



St. Mikolas

The Gift of  
Consciousness

*A Journal Reflection by St. Mikolas*

Read. Reflect. Respond.

*What are you doing with consciousness  
today? What are you doing with  
your I AM gift, your gift of awareness?*

Devotional Journal Series

*J. Mikolas*

This morning I found myself looking around at the trees, the grass, the chipmunks I've started feeding, my dog, and just life itself moving all around me. The chipmunks come close, then hesitate. You can almost see instinct working in them. They want what is there, but something in them tells them to be careful, to pause, to read the moment through whatever has been placed within them for survival. I watch them come near, then stop short, then come near again. I watch my dog. I watch the wind move through the trees. I watch the grass continue being grass, the earth continue being earth, and life continue unfolding around me without asking for permission.

And as I sat with that, something struck me.

All of this is made of matter.

The trees, the animals, the rocks, the grass, the dirt beneath my feet, even my own body—every bit of it belongs to the same created world. We are all sharing in this physical existence. We are all part of the same great woven reality of substance, breath, and life. And yet, within that shared material world, there is something given to humanity that stands apart in a way that should humble us.

We have been given consciousness.

We have been given the ability to reflect, to perceive, to wonder, to remember, to imagine, and to ask why. We have been given wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in a way that no other created thing seems to carry quite like we do. There may be forms of awareness spread across creation, but when I look across the earth, it still seems clear to me that humanity has been entrusted with something distinct.

That should stop us in our tracks.

Because if that is true, then consciousness is not casual. It is not accidental. It is not meaningless. It is gift.

And maybe, in a very real way, this is part of what it means to be made in the image of God.

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Not that we are God, and not that our bodies somehow resemble Him in a shallow way, but that we have been given the ability to know, to choose, to perceive, to commune, and to participate. We can recognize beauty. We can wrestle with truth. We can examine ourselves. We can love beyond instinct. We can turn inward, and we can turn upward.

That is no small thing.

And if I am honest, I have taken that for granted.

I have taken for granted the fact that I can sit in the morning and not merely exist in it, but contemplate it. I can look at creation and realize I am looking. I can hear a bird and realize I am hearing. I can feel conviction, wonder, gratitude, sorrow, longing, and awe. I can recognize that I am recognizing. That is a holy thing.

It is easy to overlook because it is always with us. But maybe some of the greatest gifts are the ones that become so close that we stop seeing them at all.

And that is where responsibility enters in.

Because if consciousness is gift, then it is also stewardship.

It is not enough just to have it. The question becomes: What am I doing with it? What am I doing with awareness? What am I doing with my capacity to know, to discern, to reflect, and to turn toward God?

In the language of Scripture, maybe this is not far from the idea of a talent entrusted to us—something placed in our hands that was never meant to be buried. It was never meant to sit dormant. It was never meant to be wasted in numbness, distraction, or passive living. It was meant to be engaged.

And I think that may be one of the great calls of our time right now:

Participate.

Wake up to the fact that being aware is itself a calling.

Even if the deepest place you engage is in your own mind before God, that still matters. In fact, it may matter more than we know. The responsibility is not just to survive, but to commune.

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There is something deeply connected about consciousness. When we turn inward honestly, and upward sincerely, we are not entering isolation. We are entering communion. We are speaking into that mystery that is greater than us and yet closer than breath. We are touching the reality that spirit is not separate from life, but at the center of it. And somehow, in ways I do not pretend to fully explain, that is where we are joined.

That changes the morning.

It changes the way you step outside. It changes the way you look at a tree. It changes the way you watch an animal pause on instinct while you pause in wonder. It changes the way you carry your own existence. Life stops feeling accidental and starts feeling like a gift—and more than a gift, a sacred responsibility.

There is humility in this too. Because as much as we live as though our place is guaranteed, it is not guaranteed by our strength. In a blink, if God willed it, the roles could be reversed. We could be the ones ruled only by instinct, and the rocks could cry out with understanding. The fact that we have been given this place, this awareness, this capacity, should not make us proud. It should make us grateful.

So maybe that is the question I am left with today:

*What am I doing with consciousness?*

*What am I doing with the fact that I have been allowed to know that I am here?*

*What am I doing with my gift of awareness?*

*What am I doing with the portion of God's image entrusted to me in this life?*

Maybe that is what worship is in part—the conscious returning of consciousness to the One who gave it.

*What are you doing with consciousness today?*

## Reflection & Response

*Take a moment to sit with today's reading. Let these prompts lead you into prayer, gratitude, and honest reflection.*

1. Where did you notice the gift of awareness today?
2. In what ways have you taken consciousness for granted?
3. How might God be inviting you to participate more deeply rather than live on instinct?
4. What is one way you can return your awareness to God in worship today?

### *My Reflections*

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### *Prayer*

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