

Painting the Mirror

My friend is convinced she has only 2-3 years left as a guest on planet Earth. She is quite nonchalant about it. After the conversation, I thought of what I should have said: doesn't it worry you? Being extinguished? I know from previous conversations roughly what she would have said: 'No. Why would it? It's just like being asleep forever but without the dreams'. Oblivion, in other words. 'But,' I would have responded, 'What if you are wrong? What if you find yourself face to face with God? Could you look into those eyes, that face of perfect holiness and not turn away in shame, trying desperately to cover your exposed self, reaching for the nearest fig leaf?' To which I imagine she would have said: 'If God is good and kind as Christians say he is, he will recognise that I am basically good too. I have always tried to do my best. I've never robbed anyone, never murdered anyone. I've always worked hard. I have given to charity.' To which I probably wouldn't have said: 'But the entire architecture of your psychology is founded on shame and your avoidance of it. Doesn't that suggest that your spirit knows it has a problem, that somewhere inside a part of you knows that things are not right?' We paint pretty pictures of ourselves on the glass so the mirror won't show us our true selves. Regardless of what we consciously allow ourselves to believe, doesn't some inner part know how this transaction really works? I cannot look God in the eye without crumpling into a whimpering heap of fear and shame because I know, better than I can admit, how awful my true self is. In that moment, would I not understand so very clearly how much I need Jesus?



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