

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

LIBBY: Do you ever feel like you lose control? You think you're fine then you unwittingly end up in the same old situation or doing things you know aren't good for you. Ever thought that maybe you're feeling the effects of the seven deadly sins?

KAI: Like have you ever gone to the carnival and tried to ride every ride just to prove that you could, but then you got jealous of your friend because you won a stuffed lion for his smoking-hot girlfriend? You spent the whole day on the horseshoe toss trying to win the thousand-dollar prize, then got so angry from not winning that you ate way too much cotton candy and felt so sick the next day that you didn't care if you missed a huge test and your calculus grade never fully recovered?

LIBBY: As that weirdly specific example illustrates, sometimes there are greater forces at work in the choices we make and they can leave us with a not so great feeling.

KAI: We know about those forces.

LIBBY: Do we ever?

KAI: All seven of them so stick around. It might change your life.

CATHOLIC CENTRAL OPENING TITLES

LIBBY: Hi, I'm Libby.

KAI: And I'm Kai. Welcome to Catholic Central and today's topic, the seven deadly sins.

LIBBY: Which you could describe as seven things that may feel deliciously satisfying in the moment, but won't make you happy no matter how hard you try.

KAI: You might even wonder which of these deadlies is going to kill you.

LIBBY: These aren't those kinds of sins. Catholics consider them deadly because they're deeply rooted sources of other sins -- universal forces that get at your weaknesses and drive everyone to do things they know are not a good idea.

KAI: If you've ever wondered why you seem to be doing the same things over and over even though you don't want to, the problem is probably right here.

LIBBY: But don't worry. We've also got advice for improving your self-mastery and dealing with the sins: the antidotes.

KAI: The antidotes, or remedies, go back to the early Church, which defines them in forms of actions to do and virtues to develop. Unfortunately, they do involve effort on your part and are not available for sale, even on the Internet.

LIBBY: Let's dive in with pride. Pride is the head sin. The thing we can trace all the other sins back to. It's arrogance; the belief that we are higher than God; the desire to control our lives and the lives of others.

KAI: This includes believing that you're essentially better or more important than others, failing to recognize other's accomplishments, and generally putting your own desires at the top of your list of most important things in the world.

LIBBY: The antidote is the virtue of humility.

KAI: But that doesn't mean thinking about how bad you are at everything.

LIBBY: True humility means having an honest, realistic sense of your strengths and weaknesses and realizing whatever gifts you do have God's given them to you. You can start by trying to give these gifts to others, doing good for someone for nothing in return.

KAI: Second on the list of the seven deadlies is envy. We have a caller. How timely.

CALLER: Oh hi, Kai and Libby. Wow. You look so successful.

LIBBY: Yeah. Hi. We're in the middle of doing a show.

CALLER: Oh, I am just so jealous. I always imagine myself doing the same exact thing. I guess you guys just got chosen to do it first. It's okay. I'll just go back to my job that I hate that pays nothing. Oh well.

KAI: I hope she's OK.

LIBBY: Hopefully the antidote will help just in case she's watching.

CALLER: But I love you guys.

KAI: The antidote to envy is gratitude -- for what you have and being joyful at the good fortune of others.

LIBBY: Even if their fortune is undeserved.

KAI: We've always gotta watch out for comparisons. They're deadly. If we're jealous of someone, maybe try going out of our way to praise them.

LIBBY: Next deadly sin number three -- anger.

KAI: You can't spell danger without it.

LIBBY: Anger isn't just losing your temper.

KAI: In fact, anger in itself isn't necessarily bad. After all, righteous anger can lead to positive growth and change when directed towards justice.

LIBBY: But the key with righteous anger is that there's no hatred or desire for revenge, especially against an innocent person.

Anger becomes a sin when it comes out of an extreme feeling that things aren't going the way you think they should be.

KAI: It can happen between people, groups, or even nations. Worst of all, it festers and grows in a person's heart.

LIBBY: What's the antidote to anger? Forgiveness. Acceptance of what can't be changed; letting go of the need to get even; and letting something stay in the past, while learning a lesson that makes us wiser the next time anger comes around.

KAI: And instead of letting things fester, you can actively forgive people the moment they make you angry, but moving on now to the cutest deadly sin in the animal kingdom, sloth.

LIBBY: Actually, I'm being told it's pronounced sloth (*with a long 'o'*), but a better word is the Greek and Latin, acedia.

CYNIC: Question for both of you? Does any of this really matter? Why do anything when you can just be jaded all day?

LIBBY: Well, it does matter, convenient-question-asker, because we're both doing the job we've been given to do. When the important stuff stops mattering, we're probably falling victim to acedia. Often seen as indifference, lethargy or commitment phobia, Kevin!

KAI: Unlike clinical depression which is physical and can be treated with medication and therapy, acedia distracts us from spiritual things like prayer and acts of kindness and compassion.

CYNIC: But don't you ever feel sad because any act we do as humans is inherently meaningless since we will never be fully good?

LIBBY: Sure, but the way to get past that is diligence. Try figuring out your mission and what you're born to do with your life. In doing what we know we need to do, a sense of meaning and the energy to pursue it can't be far behind.

KAI: Okay, now let's be super-diligent and finish out these last three. Which brings us to avarice.

LIBBY: You might know avarice by its other name. Greed. The excessive desire for riches and possessions.

RICH GUY: Excuse me, young whippersnappers, but money is essential for the functioning and well-being of society.

KAI: Yeah. We're not saying it isn't.

LIBBY: There's nothing wrong with private property or wealth in itself. In fact, according to the Bible, it's not money that's the root of all evil, but the love of it.

KAI: The question is more whether you think that having more and more money or anything for that matter will fulfill you or make you happy.

RICH GUY: Oh. So I suppose instead of building more hotels, you want me to build homeless shelters for the undeserving?

LIBBY: Well, have you tried generosity?

RICH GUY: Of course not. If I give something away, I don't have it anymore and it's mine. On a separate and completely unrelated note, I feel empty inside. Well, I'm off to the golf course.

KAI: Moving on to number six - gluttony, or as I think it should be called, guttony. Gluttony is the moderate preoccupation with food or drink. Either quantity, quality, or the timing of it.

LIBBY: Eating or drinking too much.

KAI: Only eating fancy gourmet foods.

LIBBY: Eating or drinking when a person should be doing other things. If we make food more important than it should be, it can end up ruling our life. If that's the case, we might try asceticism.

KAI: Asceticism means taking some time away from sensual pleasure to grow spiritually.

LIBBY: Or focus on the social connections food helps us to nurture, like eating with friends or family mindfully.

KAI: Speaking of sensual pleasure ...

LIBBY: Lust. The one you probably feel most guilty about.

KAI: Yep.

LIBBY: If we're honest.

KAI: Honest. Yeah. Now, contrary to what you might have heard, the Catholic church is not anti-sex.

LIBBY: Catholics believe sex is inherently good and beautiful.

KAI: I mean, where do you think big Catholic families come from, am I right?

LIBBY: But what isn't good or beautiful is turning another person into an object to gratify your desires, treating another person like a thing.

KAI: There are a few rules, but they're really a way to prevent people from using each other for selfish reasons and to protect what's good.

LIBBY: If you're having trouble with lust, it might be because you're thinking of people only in terms of what they can do for your satisfaction. The antidote for that is chastity.

KAI: Did somebody say chastity?

CHURCH
LADY:

Don't be attracted to anyone ever. Don't look good-looking people directly in the eye.

LIBBY: In reality, it's more than a list of don'ts. Chastity actually is all about the dos. Actively loving another person based on your state in life and respecting your own sexuality. Single or married it's always about what you're giving, not what you're receiving.

KAI: So, that's all of them.

LIBBY: The seven deadly sins. Pride, envy, anger, sloth, avarice, gluttony, and lust.

KAI: And the seven antidotes or virtues. Humility, gratitude, forgiveness, diligence, generosity, asceticism and chastity. In the end, the sins and the virtues are all about freedom. Freedom to be the best of what we're created to be. These are likely always going to be a problem for you because congratulations. You're a part of the human race. Same as me and you and yeah, all of us.

LIBBY: Your whole life will probably be a balance between the misery from being influenced by them and the peace from conquering them.

KAI: One way Catholics have to conquer them is through the sacrament of reconciliation and lots of prayer.

LIBBY: Remember, while you're conquering them or trying to, not to be super judge-y of others.

KAI: I'm Kai, and this has been Catholic Central with the seven deadly sins.

LIBBY: And I'm Libby. Stay lively.

KAI: Oh, lively.

LIBBY: You like that.

KAI: I get it. Like deadly, but lively instead.

LIBBY: Right because you said it ...

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