

TAKE AIM, DON'T MISS! DEALING WITH THE SE7EN DEADLY SINS

- AN INTRODUCTION



There's not much good news coming out of France these days, but what's happening IS a stark reminder that some people see those who disagree with them or make fun of them as ENEMIES to be annihilated! And have you noticed with some groups of people, when you disagree with their beliefs (like on same-sex marriage), you ARE the enemy! It's the language of WAR, and the longer we live and the more

consistently we strive by God's grace to live out what it means to live in a distinctively Christian way, the more we're gripped by this reality: ***The Christian Life is a life of spiritual warfare.*** Not in the same way Muslims see spiritual warfare, but the perspective is of warfare, nonetheless. *Ephesians 6* affirms as much. So does *Revelation*. So does *Genesis 3*, and the rest of the Bible, for that matter. People live their lives on a battleground, not on a playground. Like it or not, you're in the fight of your life. And to make matters even more intense, in this war, one of your most lethal enemies hangs his helmet inside your heart! It's just as scary as if you learned today that some students in all the public and private schools and home school organizations were Isis operatives!

What is one of the main problems with the sin with which we have, personally, to deal with? According to Cornelius Plantinga, Jr, the problem is "Sin has 1,000 faces & satan is a master of disguise and marketing. [Cult . . . "If you embrace our beliefs, you will go straight to hell when you die . . . "] The devil is also a master strategist, specializing in maneuvers, counter maneuvers, and sneak attacks that would give "Stormin' Norman" an Excedrin headache!

SOME INTRODUCTORY INSIGHTS INTO THE SE7EN DEADLY SINS...

The list is Centuries Old, written of by Dante, Chaucer, and acted out by Morgan Freeman & Brad Pitt in a Movie entitled "Se7en". The most faces of sin are often grouped together under these headings:

*PRIDE *ENVY *WRATH *SLOTH *GREED *GLUTTONY *LUST

WHAT IS THE *ORIGIN* OF THIS LIST?

Sins are in the Bible but

Dates back to the 4th Century, this list was NOT created by but later RECONGIZED by the catholic church. 1st person in history to formulate this list was Egagrius of Pontus, a monk, then John Cassian, and even Gregory the Great. This list is never grouped together in the Bible, so WHY study it? Well, you wont find the word "Trinity" in the Bible, yet we study the Trinity; We wont find the "Doctrines Of Grace" in a list in the Bible, yet we study "TULIP". We don't even find a LIST of the Spiritual Disciplines in the Bible. The se7en deadly sins ARE in the Bible, and that's the point!

WHY THE SE7EN DEADLY SINS? IS THERE A BETTER DESIGNATION?

Cf *Romans 6:23*, insights from John Mabray, Dorothy Sayers, John Cassian, Gregory the Great, Rebecca DeYoung & a very helpful insight on calling them "vices" . . .

The WAGES of sin is DEATH, and sin when full grown leads to death (James 1:15). John Mabray affirms if these sins are given free reign, they destroy the life of whatever is caught in their deadly web.

A more HELPFUL designation may be "CAPITAL" sins from the Latin CAPUT, which means source, like the head of a river. Dorothy Sayers calls them the "gateway" sins that lead to other sins. John Cassian calls them "principle vices" that grab hold of our hearts and are difficult to get out of, while Gregory the Great calls them "military commanders of entire armies of sin". DeYoung calls the "root sins that nest deeply in our hearts & engender whole broods of further sins." Like a Basil Cell Carcinoma cancer.

Whatever you want to call them, these 7 are sins that root themselves into your heart and spawn all kinds of manifestations of sin in your life. If not dealt with, they will destroy your life. If you are a Xn, these sins will NOT keep you out of heaven, but they will make your life on earth a living hell! All these sins are incredibly destructive on both a personal, interpersonal, and corporate level!

ONE HELPFUL WAY TO SEE THESE SE7EN DEADLY SINS IS AS DISORDERED LOVES and EMPTY HOPES.

Of course, all 7 are transgressions of God's Law, a stepping over God's boundaries. But @ an even deeper level than transgression, ALL 7 are confused attempts to get into our lives what only GOD can give us. Ultimately, we LOVE these sins more than we love GOD, or we would

not be so attracted to them. Vices ALLURE us with false hopes. Vices show us some really attractive, appealing BAIT, but vice disguises the HOOK that drags us into a miserable life.

Jeremiah 2:12-13; and an insight from C. S. Lewis . . . Jeremiah sees any attempt to quench our spiritual "thirsts" as idolatry, looking to something created to give us what only the CREATOR can give us. CS Lewis sees evil desires as the outworking of our trying to get apart from God what only God can give us. A false picture attracts us only b/c we have not seen the real thing." If even in our mind's eye we could see the real thing, the counterfeit would not appeal to us. Evil is offering a COUNTERFEIT happiness in the place of REAL happiness found only in God."

WHAT IS THE GREAT SOVEREIGN REMEDY FOR THE SE7EN DEADLY SINS?

Colossians 3:1-5; Romans 8:11-14

John Owen on the soul and substance of all false religion. . . "Any time we try to either REDEFINE sin or do away with sin in our own *strength*, according to our own *inventions*, with the goal being *self-righteousness*, we are engaging in false religion."

What we need is a strong dose of JUSTIFICATION by FAITH ALONE, and the transforming ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT.

With the confident security of God's GRACE *beneath* us, the solid hope of GLORY *before* us, and the power of the HOLY SPIRIT *within* us, we can fight the good fight against the se7en deadly sins and see real progress! NOT PERFECTION, BUT PROGRESS, GROWING HUMBLE CONFIDENCE, and A FULL LIFE IS OUR GOAL IN FIGHTING THE SE7EN DEADLIES!

A NOTE ON THE GENERAL FORMAT FOR DEALING WITH THE SE7EN DEADLIES . . .

- We will look at the fruits and deep root of each sin. And how to kill the root.
- We will look at the sickness, the symptoms, and the cure for the sin.
- We will consider the diagnosis, the prognosis, and the remedy for the sin.
- We will ask what it is, why it is so dangerous, and the deliverance from the sin.
- We will look at the sin in terms of slavery and deliverance from it.
- We will look at gifts, how they become idols, and how to deal with the idolatry.
- We will look at the dynamics of Creation, Fall, and Redemption as it applies to the sin.