

## Social Media & 7 Deadly Sins

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6th century pope, Gregory the Great, called these 7 deadly sins, not because they're the "worst" sins- but because at the core, they separate us from God - turning us to look for our worth, our source of life in worldly things - and because most other sins can find their roots in one of these - leading ultimately to spiritual death

- 7 Deadly Sins

### Pride

- Deadly because: prevents us from seeing God / ourselves / each other correctly
- Symptoms: holding your opinion of yourself/others over what God says is true about who you/others are
- Leads to: insecurity / conceit / arrogance, left puffed up or hating ourselves
- Social Media
  - How it contributes: we have easy access for comparison through social media;
  - Pride & self-deprecation vs. confidence/humility
    - Pride & self-deprecation both stem from elevating your opinion of yourself over what God says is true about you
    - Humility/Confidence both stem from knowing yourself accurately as a beloved child of God created uniquely; knowing yourself correctly allows you to take ownership of your gifts and responsibility for cultivating those gifts and building the kingdom the way only you can - and where you can learn to improve, it's okay to be a work in progress pursuing growth
- Parent Goal = humility that comes from confidence
  - Be an accurate/true reflection of who your kids are  
(DON'T OVER-EXAGGERATE HOW AWESOME THEY ARE, DON'T COMPARE THEM TO OTHERS **FOR BETTER OR WORSE**, DON'T PUT THEM DOWN) if you're not authentic in the way you encourage,, this will ultimately water down the impact you can have on their sense of self when you really want your affirmations to stick

### Envy

- Deadly because: we lose sight of who we are to God; who others are to God
- Symptoms: we measure our worth/happiness in terms of what others have/do
- Leads to: disappointment/dissatisfaction, depression, arrogance, delusion, bullying, restlessness
- Social Media:
  - Access to each others' lives more easily than ever before:
  - Why do they get to have/do that?
  - Why don't I get to have/do that?
- Parent Goal = Recognizing why your differences make you invaluable; highlighting the need for community (one body/many parts); don't compare yourselves to others in front of your children (they see all of it)

### Gluttony

- Deadly because: trying to fill a spiritual emptiness/hunger with worldly "food"
- Symptoms: Because worldly items will only ever feed you temporarily, you'll always be searching for more, you'll never have enough, you'll never feel satisfied
- Leads to: disappointment, wastefulness, missing the point of benefits of social media

- Social Media:
  - Social media, like food, is awesome - meant to be enjoyed, used for good, can even be used to fuel much creativity and energize the community - BUT here's an unhealthy how to identify unhealthy ways of engaging with social media
  - When we:
    - ...reach for it too soon (needing to check your phone every 5 minutes for updates)
    - ...engage with it too delicately (exorbitant fanfare over social media posting)
    - ...indulge it too expensively (seeing that these platforms are free, and kids may not be putting money toward it, their most significant currency right now is time - spending WAY too much time on it is an expensive waste)
    - ....reach for it, too uncontrollably (binge-scrolling through instagram, zombie-like behavior, not thoughtful engagement with quality content, just mindless consumption of endless content)
    - ...too much (social media takes the place of more important things in our lives)
    - These are 5 Ways Pope Gregory the Great used to identify unhealthy relationship to food - but I think it pertains just as well to social media
- Parent Goal = self-control that comes from recognizing where the hunger comes from, what won't be filling, and how to enjoy things in the moment/appropriately

#### Greed

- Deadly because: it is self-seeking, even when it looks great from the outside; severs us from knowing the creative/generous God who created us and we're created after
- Symptoms: bolsters manipulative tendencies for self-gain; no commitments culture
- Leads to: scheming, suspicion, manipulation
- Social Media: manipulating photos for more likes (now there are apps, not just silly filters, but ones meant to help you manipulate your face to fit the "ideals" - where you can easily erase every blemish, thin out or reshape your jawline, extend your eyelashes, etc.; non-committal culture because we want to try everything)
- Parent Goal: Turn the attention from self-gain towards how can you be a blessing? What is your unique role as a part of this community? How can you commit to others?

#### Lust

- Deadly because: we reduce other humans to objects of our immediate needs (be it sexual, entertainment, intellectual, etc.); lose sight of our dignity and others' dignity
- Leads to: seeking instant gratification for my needs; consumption of people/content
- Social Media:
  - 2 social media influencer friends of mine
    - Accruing fans and feeling lonelier and more scrutinized and judged than ever
    - Even "fans" turned on them quickly when they had slowed down in posting content because of difficult things that were going on in their personal lives (went from hardcore fans to critics in a moment because these women influencers were not serving *their* needs at the rate they wanted)
  - Social Media: endless, instant consumption of bodies, content, etc. and no regard for the whole human
- Parent Goal = compassion that comes from regarding the whole person's dignity; treat people in real life as whole people - not just people who serve our needs from moment to moment; but people who have whole stories to why they are the way they are- what they need, how they

hurt, and what makes them human; acknowledge whole people regularly and model this way of living in daily life

## Wrath

- Deadly because: it can potentially sever ties/burn bridges
- Leads to: frustration, violence, profanity, abuse
- Social Media:
  - “Without consequence” spewing toxic anger behind a screen name; are you lashing out or helping to advocate?; what is your posture before/during/after posting?
- Parent Goal = Teach kids why it’s Biblical to get mad & AND NOT SIN & to pursue wisdom
  - God got mad.
  - It’s your response to recognizing something is wrong - If you feel anger, it’s usually because some part of you that recognizes right vs. wrong has been violated
  - Anger itself isn’t the sin; in fact it says **BE ANGRY but DON’T SIN** (2 imperative greek verbs); we’re required to get angry - be like God which means being angry like God
  - Ephesians 4: in your anger do not sin
    - Just before commanding us to be angry, Paul reminds us that we’re all part of a unified body so we all need to protect each other to survive
  - When you’re 5 years old, our “sense of right and wrong” may be violated when we’re kept from having a 4th cookie in a row. We react angrily because we feel we rightly deserve that 4th cookie.
    - As we grow in wisdom, we recalibrate our standard of right and wrong to our growing knowledge of life, the Word, and our world
    - We need actively to pursue growth in wisdom - if that means starting from level ZERO at approaching the Bible, that’s okay! Start there.
    - I didn’t know how possibly God could be angry and not sin - I had to learn the life of Jesus.

## Sloth

- Deadly because: it is laziness in dealing with the things that matter most; loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves; laziness in stewarding the resource of our very lives
- Leads to: dissatisfaction; the “real” issue compounding in weight; pain/confusion that doesn’t go away because you’re not dealing with it!
- Social Media:
  - Makes it easy for us to make ourselves look busy
  - Keeps us busy/distracted
  - Helps to maintain the illusion that we’re productive by engaging in content (posts/news/articles/etc.) that make us feel like we’re doing things to actively become the Christ-like people we want to become, when really we are settling for shallow distraction/catharsis without doing the hard work of trying to live like Christ
  - Personal: with a dear family member with a terminal illness, the heartache and chaos that ensues from that, the insecurities and pain that stems from that, the confusion I have about God’s plans - these are the things I need to sit with/wrestle with/think through - but sometimes I binge-Instagram/netflix just to numb myself; sometimes I drown myself in work - but all these are just ways to avoid the things that matter most
- Parent Goal = diligence in addressing real things, however you need to; awareness of what’s making you most restless may only come from pursuing deep rest in the first place; perhaps

you don't even realize there are greater pains creating sloth-like behavior; learning to rest deeply/ emote/ journal/ be honest and encouraging that with your kids is important