

## Class 3—The Passions Part II

### Self-love

Knowledge

### Gluttony

### Lust

Love of money

Sadness

Slothfulness

Anger

Fear & faintheartedness

Vainglory and Pride

### Love of Neighbor

Prudence/Discernment

### Temperance

### Continenance & Chastity

Almsgiving

Mourning Compunction & Joy

Labor

Gentleness Patience

Courage and Fear of God

Humility

### Love of Money

“Love of money and greed destroy charity. They give birth consequently to all the passions that are contrary to it: insensibility, aversion, hatred, enmity, resentments, the spirit of argument and quarreling, crimes...fears, sadness...anger, violence, sloth...the spirit of superiority, disdain for one’s neighbor, disrespect, insolence and arrogance.”

“While the body imposes certain limits to the underlying desires of gluttony and lust, the underlying desire of love of money and greed increases the more it is satisfied.”

**St Chrysostom:** “One must understand the emptiness of things and know that wealth is an ungrateful and runaway slave, plunging its owners into a multitude of evils.”

**St Symeon the New Theologian:** “One must recognize that all is a shadow and every visible thing is passing.”

**St John Climacus:** “Unwavering faith cuts off cares.”

“In order to be healed of these passions, it is absolutely essential that man, after becoming aware of the impossibility of finding any real surety in material goods, place all his trust and hope in God and consequently dedicate all his strength to attaining His Kingdom.”

**St Chrysostom:** “If we make spiritual goods our priority, we will have no trouble for material goods, since God will provide these to us.”

“The healing of love of money and greed implies a conversion of desire: a turning around of the desiderative faculty and man’s power of love from the riches of this world towards God and spiritual goods. Through this conversion, one substitutes for the passions of love of money and greed the opposite virtues of non-possessiveness and almsgiving.

**Non-Possessiveness** along with non-acquisitiveness signify the refusal to possess or acquire anything, save what is strictly necessary for existence. This is of course, central to monastic practice. Not just not having things, but to have things without possessing or being possessed by them.

**St. Paul:** “Let those who buy [live] as though they had no goods, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it.”

So non-possessiveness is the inner preoccupation. Must root out the desire from our minds must embrace spiritual poverty

## **Almsgiving**

Love of money and greed contradict love in a myriad of ways.

**Abba Isaiah:** “Let us exercise our love in charity towards the poor, that it might save us from love of money.” consists in sharing one's goods, giving one's superfluity to those in need, and even what is necessary to oneself to those who lack.

Lk. 11:41: “But give for alms those things which are within”

**St. Chrysostom:** “It is much less for the assuagement of the indigence that God has ordained almsgiving than for the advantage for those who give alms.”

Necessary that they be proportionate to the means of the giver

Do so secretly “There is no difference at all between giving to a poor man or giving to Christ.” puts an end to continual state of fear, anxiety and anguish.

Teaches us how to have compassion for the ills of our neighbor frees from aggressiveness and anger “reunites in a single body the members of Jesus Christ”

**Chrysostom:** “There is no sin from which one cannot be purified by almsgiving and which it cannot destroy. Every sin is below it, and it is the sovereign remedy for every wound.”

a necessary companion to repentance

“By practicing almsgiving, man imitates God, showing himself truly to be His adopted son and likening himself to Him.

## **Sadness**

sadness at the loss of original created state can be an impetus to virtue

but “Instead of using sadness to weep over his sins and to grieve himself over his estrangement from God and the loss of spiritual goods, man uses it on the contrary to bemoan the loss of sensual things; he is distressed at not having satisfied some desire and not obtaining some expected pleasure, or furthermore at having had some troubles in his relationships with his fellow men. He thus uses sadness contranaturally and abnormally.”

“We have seen that St. Maximus emphasizes that sensual pleasure is inevitably followed by pain, which is most often mental rather than physical—in other words, taking the form of sadness. This is why **St. Maximus says** that sadness is the end of sensual pleasure.”

**St. John Chrysostom:** “The devil has no other weapon in hand more fearsome than despair; thus we give him less pleasure by sinning than by despairing.”

“A source of spiritual death, despair can also cause man to give his body over to death.”  
i.e. suicide

“Besides the fact that it almost inevitably gives birth to despair and its grave consequences if one allows it to develop, this passion produces from the start such impassioned attitudes as acrimony, spitefulness, resentfulness, bitterness, rancor and impatience. For this reason, sadness greatly disturbs man’s relationship with his neighbor.”

“Let us note further that sadness, like all of the other passions, fills the soul with shadow, first of all covering up the mind with darkness, blinding the intellect, and considerably reducing its faculty of discernment.”

### **Therapy of Sadness: Mourning, Compunction, and Joy**

first possible cause of sadness is the frustration of a present or expected pleasure and thus, more fundamentally, the loss of a sensual good, the frustration of a fleshly desire or the dashing of some carnal hope.

Therapy essentially entails the renunciation of “carnal” desires and pleasures detachment with regard to all sensual goods not only material goods, but also honors and human glory

**St. Maximus:** “With regard to sadness, be indifferent to fame and dishonor.”

second essential cause of sadness is anger, either as a result of anger or as the consequence of some offense

**St. John Cassian:** that sadness “is healed by interior meditation, watchful care, and the company of brethren with their constant example.”

not holding grudges and/or forgiving our offenders recognizing oneself as worthy of offense

“unmotivated” sadness that can appear in the soul without reason not to withdraw but find help and consolation by seeking spiritual guides, reading, meditation and prayer

“Your sorrow will turn to joy.” lastly is the holy sadness which consists in being grieved at being separated from God being deprived of spiritual goods weeping over past and present faults, both known and unknown Fathers tell us to renounce the former and seek out the latter

**St. Paul:** “For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death.”

Thus it is not a matter of abolishing every form of sadness, but only of the passion of sadness.

Since godly sadness is a gift from God, man must pray and ask to obtain compunction. Often arises from remembrance of death and the thought of future judgement.

Repentent tears

“God grants to the afflicted person not only consolation, but also spiritual joy the more man is saddened by his sins, the more he humbles himself before God and weep also for the sins of his neighbors”

### **Acedia or Slothfulness** or boredom

“excites practically all the passions together.”

“acedia corresponds to a certain state of sloth and boredom, but also of disgust, aversion, lassitude, dejection, discouragement, languor (lethargy), torpor (state of mental or physical inactivity or insensibility), nonchalance, drowsiness, somnolence (sleepiness) and sluggishness (of the body as well as the soul).”

**St. John Climacus:** “a paralysis of soul, an enervation (weakening) of the mind [and] neglect of asceticism.”

“This acedia takes the form of an oft-times vague and muddled feeling of dissatisfaction, disgust, boredom, lassitude—and this vis-à-vis themselves, existence, those around them, the place where they live, their work or even any activity whatsoever.”

“makes the mind dark, blinding it and covering the entire soul with gloom.”

### **Therapy of Acedia (Despondency)**

#### **Labor**

**St. Climacus:** “Each of the other passions is destroyed by some particular virtue. But despondency... is a general death.”

first must be recognized for what it is  
tendency to drowsiness

**St Isaac of Syria:** “The health and healing of the man whose soul has become darkened comes to him from hesychia.”

finding a spiritual guide  
quelled by patience, does not leave swiftly  
remedied by repentance, mourning and compunction  
remembrance of death  
manual labor

**St John Cassian:** “Aspire to live quietly” “Mind your own affairs” “Work with your hands”  
and of course, prayer

#### **Anger**

“is like a poison of the soul through which the devil eats away at the soul from the inside. The remembrance of insults, resentment, and especially rancor, are like a venom that easily worms its way into all parts of the soul, poisoning the heart.”

**St. Maximus:** “According to nature, anger is courage.”

**St. Paul:** “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Eph. 6:12

#### **in the negative:**

exteriorized and violent displays  
resentment (sustained anger)  
rancor (deep-seated ill will)  
hatred (all forms of grudges, hostility, animosity, enmity)  
bad moods, indignation, mockery, scoffing, irony, etc.

Fathers see a fundamental cause of anger in the love of pleasure  
desire for sensible goods and the attachment to them

attachment to food

attachment to money

attachment to oneself (pride and vainglory)

also attachment to lust and excess of bodily rest

**St. John Chrysostom:** “There is no difference between anger and madness.” “The angry man absolutely resembles a mad man.”

spiritual epilepsy

resembles someone possessed

**St. Basil the Great:** “This passion banishes reason; it forbids man to use his reasoning.”

**St. John Chrysostom:** “Truly, anger is no less mad than delusion; behold how this demon casts his victims into delirium, utterly depriving them of reason and convincing them of what is contrary to what their eyes behold. They see nothing, they do nothing with reason; one would say they no longer have sense or judgment...anger subjugates them.”

cuts man off from both God and neighbor

### **Therapy of Anger:**

#### **Gentleness and Patience**

therapy of anger presupposes a mortification of strong sexual desire

must conquer gluttony, lust and love of money

almsgiving is the most essential therapy

**St Gregory of Nyssa:** “Humility is the mother of gentleness of heart. If you close the door to pride, anger will find no entrance.”

“**Humility** is reinforced when combined with repentance and compunction interior meditation and psalmody striving to keep silence when attacks come both the tongue and the thoughts reconciling with one's neighbors.”

“**Spiritual gentleness** has nothing in common with indolence or feebleness; it is an active, not a passive, attitude.”

“**Gentleness** is a state of stability of soul, of serenity, close to passionlessness when it reaches its fulfillment.”

Acquired and practiced mainly through prayer

**Patience** consists in calmly enduring the evils inflicted upon us by circumstances or other people; especially in the case of the latter, this means calmly enduring criticism, outrages, insults, and other harmful words.

Best acquired by the love of God, the best model being Christ

**Patience** provides the soul with the energy it needs to fight and put forth the necessary effort toward spiritual progress

Must add Love to gentleness and patience

## **Fear & Faintheartedness**

Two kinds of virtuous fear:

man is attached to this life and fears everything that can corrupt or ruin him, repulsed at the thought of non-being—a tendency that belongs to his nature  
fear of God which is both the fear of divine punishment on the lowest level, and fear of separation from God on the highest level

Passional fear

“is a consequence of the ancestral sin, always appearing as a repulsion that man experiences when confronted with what can corrupt and destroy his being. But what matters now is no longer man’s being according to God, but his fallen being to which he is attached through self-love.

“Every case of fear as a passion reveals an attachment to this world: to the goods of this world and sensual pleasure in them, as well as to this life, inasmuch as it is conceived as having to serve the attainment of this kind of pleasure.”

“Fear is also the sign of a lack of faith in Divine Providence.”

“Lack of faith in God obstructs man’s dynamism, curbs his best impulses, slows down or even paralyzes his activity and in many circumstances inhibits the exercise of his faculties.”

**St. John Damascus:** “Fright comes from too powerful an imagination.”

## **Faintheartedness**

“While power is among the essential gifts of the Spirit, constituting the image of God and called to attain their full realization in the acquisition of Christ’s likeness, faintheartedness is the negation of this.”

“Faintheartedness alienates man, exercising a powerful dominion over him. It is particularly fearsome because it obstructs man’s dynamism, curbs his best impulses, slows down or even paralyzes his activity and in many circumstances inhibits the exercise of his faculties.”

## **Therapy: Courage and Fear of God**

irascible means having or showing a tendency to be easily angered

“we use it to fight for the fulfillment of the desires of the flesh and the acquisition and preservation of sensual pleasure, to facilitate the exercise of the passions, and to satisfy self-love.”

It needs to be redirected to fighting evil in all forms.

**St John Cassian:** “We can recognize that the instinct for anger is beneficial to us, in that we may be enraged at our own vices and mistakes and be all the more zealous for virtue and spiritual learning.”

**Most commonly, the Unseen Warfare:** “the interior struggle against the thoughts inspired by demons—a battle against the temptations.”

“It takes courage because it is a real battle and sin has rendered us soft, more willing to surrender and/or flee the fight.”

We must fight against the devil for the acquisition of virtue.

This calls for controlled use of the incensive power, **just** anger. “Be angry, but sin not.” Ps

### **Therapy of Fear: The Fear of God**

first source of fear is lack of faith

“It is not faith that delivers man from fear, but rather God who in response to this faith bestows His aid and succor upon man.”

Must keep Fear of God

can be considered to be a basic virtue

fear of punishment

fear of separation is ultimately a manifestation of God's grace

promotes prayer

basic source of humility

source of spiritual joy for man

### **Knowledge**

The ignorance of God is the most basic is the most basic illness of the soul

“Man was first to grow in the knowledge of his Creator, and only after this could he delight without harm in the visible creation.”

“As a result of the disregard for, and ignorance and forgetfulness on God, as well as its submission to all the other passions, the intellect is darkened, becomes blind, becomes lost, plunges the soul into obscurity and moves the whole of man into a world of darkness.”

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### **Therapy of Prudence**

means the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason

“If he wishes to advance along the path of spiritual conversion, which consists in turning away from evil and doing good, he must again be able to distinguish the two clearly and without being deceived.”

first, distinguish between good and evil

advanced, what comes from God and what from the demons (Satan).

**St John Cassian:** “Prudence sees and casts light on all a person's thoughts and actions and discerns everything that must be done.”

“Prudence is the great strategist of the battle man must inevitably fight in praxis against the devil and demons.”

Not only but also

“at heart is also the discernment of the modes of these attacks (which can be both complex and quite varied) and the foiling of the demons' ruses—something possible only with the sure knowledge of God's will indicating the true good to man.”

Also affirms and encourages the other powers of the soul to submit to the rational part in the battle that must be fought against the demons and passions.

“In this activity, its primary activity is to guard the irascible power.”

“Finally, prudence has the function of governing the soul's different powers and or reordering them by having them work according to their true nature.”

## Vainglory

“Leads man to exalt himself and cause himself to be admired for the riches and material goods he has been able to acquire

Attaches man to power in all forms

Proud of one’s intellectual qualities

Looking for empty praise for especially spiritual things.

Vain, futile, fragile, fleeting and superficial character

“He who loves to be glorified by men...delivers his soul to his enemies, and they give it over to many evils and lay hold of it.”

First exalts before other men Then exalts before God – really a denial of God

The first and the last of the passions

**St. Maximus:** “When you overcome one of the grosser passions,...the thought of vainglory at once assails you.”

“God gave this passion to human nature so as to strive for glory; but man was destined to obtain the divine glory in his union with God, and not the human glory sought by his passion and which the tradition calls ‘glory after the flesh.’”

plunges man into delusion and delirium (madness)

continuous unrest and confusion of thoughts

ultimately self-defeating

man becomes the slave of those whom he seeks to please because he awaits their praises.

## Pride

“the passion of pride is presented as the summit of vainglory or as its product, developed to the highest degree.”

two components

1. thinking of oneself superior to fellow men

“Pride drives man to pit himself against his neighbor, and before affirming his superiority in relation to him, to assert what distinguishes him and what he believes makes him fundamentally different than his neighbor.”

arrogant

self-infatuated

self-content

certain aggression in response to smallest criticism

2. exalts himself before God, setting himself up against Him

negation or denial of God

setting oneself up as a god without God

attributing one’s good works to himself and not God

**St. John Climacus:** “Some of the faithful and even of the unfaithful, have been deserted by all the passions except one; and that one has been left as a paramount evil which fully takes the place of all the others.”



**St. Gregory the Great:** pride “corrupts the soul like a contagious and systemic illness that corrupts the entire body.”

“establishing and exalting oneself without God is against God”  
deluded image of himself

**St. John Climacus:** “Pride is the extreme poverty of the soul that thinks itself to be rich and takes darkness for light.”

unaware of his neighbor  
derangement of mind  
deprives him of divine protection and goods  
loss of spiritual knowledge  
loss of all virtues  
destroys inner peace  
permanent turmoil  
makes him distrustful, touchy and over sensitive  
irritability drives him to aggression

**St. John Climacus:** the proud man “has no need of a devil; he has become a devil and enemy to himself.”

### **Therapy of Vainglory and Pride:**

#### **Humility**

“Therapy of vainglory must realize the vanity of human glory, its lack of substance and spurious goals  
same with respect to conquering; one must hide his asceticism, virtues and wisdom, and not hide his faults from others  
love of being dishonored  
see humiliations as providential remedies

#### **Therapy of pride**

“Pride shows forth in a number of attitudes: confidence in oneself, self-satisfaction, arrogance, assurance, pretensions to knowledge, trust in one’s own judgment, the certainty of being right, the compulsion to justify oneself, a spirit of contradiction, the desire to teach or command, the refusal to submit oneself

must put others first, see their superiority and overlook their faults and value their qualities  
see every “good” as a gift from God  
spiritual progress only by the grace of God

#### **Humility**

characterized by “self-detachment in all things.”  
renunciation of one’s own will  
absence of trust in oneself  
refusal to self-justify  
refusal to contradict  
forgives everyone  
“recognition of divine grace and divine compassion”  
inseparable from prayer

inseparable from contrition of heart, repentance and compunction  
Along with Love, is the Christian virtue par excellence.

“Healing man of all his passions and encompassing all the virtues, humility allows man to  
regain his original nature and to become truly human once again.”  
Unites man most to God