YOU ARE WHAT YOU LOVE: CH 1

by James K. A. Smith • Doug Olena • 9/14/2019

<http://bit.ly/30mGIIw>

YOU ARE WHAT YOU LOVE: TO WORSHIP IS HUMAN – CH 1

What do you want?—

The Power of Habit—

Ancient Wisdom for
Contemporary Christians—

Orienting Desire:
The Quest to Be Human—

JOHN 1:38 "WHAT DO YOU WANT?"

Episode 13, Season 1 of Babylon 5 "Signs and Portents"

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

➤ Smith makes the Humean point by saying: "Our wants and longings and desires are at the core of our identity, the wellspring from which our actions and behavior flow." 2

➤ "So discipleship is more a matter of hungering and thirsting than of knowing and believing."

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

➤ "Every approach to discipleship and Christian formation assumes an implicit model of what human beings are." 2

➤ The assumption that we are what we think is a Cartesian supposition. "Human beings are fundamentally *thinking things*." 3

James K. A. Smith <http://bit.ly/30d3gLC>

THINKING THINGS?

➤This model, suggests Jamie Smith, ignores "the overwhelming power of habit." 4

➤A disciple is, in the modern world, a learner who acquires "information about God through the Scriptures."

➤If "filling your thinking organ with Bible verses" makes you like Christ, "then changing what you think should change what you are." 4-5

THE POWER OF HABIT

➤Jamie asks the rhetorical question about whether there is "a gap between what you *know* and what you *do*." 5

➤Logic and correct thinking are not enough to get us to holiness.

➤Jamie answers our puzzlement with: "We don't need *less* than knowledge; we need more." 6

➤The way we get that is through fostering good habit.

➤The Scriptures have a different set of assumptions than *thinking-thingism*.

➤"Love is the condition for knowledge." 7

➤"It is not that I know in order to love, but rather: I love in order to know."

➤"Human beings are first and foremost *lovers*."

ANCIENT WISDOM

➤The future of Christian discipleship is in the discovery and acquisition of ancient practices, avoiding varieties of modern reductionism. 7

[to do this requires a modern rational discipline to avoid prejudices of the past]

Augustine of Hippo <http://bit.ly/30o1Xtv>

➤Augustine:

➤Who made us?

➤What is the purpose of our being?

➤True human being is in relation to the Almighty.

➤For Augustine humans have a purpose, a *telos* (τέλος) a goal or trajectory for being human. 8

➤Teleology is uncomfortable for many modern people. But Smith points us away from humans as reactors to their environment.

➤The heart is "the fulcrum of your most fundamental longings—a visceral, subconscious *orientation* to the world." 8

➤Smith's reorientation to the heart is substantially like C. S. Lewis' focus in *The Abolition of Man I* and a variety of other works.

➤Smith seeks the redemption of *eros* (Ἔρως) having been set aside by Christians because of its association with loves of the flesh.

➤Eros is associated with desire and attraction. "Think of agape as rightly ordered eros." That is, turning our desires and attractions to God.

Eros <http://bit.ly/30jjymb>

➤"The question isn't *whether* you will love something as ultimate; the question is *what* you will love as ultimate." 10

ORIENTING DESIRE: THE QUEST TO BE HUMAN

➤Telos 11

➤Not an ideal, but a vision of the good life, not necessarily articulated.

➤…how the world ought to be…

"

We are lovers first and foremost. If we think about this in terms of the quest or journey metaphor, we might say that the human heart is part compass and part internal guidance system.

-Jamie Smith

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➤Augustine again: "Love is like gravity." 13

➤When we set our goals on material things, we are weighed down. When, on the other hand, we set our goals on God and heavenly things, we are lifted up.

<http://bit.ly/30kuWyf>