

Concepts create idols; only wonder grasps anything – St. Gregory of Nyssa

St. Gregory’s marvelous dictum is among a handful of things that describe what is required for the Christian life. So much of Christian history has been marked with a bifurcation – a split between those who study the faith and those who live it. It is

not a necessary split – only a common one. Of course there is the larger number of Christians who do neither.

But wonder is an essential attitude of heart – without it – we will see nothing as it truly is.

The Scriptures tell us that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” – which also means that other human beings should be approached with awe and wonder. We will not see them nor love them as we ought if our heart is dwelling in some other mode.

I tend to see wonder in two particular places – in children and in those of older years. My own children have always been a revelation of the world about me – a chance to see the world as though for the first time. To watch the wonder of a child beset with the jaded cynicism of our culture is surely to see one of the most crucial battles of our age. Cynicism is generally always correct, but it lacks the wonder that alone would reveal its error.

The wonder of older years has been something of a new revelation for me – if only because I barely qualify for “older years.” I will turn 57 later this year. But I have been around long enough to see my last child enter college. I have been blessed with 34 years of marriage. With those years comes an increasing sense of wonder at how things have worked together to be what they are. I am less impressed with my choices and the power to choose. Rather I am overwhelmed at the good that has come to me that I did not know to choose (and it came unbidden). (περισσότερα…)