

## He who has lost sensibility



He who has lost sensibility is a brainless philosopher, a self-condemned commentator, a self-contradictory windbag, a blind man who teaches others to see.

He talks about healing a wound, and does not stop irritating it. He complains of sickness, and does not stop eating what is harmful. He prays against it, and immediately goes and does it. And when he has done it, he is angry with himself; and the wretched man is not ashamed of his own words. 'I am doing wrong,' he cries, and eagerly continues to do so. His mouth prays against his passion, and his body struggles for it. He philosophises about death, but he behaves as if he were immortal. He groans over the separation of soul and body, but drowns along as if he were eternal. He talks of temperance and self-control, but he lives for gluttony. He reads about the judgment and begins to smile. He reads about vainglory, and is vainglorious while actually reading. He repeats what he has learnt about vigil, and drops asleep on the spot. He praises prayer, but runs from it as from the plague. He blesses obedience, but he is the first to disobey. He praises detachment, but he is not ashamed to be spiteful and to fight for a rag. When angered he gets bitter, and

he is angered again at his bitterness; and he does not feel that after one defeat he is suffering another. Having overeaten he repents, and a little later again gives way to it. He blesses silence, and praises it with a spate of words. He teaches meekness, and during the actual teaching frequently gets angry. Having woken from passion he sighs, and shaking his head, he again yields to passion. He condemns laughter, and lectures on mourning with a smile on his face. Before others he blames himself for being vainglorious, and in blaming himself is only angling for glory for himself. He looks people in the face with passion, and talks about chastity. While frequenting the world, he praises the solitary life, without realizing that he shames himself. He extols almsgivers, and reviles beggars. All the time he is his own accuser, and he does not want to come to his senses—I will not say cannot.

I was astounded at the words of this raving passion and asked her about her father, wishing to know her name, and she said; 'I have no single parentage; my conception is mixed and indefinite.

Satiety nourishes me, time makes me grow, and bad habit entrenches me. He who keeps this habit will never be rid of me. Be constant in vigil, meditating on the eternal judgment; then perhaps I shall to some extent relax my hold on you. Find out what caused me to be born in you, and then battle against my mother; for she is not in all cases the same. Pray often at the coffins, and engrave an indelible image of them in your heart. For unless you inscribe it there with the pencil of fasting, you will never conquer me.'

Pray for those people but do not judge, do not believe and do not envy such people even if you see them in politics, show business or media because they are the victims of their own absurdity.

Based on Saint John of the Ladder

- Source: [asceticexperience.com](http://asceticexperience.com)