

GREED, GLUTTONY, VAINGLORY & THEIR MEDICINE

SPIRITUAL SICKNESS TO SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Baptism

- We were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. - *Romans 6:4*
- We have free will even after Baptism.

Spiritual Health & Spiritual Sickness

- Spiritual Health
 - To use well our free will
 - Turning our minds and hearts to God
 - Virtues
- Spiritual Sickness
 - To misuse our free will (sin)
 - Turning our minds and hearts away from God toward sensible realities to seek pleasure from them
 - Passion – to plant a seed that grows and establishes roots in our hearts such that we have a tendency (thoughts arise) toward a disorder affection
 - Church Fathers: As we habitually follow our passions, we are “sick”.

Spiritual Sickness / Passions

- Cancerous cells that multiply
 - Sickness of soul requires purification for healing
 - 8 Passions or Sicknesses
- **Gluttony**
 - Lust
 - **Love of money (avarice)**
 - Sorrow
 - Anger
 - Acedia
 - **Vainglory**
 - Pride

Gluttony

- Defined
 - Search for the *pleasure* of eating
 - Desire to eat with *pleasure* in mind
- Arises in regard to *pleasure* of the quality or quantity
 - I want that chocolate, that wine, that bread.
 - How much is needed for a taste?
 - I want to feel stuffed, tipsy, full.
- Arises from the soul, not the body
 - When the desire for food and drink surpasses the need
 - When the desire for the *pleasure* of food and drink surpasses the need

Gluttony

- Reaction: I detest food and drink!
 - To detest food and drink as something bad is demonic.
 - Food and drink are good.
 - To choose to misuse food and drink is bad, a sin, a passion, a sickness.
- The passion of gluttony is to choose to misuse food and drink, not to sustain me, but exclusively for the pleasure of it.

Gluttony

- We eat often, so Satan easily excites gluttony.
- Adam & Eve
- Satan tempts Jesus.

Gluttony

- Too much food and drink
 - Weighs us down
 - Low energy
 - Mentally dull
 - Slothful
 - Sleepy
- Not as serious as murder, adultery, or theft
- Seriousness arises in what follows
 - “Tumult of thoughts”
 - “Mother of all passions”

Gluttony

- I don't need any more of this food or drink, but I'm taking some anyways.
- Dessert is being served. I don't need a large piece. "Please cut me a small piece." Thanks be to God.

Spiritual Medicine for Gluttony

- Fasting
- Abstinence
- Consider our relationship with food and drink
- Narrow way: consume food and drink *Eucharistically*
 - Delight in God
 - Giving thanks

Spiritual Therapy for Gluttony: Temperance

- Partake of (good) food and drink as needed, not solely for pleasure
 - Feeling full
 - Body's reaction to alcohol
- Temperance is different for each person
- Temperance changes over time for each person
- Temperance determines the usefulness and limits the pleasure

Spiritual Healing: Self-Knowledge

- Knowing how much we *need* is an important piece of self-knowledge.
- How much we need fluctuates.
- Food and drink require constant vigilance and discernment.
 - Make up our minds prior to meals.
 - Accountability partner

Love of Money / Avarice

- Defined
 - Search for pleasure in the possession and keeping of money
 - Pain one senses in separating himself from money
 - Delighting not in the use of money, but in the possession of money
 - We desire the pleasure we receive by possessing and keeping money
- Like food and drink, money is not an evil thing

Love of Money / Avarice

- Love of money is the root of all evil. – I Timothy 6:10
- Desire for money takes the place in the heart of man's desire for God.
- Man prefers to possess and keep riches than his own soul.
- “Bulimia of the soul” for it is never satisfied, spawning off all other passions
- Strained relationships due to love of money

Spiritual Medicine for Love of Money

1. Recognize it and admit it
2. Look at every visible thing as a passing shadow that withers and fades
3. Strive to be content and thankful for what we have
 - One shops, the other buys
 - No purchasing in the same Internet session
 - No decisions at meetings
4. Make an act of faith in God

Spiritual Medicine for Love of Money

5. Pray the words of Jesus: “No one can serve two masters. He will love the one and despise the other.”
 6. Do I really need this?
 - The same question as food and drink!
 7. Almsgiving done in a disinterested manner
 - Almsgiving atones for sins
- Conversion of desire away from the possession of money and things to something or someone else.

Spiritual Healing: Voluntary Poverty

- Voluntary poverty does not mean “I have nothing.”
- Voluntary poverty means “Nothing has control over me.”
 - Money does not possess me.
- Nothing renders the mind more clean, pure, and at peace than voluntary poverty.
 - Job is the quintessential example of voluntary poverty.

Vainglory

- Defined
 - Taking pleasure in possessing others by being seen, admired, considered, esteemed, honored, praised, flattered
 - Arises in two forms
- Subtle, unseen by ourselves, but clearly recognized by others
- Vainglory and love of money produce each other because they both involve a *taking pleasure in possessing*

Vainglory: Seen, Honored & Praised

- Women

- Did you notice my hair, dress, how much weight I lost?
- Did you notice I did that?
- Do you like my cooking? How does it taste? What do you think?
- Why didn't he say anything?
- Why didn't she congratulate me?

- Men

- Did you notice my new car, watch, gadget? It's way more than you could afford.
- Yeah, I'm doing really well in the stock market right now.
- I'm such a big donor that the scholarship is named after me.

Vainglory: Expertise

- More common in men
 - She needs me. I'm the man. Without me, she'd be lost.
 - Daddy, you're so great. You take care of everything.
 - By asking me for help, this guy shows everybody that he knows that I'm the boss.
 - He better say in front of everyone that I saved the company, or I'm going to be very angry.
 - I can see that he needs a hand, but I'm going to make him ask for it.
 - He asked me to make a \$1M donation. It's because he knows that I've got that kind of money. I'm happy about that.
 - Of course, he comes to me with his problems, I'm the priest.
- Territorial in women
 - I'm her mother. She should have come to me!

Vainglory

- Seen, honored, praised
 - External
 - More frequently noticed
- Expertise
 - Internal
 - Gives the appearance of the absence of vainglory
 - Much worse: undetectable cancer

Vainglory

- Unnecessary use of “I”
- Talking too loudly
- Slyly commanding attention in conversation
- Laughing too much or too loudly
- Where we sit at table
- Overly concerned about our appearance
- Becoming anxious waiting to be recognized
- Holding a grudge if we weren't asked
- I went the whole day without food. I hope they noticed.
- Satan: Look at you! You didn't sin!!! “Yeah, I'm really holy. I'm glad you noticed, Satan.”

Vainglory

- Vainglory precedes and follows every passion.
- The more we elude vainglory, the harder it assaults us over the joy of victory.
- Vainglory is an onion of endless layers.
- Vainglory is a life-long struggle.

Spiritual Medicine for Vainglory

- Freedom from vainglory is custody of the mouth: refrain from “I”
- Meditation on Divine Judgment
 - I’ve done great things. I’m beautiful. But that won’t get me to Heaven!
- Renounce everything that is a source or opportunity for respect, renown, honor, glory
 - As respect, renown, honor, glory do come our way, simply say “Thank you” and then inwardly give thanks and glory to God.
- Hide our good deeds
- Disclose our faults
 - Depending upon circumstances
 - Too much is vainglory
- Focus conversations on others
 - Too much is vainglory
 - Sts. Benedict & Scholastica
- Work and raises
 - I’m able to make these contributions because of the talents God gave me.
 - The just reward of my labors merely gives glory to God, not me.

Maximum Strength Medicine for Vainglory

- Appreciation and thankfulness for being dishonored
 - I'm a sinner. I deserved that.
- Give no attention our own virtues and spiritual practices
- Strive to become unknown to men. If we want to become known by God, become unknown to men.
 - Let God be the one to admire, esteem, appreciate and notice...what He gave us!

Healed from Vainglory

- No sorrow at being humiliated in public
- No rancor against the one who humiliated us
- We give thanks to God for the humiliation

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