8:33 NKJV) Our accusers may be numerous, however if we are careful to have a proper relationship with God it matters not how justified they feel in blaming us for their inability to take responsibility for their actions, or to forgive us of our trespasses.

We may accuse others in order to make ourselves feel better about living with our mistakes instead of repenting and exercising the self-control necessary to submit to the will of God. (Acts 24:25; 2Corinthians 10:5-6) Mature

Christians are those *who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil* (Hebrews 5:14 NASB) because they are to be *the light of the world*. (Matthew 5:16)