

Practical Thoughts to Disarm Desires

Taken from Richard Baxter, *Directions against Sinful Desires and Discontent*

If we hope to have heaven someday, and to stand in the presence of God, then it is important to keep ourselves from worldly lusts. The following are not to be thought of as responses to sin, but bulwarks against sin. The spirit of this admonition is found in Romans 12:1-2.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what [is] that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:1-2 NKJV)

The thoughts shared hereafter will, I hope, help you with the renewing process. Many sins over take us because we just don't have our guard up. These thoughts might help you to keep your armor on.

1. Know yourself well. You have need of much grace, and without that grace, you will run after all manner of evil to your own harm. Pray that God will grant you grace and reveal your need for it daily.
2. Think about the fact that your carnal desires weaken your spiritual desires. When you seek after earthly things, the things of God grow distant with your increasing contempt.
3. Remember that friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4). Let that thought humble you. Surely, you do not wish to insult the Lord who died for you.
4. Ask yourself if Christ is sufficient for you. Must you have more than Christ? The man sold all he had for the pearl of great price. Didn't you?
5. Think how every sin is an act of rebellion against God. Whose will, will be done, yours, or His? When you rebel against God, you accuse Him of wrongdoing. We are to prove what that acceptable, perfect will of God is (Rom. 12:2 above). We are not to fight against it.
6. Recognize that you pray as a hypocrite. Shall you ask the Lord's will be done, and then rebel against it? “When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.” (Isaiah 1:15 NKJV)
7. Remember your covenant with God. Did you not crucify the flesh? Did you not forsake all for Him?
8. Know that God is better at making choices for you than you are. When you desire that thing even though it may be lawful, it may be your undoing in the end. Trust God to provide what you need.
9. Don't forget that God keeps us from evil, and gives over the rebellious to evil. “So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, to walk in their own counsels.” (Psalms 81:12 NKJV)
10. Understand that lust is the beginning of all sin. “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” (James 1:14-15 NKJV)
11. Consider what you already have, and be thankful.
12. Realize that all your desires once realized will leave you unsatisfied.
13. Contemplate how your desires make that thing desired a torture to your soul. Wanting something is a constant worry that consumes what could be communion with God.

May God bless you today as you seek to live holy before Him! If you would like to read about these directives from the original source, you will find them at the follow link:

<http://www.puritansermons.com/baxter/baxter21.htm>