



## Dear Friends,

Some people can't properly function after waking up until they have a coffee. I'm married to such a person. If I wake before Kathryn, I turn on the coffee machine. This act of service on my part reduces the time between Kathryn getting out of bed and having her first coffee.

Having a coffee first thing after waking is so important to Kathryn, that even if she goes to the gym for a 6:15AM workout, she will wake a quarter of an hour earlier so that she has time for her first caffeine hit.

So, you can imagine my horror when I came across a newspaper article entitled, "Are there health benefits to delaying your morning coffee?"<sup>1</sup> The article began by stating that online influencers have been claiming that if you delay your first coffee in the morning for 90 to 120 minutes after waking, you will perk up more naturally, be more alert in the afternoons, and sleep better. What might this mean for Kathryn? I was anxious whether she could even entertain the possibility of doing such a thing, even if there were health benefits to be enjoyed.

It got me thinking about morning rituals, and rituals in general. Mealtimes are obvious examples of daily rituals most people observe. There are others. Some, like Kathryn, regularly attend the gym or exercise. Others scroll through their phones first thing in the morning, whether it's to read the news online, do a word or number puzzle or see the latest postings on social media.

Humans are creatures of habit. That's because we are embodied beings. We are created as ensouled bodies. We are not just a soul (an immaterial being) or just a body (a material being). The Bible teaches that both body and soul are essential to our humanity. Genesis 2:7 says:

*Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*

The importance of the human body to our being is also signified by what Genesis 1 says about the goodness of God's creation, which is then affirmed by the Son of God becoming flesh (John 1:14) and being raised bodily (1 Cor 15). The new creation to which we look forward is not an ethereal world inhabited by spiritual beings. It is a material world which we will enjoy in new resurrected bodies.

So, what you do with your body matters to your overall well-being. Not just to your physical health, but to your spiritual, emotional, mental and social health. Your body is a temple of the Spirit, bought by the blood of Christ. Consequently, Paul says, "honour God with your bodies" (1 Cor 6:19-20).

So, what embodied practices do you follow to honour God and grow mature in Christ? How you care for your body, matters. Practising good habits around eating, exercise, sleep and rest are conducive to godliness. If I don't get enough sleep, I'm more likely to be impatient and grumpy. For Kathryn, I suspect it's having that coffee first thing in the morning!

Spiritual rituals are also essential to our overall well-being. That is why there is something lovely about the rhythms of weekly Sunday worship. The practice of waking up on a Sunday morning and knowing, "this is what I will be doing," is conducive to godliness. Going weekly to church reminds me that I am part of God's family, I am to love my brothers and sisters, and I live in the realm of God's kingdom, in which Jesus rules by his word and Spirit.

God Bless,  
Mark Adams

<sup>1</sup> <https://amp.smh.com.au/lifestyle/health-and-wellness/are-there-health-benefits-to-delaying-your-morning-coffee-it-depends-20240604-p5jj82.html>