

THE STRONGER ONE · TAKE-HOME

Session 6: The Battle of the Mind

Keep this sheet. It is yours, and it is private.

WHAT WE FOUND

The renewed mind begins with the presented body (Romans 12:1-2): nobody thinks their way into new living as reliably as they live their way into new thinking. Then the technique most of us were never taught: not the wrestling match (attention is the thought's food) but two verbs from the tradition: dash: break the thought against Christ at first appearance with a short prayer, declining the debate entirely: and tell: disclose the recurring thought to someone wise, because a disclosed thought loses its garrison. Redirection, not suppression: the watchman's eye is on Christ, not on the thought. And guard the wellhead (Proverbs 4:23): "Keep your heart with all vigilance; for from it flow the springs of life."

Second technique: replace. "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just... think about these things" (Philippians 4:8): the mind, like the swept house, is not emptied of a lie but crowded with truth, and the opposing virtue starves a vice by small contrary acts done for love: Session 2's machinery now conscripted for the Kingdom. And the discovery many in recovery have leaned their weight on: "God is faithful... with the temptation will also provide the way of escape" (1 Corinthians 10:13): common to man (you are not a special monstrosity), measured by a faithful God, exit shipped with the test, sometimes a humble door or call or short prayer, sometimes the strength to endure. The house was occupied at the altar; this week we furnish it.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

VOICE OF THE CHURCH St. Benedict of Nursia

The Rule, ch. 4

St. Benedict instructs, in substance: as soon as wrongful thoughts come into your heart, dash them against Christ, and disclose them to a spiritual father. Two moves, immediate and humble: the thought is not entertained or debated but broken at once against the Rock, and told.

A close summary of Rule ch. 4; wording varies by translation.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH St. John Climacus

The Ladder of Divine Ascent

St. John of the Ladder teaches, in substance, that the fight with a thought is easiest at its first appearance and grows harder with every second of hospitality; meet the first movement with the name of Jesus and refuse the conversation. As we would put it: no one has ever lost a debate he declined to attend.

A summary of his teaching on thoughts; not a direct quotation.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH St. Thérèse of Lisieux

Story of a Soul (the Little Way)

St. Thérèse teaches, in substance, that holiness is built of small deliberate acts of love done at once: the little contrary act, the small comfort surrendered, the failure met with a child's confidence rather than dramatic self-reproach. Each small act, done for love, lays a course of the counter-wall.

A summary of her spirituality as she describes it; not a direct quotation.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

- **Dash and tell.** Meet the first movement of the old thought with your short prayer, instantly, no debate: and tell one trusted person about the thought that recurs most.
- **One course of the counter-wall daily.** Your opposing-virtue act, once a day, small, for love: Thérèse-sized.
- **Hang Philippians 4:8.** Write it where the old habit lived (mirror, desk, lock screen) and let it furnish the room.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

“Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Romans 12:2

Before next session: Read Romans 7:14-25, Luke 22:31-34, and John 21:9-19.

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