

SEVEN SINS AND SEVEN VIRTUES — Envy and Contentment

Definitions and Perspectives

- ▶ ENVY — A feeling of discontent and resentment aroused by a desire for the possessions or circumstances or qualities of another.
Origin: Observation, appreciation, imagination, desire, pursuit.
Degrees: In likeness or in particular? Indulgent fantasy or displacement plan?
 - ▶ CONTENTMENT — Being at ease with one's state and circumstance, satisfied.
Signs: Wanting what one has. Valuing who one is. Tastes within one's means.
- ☼ For our moral health God prescribes boundaries for desire — *Deuteronomy 5:21*

Really: Isn't Desire Discernment? Isn't Wanting Motivation?

- ▶ DISCERNMENT — Includes the recognition of an object's value and cost?
Whose is it? Do I need it? What will it cost me (or others) to get it?
 - ▶ MOTIVATION — Requires objectives and appetites. Outcomes worthy of effort.
Initiative is wedded to intention; and one's purpose may be bent.
- ☼ For our spiritual fitness God empowers fulfilling desires— *Galatians 5:15-18*

Optional Self-Discovery and Self-Mastery

- ▶ SELF-AWARENESS — So, what do you want? Make a prioritized catalog of desires.
Unpeeled, this is the hardest vocational, relational, personal question.
 - ▶ SELF-CONTROL — You cannot manage what you do not understand. We must go beyond the object of desire (the who or the what) to why. Why it, why now?
Truth: Our desires are as fickle as their imagined rewards. Green Grass.
- ☼ For our emotional welfare God teaches us contentment — *Philippians 4:11-13*¹

The Slippery Slope of Satisfaction

- ▶ SATISFACTION — Identifying ill-conceived or miss-directed appetites.
Not every itch should be scratched every time. Acquiring the presence of mind to know when to answer the phone and open the door.
Hitchhikers.
 - ▶ HIGHER NEEDS — Maslow's model in a theological context. Blessed states of mind.
Why do we not "seek first the kingdom of God" when the appeal is so explicit?
What explains our on-again, off-again pursuit? Feeding our hunger.
- ☼ God satisfies the soul with mystical and transformative encounters — *Psalms 90:14*

¹ 1 Timothy 6:6-10