

REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 8/5/19

"Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching."

- I Tim. 4:16



The wild turkeys that stay on our property have recently given birth to a number of young poults. They come for the food that we put out for them with what is best described as an all-out stampede. The adults remain weary, but the young gobble up whatever they find with abandon. They haven't learned that danger is always present and that all things that can be eaten are not equally good for them. I photographed this young poult simply because he was, unlike his brothers and sisters, alert to danger. He was the first one to flee when an adult called or when the food he found seemed suspect. His siblings, it seemed, would consume anything or go anywhere so long as the others were doing it. This unwillingness to closely examine where one is being led or what one is being fed is not limited to young turkeys. The church is plagued with this behavior. I have personally watched congregations accept teaching it once rejected and reject teaching it once accepted simply because the leadership changed what was being fed. We often behave more like turkey poults than careful students of scripture. Current trends dictate what we believe and do rather than thoughtful conviction. And what is most disconcerting is that once the diet is changed and the majority have blindly followed, any attempt to challenge the change is viewed as disloyalty or divisiveness. The church needs more members like this young turkey, people who will be watchful, who will consistently measure any change with the standard of the word of God. New interpretations of scripture or ways of worship should always be viewed with some suspicion. Yes, the church does at times depart from biblical truth and must be realigned, but that must always be done with adherence to scripture in mind. My mother used to say that just because everyone else is doing something, doesn't mean we should do it too. I believe she was right. Watch carefully what you are fed. - John