

Root Canal

Recently, I went to the dentist to have a broken tooth repaired. That was the only problem I knew of, so I thought. However, the routine x-rays told a different story. One of my molars was severely decayed. It had been aching for a while, but I had dismissed the pain as minor. The decay was serious, and the dentist recommended a root canal. I agreed, which led to a visit to the endodontist. After reviewing the x-rays, the endodontist warned me that the tooth might be beyond saving. Still, he drilled, cleaned out the decay and removed the roots, and thankfully, saved the tooth from being extracted.

Just like that decaying molar, **soul decay** often starts indiscreetly. It may be seemingly small things, like a slip-of-the-tongue bad word, an occasional beer or glass of wine, or occasionally missing worship service. On the surface, things may seem fine. We may not even realize the extent of the problem until it has progressively got worse.

Jesus said, *“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders... All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”* Mark 7:21–23.

The Hebrews writer stated that a man or woman can become *“hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”*

Sin is spiritual decay. It slowly eats away at the soul, just as bacteria eat away at enamel and dentin of a tooth. The Apostle Paul wrote, *“For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.”* Romans 7:11. If left untreated, sin can lead to complete destruction: *“For the wages of sin is death...”* Romans 6:23a.

Just as I had to go to an endodontist to save my tooth, we must turn to the **Great Physician**, Jesus Christ, to save our souls. He sees what lies beneath the surface. He knows how deeply sin can damage us. And yet, He is willing to cleanse, restore, and renew.

Peter proclaimed boldly: *“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...”* Acts 3:19. When we respond to God through faith, repentance, confession, and baptism, He washes away the decay of sin. The soul is cleansed and made whole:

“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” Acts 22:16.

God doesn't want our souls to rot away with the world. He wants souls that are healthy, strong, and whole in Him. Paul encourages Christians to keep themselves clean from worldly defilement:

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1.

Decay of the soul is far more dangerous than that of any tooth. But the remedy is freely available through Jesus Christ. Let us not wait until the pain is unbearable and the damage is beyond repair. Let's not just treat the symptoms. Let's get to the root of the problem and let God save what sin tries to destroy. Seek the healing power of God's Word today.

“He restores my soul...” Psalm 23:3a.

~Ron Josselet (ChatGPT assisted)