

HIV and Sodomitedes:

A Dialogue Between Kapadgettes And Sodomitedes

After being diagnosed as HIV positive, an acquaintance of mine, Sodomitedes, confided in me for advice. After considering the matter at some length, and taking into account the nature by which his affliction had been acquired--for you see, Sodomitedes, is homosexual and contracted his affliction through unnatural means, "men with men working that which is unseemly" (Romans 1:27)--I refrained not to inform him of his duty, to himself, to mankind, and to God. Said I unto Sodomitedes, 'cease thy practicing of such wicked deeds and pursue the high road to nobility and righteousness and follow the words of the Christ'. But he would give none ear to my plea to sound words and deemed any such words by the Lord as heretical, fanatical, and irrational, since Sodomitedes was, by choice, an atheist. So I then proceeded to expound unto him the words of a follower of Zeno the Stoic, one Epictetus, and his call to the dutiful life, to the which Sodomitedes immediately gave an earnest ear, supposing such philosophies to be the more intellectual and true (for Sodomitedes prided himself with the hearing, or the telling, of some new thing, as did all Athenians of our day).

His curiosity now being aroused, Sodomitedes, in his usual rhetorical fashion then asked, 'why shouldst I, a man who not long from hence shall die of mine afflictions, respect such a dutiful life, and seek not what little pleasure yet remains for me in this life, seeing that I have but a short time upon this earth and many desirable things yet left undone'? 'Sodomitedes', answered I, 'of what good would it do for thee to indulge thyself in such earthly pleasures and abominations and yet refrain from the dutiful life'? 'For lustful pleasure and peace I seek, and to remove distress from my heart', answered Sodomitedes. 'Thou seeketh pleasure, peace, and to remove distress from thy heart, Sodomitedes'? 'Indeed', he answered. 'And all things which achieve this end thou wilt pursue' I inquired? 'Yea', he replied.

Then asked I of Sodomitedes, 'Dost all things which bring thee pleasure removeth distress

from thy heart'? 'Yea', replied Sodomitedes. 'Did not thy actions bring thee pleasure in the days whereof thou had committed them' asked I? 'Indeed!' he said. 'So', I asked Sodomitedes, 'all thy actions bring thee pleasure and removeth distress from thy heart'? 'It seemeth so', said Sodomitedes. 'So, no things which bringeth pleasure bringeth distress of heart', I asked? 'Nay', he replied. 'Was it not for thy lust for pleasure that thou hast sought pleasure'? 'Yea', said Sodomitedes. 'And was it not for pleasure that thou hast sought for the things which thou hast done'? 'For pleasure only', he said. 'And is it not but to avoid distress of heart that thou seekest pleasure', I asked? 'Yea, to avoid distress of heart', he said. 'Yet thou art presently distressed in spirit', said I. 'True', said he. 'And is it not but for thy present knowledge that thy life shall soon flee from thee that thou art distressed in heart' I asked? 'Yea', said Sodomitedes. 'And is it not but for the fruit of thy actions that thy life shall soon flee from thee', asked I of Sodomitedes? 'Nay, I seeketh only that which bringeth pleasure and removeth distress of heart', said Sodomitedes. 'But', said I, 'it is thy pleasure which hast brought thee distress of heart. Behold, thou sayest:

P1 All things which bringeth Pleasure removeth Distress of heart(A)PD

P2 All thine Actions bringeth thee Pleasure (A)AP

P3 All thine Actions removeth Distress of heart(A)AD

But:

P4 Thou hast not removed thy Distress of heart ~D

P5 Therefore, all thine Actions do not removeth Distress of heart or thou hast not sought for
pleasure [(A)A (~D v ~P)]

'So then, is it not but for pleasure that thou art presently distressed in heart and hath a troubled spirit'? 'It appeareth to be so', said Sodomitedes. 'So then, it is not true that no things which bringeth pleasure bringeth distress of heart', I asked Sodomitedes? 'Again it appeareth to be so', he said. 'So then, is it not for pleasure and the deeds of pleasure that thou art presently distressed', asked I? 'Very well, this must be true', said he. 'So thou seekest to removeth distress of heart, yet thou desireth to pursue pleasurable abominations by which thy distress of heart hast come upon thee.

Is this not also true?' 'It seemeth to follow from thy musings', he replied. 'So then', said I, a life of pleasure removeth not distress of heart?' 'Nay', said he.

'But', asked Sodomitedes, 'wilt the dutiful life, of which thou hast spoken, relieve distress of heart or bring a pleasurable life?' 'Most assuredly', said I. 'How so', he asked? 'If thou wouldst live a life of duty, thou wouldst have no desire but to desire duty. Thus, thou wouldst discipline thy heart to know what is dutiful and seek only to fulfil that end.' 'But', said Sodomitedes, 'what if I shouldst fail to fulfil that end? Would I not then find distress of heart also, seeing that I couldst not obtain that for which I sought?' 'Not so', said I, 'for in thy quest for the dutiful life, thou wilt ever search within thyself for the answers to discover why thy quest for duty must continue and hast evaded thee. Thus, it wilt become thy self sworn duty to seek understanding of those things which becometh the dutiful life'.

'If such things be true of the dutiful life, what then is my duty concerning the affliction which has befallen me', Sodomitedes asked? 'Thy first and foremost duty, O Sodomitedes, is to thyself, to constrain thy desires of all things against nature'. 'And what things, O Kapadgettes, are they that be against nature', asked Sodomitedes? 'Is it not true that all things natural by definition are by nature?', I asked. 'Verily', he replied. 'Is it not also true that all things natural are things which are not of man's device?' 'This is also true' said Sodomitedes. 'Is it not also true that all things which are not of a man's device are things over which a man hath no control?' 'Yea, this also be true', he said. 'And is it not true that all things which befall a man over which a man hath no control are things for which a man weepeth in vain?' 'Yea, this also seemeth to be true', said Sodomitedes. 'Therefore, to weep over things that be by nature, is to weep in vain, is it not?' 'Most assuredly, O Kapadgettes. Thou speaketh truth', said Sodomitedes.

'Moreover, distress of heart bringeth forth weeping, doth it not?' 'Indeed', replied Sodomitedes. 'And confesseth thou not that he who weepeth over things that be by nature, weepeth in vain?' 'Indeed, I have spoken', said Sodomitedes. 'So', asked I, 'that which is by nature bringeth none cause for weeping?' 'Nay, this seemeth to be true', said Sodomitedes. 'Therefore, if distress

of heart bringeth forth weeping, and if that which is by nature bringeth no cause for weeping, then that which is by nature is good and bringeth no cause for distress of heart'? 'Such doth appear to follow, most noble Kapadgettes', said Sodomitedes. 'And wouldst thou not also agree that that which is good is also pleasurable and bringeth forth no distress of heart nor weeping, if it be by nature'? 'Yea, this also seemeth to be true', replied Sodomitedes. 'So then, if a man seeketh after that which be by nature, then he seeketh the good and hath no cause for weeping, seeing that no distress of heart cometh by nature'? 'Yea, this would follow from all thou hast thus spoken', said Sodomitedes.

'And is it not in a man to refrain from distress of heart and to seek after that which bringeth him the most pleasure, which must thus be good'? 'Indeed, that is why I have always pursued pleasure', said Sodomitedes! 'Is this not a natural duty within a man, to seek after that which bringeth him the most pleasure and which must thus be good'? 'So it seems', he said. 'But thou hast distress of heart, hast thou not, O Sodomitedes'? 'This be true', he said. 'And hast thou not agreed that that which is by nature bringeth not distress of heart nor weeping'? 'Yea, it be so', he said. 'Therefore, 'either thy distress of heart and weeping over thy affliction is in vain (if it be true that thy affliction is natural or by nature), or else thy affliction is not natural or by nature and therefore not that over which a man hath no control--and thus, must be that over which a man hath control. And if the latter be true, then thy distress of heart is of thine own doing--by virtue of thy lusts, and submission to thy lusts, in pursuing thy unnatural pleasures. To be sure, thy duty to thyself is to put away that which is unnatural, and seeketh that which is natural, from which only the true good, and pleasure cometh'.

After I had thus spoken, Sodomitedes paused for a moment and then responded with words which surpriseth me not: 'Well, I yet find pleasure in the life which I live, and refraineth not from my actions, whether they bringeth me distress of heart or no! And then he departed, and I considered the matter no more. For he hast received that recompence of his error which was meet. (Romans 1:27)