

## The Mature Believer Has His Senses Trained How to Discern Good from Evil; Humility Required for “Gumnazo” to Instruct, Heb 5:13-14

26. Kittel then takes his discussion into the New Testament and addresses the use of the word *aisthētērion* in Hebrews 5:14:

**ibid.:**

In Hebrews 5:14 the αἰσθητήρια [*aisthētēria*] are the organs which are capable of, or at least susceptible to, discrimination between good and evil, the τέλειος, [*teleios*: mature believers] having so trained them by exercise [  $\tau\rho\upsilon\phi\acute{\iota}$  *lamath*: to train for war by means of disciplinary measures ] that they have become a corresponding habitus [Latin from which we get the word “habit” and refers to “a behavior pattern acquired by frequent repetition that shows itself in increased facility of performance” (MWCD-11)]. Here the *pneuma* [Πνευμα: the Holy Spirit] has replaced the νοῦς [*nous*], and αἰσθητήρια [*aisthētēria*] indicates a plurality of capacities for moral decision which through ἕξις [*hexis*: habits developed through practice or exercise] have already developed into specific qualities.

27. Thus the word “senses” in our translation actually has to do with the accumulation of information, evaluation of its content, and considered discernment of whether to reject it or accept it.
28. In order to incorporate this concept into our translation of Hebrews 5:14, an expanded translation is necessary:

**Hebrews 5:14 -But solid food [ advance doctrines ] is for mature believers [ τέλειος, *teleios*: spiritual maturity through the understanding & knowledge of truth & virtue ], who because of self-discipline have their capacity for evaluation of incoming data [ αἰσθητήριον, *aisthētērion* ] trained [ γυμνάζω, *gumnazō* ] to discern [ διάκρισις, *diakrisis* ] between good and evil.**

29. This capacity for evaluation of incoming data must be acquired through “training.” Kittel in his commentary used the word ἕξις, *hexis* but here we find γυμνάζω, *gumnazō*: to train naked.
30. The word describes the training of athletes in ancient Greece. The participants were trained by the γυμνάσιον, *gumnasiarch*, or coach, while in the nude. The tactic was used so as to acquire maximum submission from the athlete toward the trainers.
31. Figuratively this word refers to the humility that is needed to acquire the teachings of the Word of God. As the Greek athlete stood before the *gumnasiarch* naked, we stand before the instruction of the Holy Spirit as students without portfolio.
32. When we approach Scripture with humility and a willingness to learn we will construct a house within our souls built on wisdom that will provide us the insight and the discernment to execute a lifestyle filled with the benefits of a living a biblically directed life.
33. With this inventory of ideas will have the power to discern between good and evil and with this ability we can make decisions that separate us from ideologies, philosophies, circumstances, places, and people who would do us harm and to respond with enthusiasm to those that would contribute to our well-being.
34. Here then is a corrected and expanded translation of our passage followed by a paraphrase:

Corrected and expanded translation:

**Hebrews 5:13** -Everyone who partakes only of milk [ basic doctrines ] is ignorant [ ἄπειρος, *apeiros*: biblically uninformed ] of the word of righteousness [ λόγος δικαιοσύνη, *logos didaiosunē*: advanced doctrine producing acquired righteousness, i.e., the sophisticated spiritual life of a mature believer ], because he keeps on being a spiritual baby.

**Hebrews 5:14** -But solid food [ advanced doctrines ] is for mature believers [ τέλειος, *teleios*: spiritual maturity through the understanding & knowledge of truth & virtue ], who because of self-discipline have their capacity for evaluation of incoming data [ αἰσθητήριον, *aisthētērion* ] trained [ γυμνάζω, *gumnazō* ] to discern [ διάκρισις, *diakrisis* ] between good and evil.

Paraphrase:

**Hebrews 5:13** -Believers who do not take advantage of advanced biblical instruction are ignorant of the righteous standards of divine guidance and thus keep on being spiritual runaways in the scrum of the Invisible War.

**v. 14** - But advanced instruction is for mature believers who because of self-discipline have their capacity to analyze incoming data trained through consistent exercise and discipline so that they are able to discern the difference between good and evil.

35. Some people appear on the surface to be honorable but doctrine and discernment enables the advanced believer to look behind the presentation and discover the motivation.
36. Some people can say the right thing in a right way but have the wrong thing on their agenda. Unbelievers and believers without doctrine are whom you should beware.