



# Guarding the Senses

Part 2



# Recap



- Our body is like a Royal Palace
- We are to have rational souls that have authority over our senses.
- The purpose of our senses is to facilitate communion with God.
- Sense of Vision
  1. Cut off and redirect
  2. Be watchful of your gaze
  3. Take refuge in prayer



# Recap



- Sense of Hearing

1. Separate yourself from slander
2. Listen to the words of God
3. Listening to hymns

- Today

- **Senses of Smell, Taste, and Touch**
- **How are the senses brought under the obedience of the soul?**
- **Final remarks**

### 3. Sense of Smell



- Smell can evoke strong emotional reactions.
- We must not ignore the effects of smell upon us. It can incite the soul to gluttony, fornication and other sins.
- Incense
  - **“Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.” (Rev. 8:3-4)**

## 4. Sense of Taste

- ▶ Perhaps the most powerful
- ▶ When left uncontrolled...
  - ▶ Greed and gluttony
  - ▶ Drunkenness, obesity
  - ▶ Fornication and virtually all carnal and irrational passions.
- ▶ **“Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.” (Ps. 34:8)**





## 4. Sense of Taste



### Disciplines

1. Participate in the fasts of the Church
2. Limit quantity
3. Limit variety



## 5. Sense of Touch

- **“And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God.” (2 Cor. 6:16)**
- **“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” (1 Cor. 3:16-17)**
- **Discipline:**
  - Use touch to communicate love and compassion



# Bring the senses under the obedience of the soul

1. Cut off the supply – of the passions of each
2. Read Holy Scripture – nourishes the spirit
3. Practice virtue
  - ▶ *“When the soul is attracted against its very nature toward matter through the body, it insinuates upon itself the earthly form. Knowing this, the saints seek to move toward God through the natural tendency of the soul, while at the same time they try appropriately to familiarize the body with God through the practice of virtues, hoping thus to beautify the body with divine outward appearances.”* (St. Maximus the Confessor)
4. Practice Prayer



# Concluding Remarks

1. Do not think to tame the senses is easy

➤ **“The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell... But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison..” (Jam. 3:6,8)**



# Concluding Remarks



- *"Once the eyes become accustomed to looking passionately upon the mature beauty of living bodies; once the ear drums are accustomed to the pleasing sounds of certain songs; once the sense of smell is delighted by the fragrances of myrrh and aromatic things; once the tongue and the mouth taste or rather become accustomed to the rich and tasty foods; and finally, once the sense of touch is accustomed to fine and soft clothing- who will be able after that, even if one is most eloquent and persuasive, to convince people that what they have up to now enjoyed is not a true and rational pleasure, but on the contrary an irrational and temporal one?" (St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain)*



# Concluding Remarks

## 2. Defining Pleasure

- ▶ *"What should be called true pleasure, namely that which by nature and reason cannot be condemned and which lasts and is ever more active, bringing joy and gladness to the heart even after it is fulfilled." (St. Nicodemos of the Holy Mountain)*



# Concluding Remarks

## 3. Be vigilant, the enemy is lurking

- **“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”** (1 Pet. 5:8)
- *“The enemy is standing and observing day and night directly against our eyes to detect which entrance of our senses will be opened to him to enter. Once he enters through one of our senses because of our lack of vigilance, then this devious shameless dog attacks us further with his own arrows.”* (St. Isaac the Syrian)