

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

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HISTORY

- The seven deadly sins which are also known as the capital vices, or cardinal sins are fully classified vices used since early Christian times in order to educate people on the human fallen tendency to sin. Each of them has several meanings in real life. The seven deadly sins are the following: pride, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and lust.

PRIDE

- Pride or “hubris” in Greek is considered from many people as the most serious deadly sin which causes or affects the others. Pride is the feeling that possesses us when we ignore or taunt other people’s accomplishments and think that we are essentially better than the others. The actual meaning of pride is dominating in our world nowadays as more and more people are being ruined by the consequences of extra pride. One striking example dates back to the 17th and 18th century and to the French revolution. Queen Marie Antoinette is a common example of a person with a lot of pride. As far as art is concerned, the well known “Tower of Babel” which was built by Dante was an example of great pride.

LUST

- Lust or “luxuria” is the deadly sin which is referred to the strong sexual tension in someone’s body. Throughout the past we can make reference of several examples of lust. In Ancient Greece, a person with such a strong desire was god Panas who was a retainer of Dionysus. As far as daily life is concerned, it is a fact that a lot of people in modern societies have such a problem and consequently, they are not able to live a normal life. This sin turns out to be rather impeding after all. Concerning arts, one very popular painting is “The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things” by Hieronymous Bosch.

GLUTTONY

- Gluttony is the sin which shows the desire to swallow or over-consume something but to the point of waste. For Christians, gluttony was a serious injustice due to the fact that other people weren't able even to earn a living. This opinion is valid nowadays but, unfortunately, in modern societies and especially in the United States of America, the industrial "empire" which has been created urges people to gluttony with the materialistic standards that they promote. Finally, in the world of art, the dazzling painting "Excess" by Albert Anker (1896) shows gluttony in consuming food blindfold.

WRATH

- Wrath or rage is a really important deadly sin which touches the issue of uncontrolled and spontaneous feelings of anger. Sometimes it can take the form of self destructiveness or of violent behaviour against other people. Nowadays, due to the fast paced life, people's psyche is full of hatred and suspiciousness during their daily routine. In Ancient Greece, wrath was a popular phenomenon in the world of gods and often led to hubris which, in turn led to nemesis and punishment, the anger of god and the judgment respectively. A painting, "Wrath" which was created by Jacob Matham shows a moment of wrath in ancient world.

SLOTH

- Sloth, as a deadly sin is interpreted as the physical and mental laziness to do something or to act in a particular way. Furthermore, sloth, at Cristian times, was believed to reject God and His work. This citation is referred to His order (people must work six days per week and they can rest the 7th). In this day and age, people and especially young people lead a comfortable life without almost any worries which may sometimes lead to sloth. Apart from that, sloth and laziness usually lead to inaction which is the birthplace of all evil. Turning off, as far as culture and arts are concerned, a famous painting inspired by this particular deadly sin is “Parable of the wheat and the tars” by Abraham Bloemaert which is now kept in Walters Art Museum.

ENVY

- Envy is the feeling that characterizes us when we are jealous of one person and we pursue his harm and his failure. More particularly, as time goes by, more and more people are being possessed by feelings of envy and begrudge. As a result, these days, people have suspiciousness and hatred in their hearts and, they seem like a snake that basks and waits to exploit other people's mistakes for fulfilling its corrupt purpose. Finally, in the wonderful world of arts, an excellent painting is the one called "Envy" which shows an arch in the nave with a gothic fresco from 1511 of a man with a dog head which normally symbolizes envy.

GREED

- Greed, avarice or cupidity is the state which is connected with the wish and the strong desire to acquire material goods but in an excessive way. More specifically, in the ancient world as in our days, many greedy people want to be wealthier than the others and, as a result, they become more and more arrogant. Additionally, they are not able to understand that prosperity doesn't lie in possessions or money but in high moral values, ethics and spiritual abundance. Concerning arts, a representative work is a wonderful painting which is called "The Worship Of Mammon" (1909) by Evelyn De Morgan.

WHAT CAN WE DO???

- These days, the harsh reality is that the seven deadly sins which have been in existence since the creation of human being, seem to affect negatively not only the entire society but our personality as well. People nowadays have become greedy and self-seekers as they can harm their brothers in order to achieve their goals and aims. For that reason we can realize that action must be resumed immediately so as to save human relations. First of all, people must be aware of the fact that there is equality amongst us and that we all have the same rights. Moreover, it is imperative for us to miscarry all the sufferings that the seven deadly sins cause and, together, united as a herd, to ensure prosperity all over the world.

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