

Soft Americans Have Instant Everything

Tim Conway (*Excerpt from: Believer: You're Dead to Sin*)

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I've been made aware of something, all the more just recently. Many of you know that I had this viral meningitis for a month, I'm just coming out of it these last few days, to where I'm actually starting to feel better. It causes swelling of the brain, and that hurt my head and you guys know that I suffer migraines, but I have not had that kind. This hurt my head in a way that no migraine ever has. There were three straight days, where I probably should've gone to the emergency room, I got to the place where I thought, "Ruby I think you're going to have to take me." James came and prayed for me and that night it actually did take a turn. He wanted me to be here the next day, God didn't answer that, but it did take a turn at that point.

But after I came out of it I told Ruby, "I don't know if I'm gonna die well." I mean those three days I didn't feel very patient. And I recognize something: I'm one of you. You say, "What's that?" I don't mean just Christian, I mean a 21st century American. You say, "What does that mean?" That means we're used to softness. Our towels are soft and our cars are air-conditioned, you say, "Mines not!" Ya, but you have a car. People in other places are walking. And probably if it's not working you've had thoughts about getting it fixed. Our homes are air conditioned. We can put our food right in the microwave, and it's instantly the right temperature. We have instantly clean water. Now it's like these cell phones and computers, instant Facebook, instant chat, instant email. Everything is instant, we want it now. We're a very entertained people. We're a very soft people. Let's just call it what it is.

Brethren, when you compare us to guys in Iraq. John was just telling us in the elders meeting about these guys over in Iraq. He said, "We can learn some things from them." He said, "They don't know the doctrine we know, but we can learn from them." What we can learn? We can we learn about suffering persecution. Oh yeah when things start happening the Jeff was mentioning in the Sunday School, it's going to test us. The thing is there's some spiritual conditioning that we we really need.

And if we're gonna fight sin... we tend to be spiritual light weights. When things get difficult, you know how we try these little things, you know, a little new program, "I got this new book." You know how we try some little deal over here, we just discovered this new preacher. You see, we want results immediately. We want things to happen right now. "Now, now, now, now!" And we don't want to think too long about anything. You know, "Gimme that, gimme that!" You know, on Facebook, "Oh, they're doing this, and they're doing that." "We're gonna do this." We're just back and forth.

Brethren, I don't know about the discipline of our generation, to really be able to sit down and just meditate on the fact that were dead to sin. Long enough for it to do us any good. Why? Because we've put so much stuff in our brain to cause us to forget what's essential so quickly.

Brethren, you know were not 21st Century Americans first, were Christians first. What God commands us to do: You need to do whatever is necessary in your life to be able to fill your head with this reality and have your mind renewed and get the garbage out. Get disciplined!

You know what? It's not as sin not to have a cell phone or computer. If you can't govern that thing, if you can't rule over it, if you can't master it, if you can't obey God because of it, get rid of it! Some of you can't turn your ringer off! It's amazing to me. I must offend lots of people these days because of this text thing. Sometimes I won't get back for a day or two or five, on a text. Why? Because I don't carry my phone everywhere, and even when I have it I do not count at the highest priority, to respond to a text. Why? Because your mind might be involved in thinking about the fact that I am one with Christ, and in Him I can beat this sin. (Then the cellphone goes) "BING!" "Oh what's that about?" And some of you don't have any self-control, and you know what? What happens? You're a shallow Christian. You do not have the militancy, and the discipline, to fight for holiness the way it needs to be fought for.

Brethren, this is serious, this is dead serious, and dead real about fighting this battle. I'll tell you when that persecution comes that was described to us, you know who the first one's gonna be falling away? Those of you that have absolutely no control over these things. Your minds weren't renewed, you didn't think right, you didn't believe right, and now all of a sudden you're full of terror and you're gonna deny Christ. Because you're not gripped by the truth, because you haven't taken a long enough time in your life to let it sink down and to permeate your being. God commands you to consider yourself to be what you are and what He has made you.

Brethren, part of the reason this is such a fight is because we've gotta fight to think right, that alone is the fight. That means we've got to be disciplined enough with our brains, with our heads, with our minds, with are meditating, with are pondering, that were actually taken enough time, undisturbed, undistracted. Brethren, I'll tell you the people who are going to excel in this battle and excel in holiness. Their the people that have self control here. They can set aside big amounts of time, and say, "I'm going to dwell on the glories of what it means to be one with Christ, united to Christ, in Him." We have American softness.

Many of you may have heard Andy, when he said he spoke to Elisabeth Elliot, they had had dinner with her before she died, and she said, back in the fifties, of course her and her husband, they went down to South America. Before she got married, my understanding is she inquired of Amy Carmichael, back in the early 1950's. Amy Carmichael was still alive, and she inquired, I believe, to the possibility of working with Amy Carmichael's ministry in India. She told the Hamilton's, without even being seen Americans were being turned down by Amy Carmichael's ministry, because they were considered, back then, being too soft. Somebody like Elisabeth Elliot! Not even given a chance. Why? Because American's as a whole were counted too soft, in the 1950's. Oh yeah, come forward sixty years, with all our devices and gadgets, and softness's.

You know they're figuring out how to make towels and blankets softer, and sheets softer, and pillows softer, and clothes softer. And you know what? We buy them. And you know what that does? And it very subtly makes us into something that I don't think we want to become.

And it's often been talked about, before Hudson Taylor went to China, Andy talks about him sleeping on boards, eating certain kinds of food, not the kind of food everybody had. And living in conditions not everybody else is living in. You know, there's a place for beating our bodies into submission, why? Because that makes us warriors. That make that gives you a disposition to be warlike. We gotta beat our bodies into submission. American softness.