**Getting to Know You: Root Vices in the Life of a Christian**

1 Jn 2:16 “For all that is in the world, sensual lust, enticement for the eyes, and a pretentious life, is not from the Father but is from the world.” NAB

New International Version (©2011) “For everything in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--comes not from the Father but from the world.”

Aramaic Bible in Plain English (©2010) “For everything that is in the world: the desire of the body and the lust of the eyes and the pride of temporal life, these are not from The Father but these are from the world.”

St. Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*

Meditation on the Two Standards

Third Day of the Second Week

Third Point. The third, to consider the discourse which [the devil] makes them [his minion tempters], and how he [the devil] tells them to cast out nets and chains [over the hearts of men]; that they have ***first to tempt with a longing for riches***—as he is accustomed to do in most cases—that men ***may more easily come to vain honor*** of the world, and ***then to vast pride***. So that the first step shall be that of riches; the second, that of honor; the third, that of pride; and from these three steps he draws on to all the other vices.

*Definition of Root Vice*:

A default motivation which pervasively but unconsciously influences your reason for doing the things you do. It causes you to do evil things, but it also causes you to do good for the wrong reasons.

I. Sensuality

A. Definition: The disordered tendency to feel a need for comforts of the flesh (food, drink, purely recreational or sedentary activities) and towards material wealth.

B. Causes:

(1) Family history causing genetic pre-dispositions, environment, luck-of-the-draw (temperament)

(2) A lack of deeply nurturing relationships at an early age. The “vacuum” created causes a *compensatory need* for comfort in material things, these things giving a false sense of security or peace.

(3) Sheer lack of experience (i.e. ignorance of) the goodness of accomplishment and deep relationships. For example, perhaps your parents were deeply loving, but only expressed that by giving you material things.

C. Truth Acknowledged By It

The human person is both body and soul, and material comforts and possessions are proper to a happy life.

D. Truth Ignored By It

The human person is most deeply fulfilled through (a) accomplishment and (b) much more deeply, relationships; material goods are only means toward those ends.

E. Skills of a Sensual Person

Can be very good at making others comfortable, making money, being cheerful and easy-going; usually agreeable to be around

F. Manifestations of Sensuality

Can be quick-tempered (emotions out of control), fearful, unable to give up the slightest luxury or recreation, a sensual person finds it very difficult to *consistently* exert him/herself when it is painful.

II. Vanity

A. Definition: The disordered tendency to feel a need for recognition from others and the affections of friendship.

B. Causes

(1) Family history causing genetic pre-dispositions, environment, luck-of-the-draw (i.e. temperament)

(2) Relationships fixated on superficiality and appearance; early experiences of failure when goals were attempted; rejection from others creating a *compensatory* desire to make up for it by winning esteem.

(3) Ignorance *how-to* accomplish goals which give substance to a person’s character, usually because a mentor was abusively hard on this person, or because of a lack of mentors.

C. Truth Acknowledged By It

The human person is good, lovable, and beautiful in his nature and any good whatsoever is worthy of explicit praise.

D. Truth Ignored By It

The human person is good independent of recognition.

The human person *must* learn to do things well, even though he experience much failure.

E. Skills of a Vain Person

Can be good at dressing, maintaining physical fitness, impressing strangers and making superficial friends, using art to display ideas, interest in the arts

F. Manifestations of Vanity

Can be a desperate need to hide insecurity about one’s own goodness, chronic melancholy and sadness, a need to stand out in a crowd when it is inappropriate solely for the attention it gains, failing to take a stand on issues when courage is needed to do so, a tendency to waste money on flashy things

III. Pride

A. Definition: The disordered tendency to act independently of others, to ignore the value of others’ perspective on things, and to myopically focus on oneself.

B. Causes

(1) Family history causing genetic pre-dispositions, environment, luck-of-the-draw (i.e. temperament)

(2) Relationships fixated solely on the accomplishment of goals; an environment of criticism and negativity or even abuse, causing a *compensatory need* for accomplishment in order to escape that criticism or abuse.

(3) Simply failing or forgetting to take into account the great value of others, their emotions, their needs, their accomplishments, their experience.

C. Truth Acknowledged By It

The measure of a man is secondarily his ability to accomplish good and command others in the accomplishment of works.

D. Truth Ignored By It

The measure of a man is primarily God’s loving knowledge of him and the incredible dignity which the human person bears intrinsically.

Also, that each human individual is called to spiritual union with others.

Finally, that others need to be taken into account and explicitly recognized for the good in them.

E. Skills of a Proud Person

Can be extremely gifted intellectually, able to accomplish great works, reliable, hard-working, sacrificial, prudent

F. Manifestations of Pride

Can be very negative, caustic, critical, quick-tempered, falsely imagines that others are maliciously attacking them (e.g. in traffic), unable to simply spend time with others without doing things.

-- Vanity overcome with courage, modesty and healthy self-reliance, Pride by getting to know and appreciate others, and Sensuality by learning to become good at and enjoy higher spiritual things.