

The Seven Seductions of Modern Culture

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Man was created in the image of God and needs to relate to both God and other humans. Sin has isolated man, though, cutting him from these relationships and leading him to despair. Because of the progress of technology, and the incredible power man has developed over matter, the seductions linked to pride, vanity and selfishness have reached a critical point. These seductions affect us now like at no other time in history. These deviations from the truth of humanity are so extreme that only Christ can offer real hope to overcome these seven seductions.

1. **Pride** – Man does not need God anymore. We think that we are masters of life and death and even of our own happiness. We believe we control our own peace and suffering.
 - a. Consequence – He becomes an orphan cut from God and enslaved by a worldly promise which in fact is a dream---leading him to despair.
 - b. Remedy – Christ brings us back to truth through adoration, helping us to once again understand that we are children of the Father.
2. **Materialism** – Instead of being open to others, man seeks fulfillment through possessions.
 - a. Consequence – Realizing that he cannot possibly possess everything, man begins to experience fear and insecurity, leading him to despair.
 - b. Remedy – Christ invites man to follow Him in simplicity - serving others and discovering the kingdom for the little ones and the poor.
3. **Hedonism** – Man is obsessed with pleasure, over-sexualized and caught up in how he looks. He chooses to seek pleasure and to focus on looks.
 - a. Consequence – Man becomes enslaved by his passions, fed by his need for pleasure, and enslaved by physical appearances, leading to despair.
 - b. Remedy – Christ invites man to see himself as He sees us, in a gaze of love beyond appearances.
4. **Efficiency** – Man equates self-worth with power and success in a culture where the strongest wins.
 - a. Consequence – Man becomes over-dependent on scientific progress and enslaved by technology. He rejects anyone who is not efficient enough, ie...euthanasia and abortion of handicapped children. As soon as he sees himself as a failure in this system, he despairs.
 - b. Remedy – Christ brings us back to a life of self-love, giving and sacrifice, where each person is seen as unique and not just a number.
5. **Imagination** – Man, because of his fear of suffering, constantly tries to evade reality by escaping into his imagination. He becomes addicted to a virtual world.
 - a. Consequence – He can no longer face others or reality in the present moment. He sees only his own limitations, leading him to despair.
 - b. Remedy – Christ brings man back to the fullness of the truth and helps him understand true suffering, bringing him to embrace the reality as it is, without trying to escape it.

6. **Freedom** – Man gets lost in the abundance of choices (example: types of chocolates) and becomes empowered by this individualism, where he chooses whatever pleases him. It's a freedom totally centered on him, and not any longer at the service of loving one another. It's freedom without finality!
 - a. Consequence – Man becomes enslaved in this multitude of choices and incapable of responsible and faithful choices. There is always another possibility, so he begins to wonder if his choices are the right ones. Doubt sets in and leads to despair.
 - b. Remedy – Christ gives us the fullness of truth capable of freeing man from the constant choices. He offers man the real freedom, which is to love others and God in truth to the end.
7. **Globalization** – Focusing on the common good, to the detriment of the personal good. Man adopts a herd mentality which hinders the development of personal responsibility and man's ability to choose.
 - a. Consequence – Man relies on order and justice rather than mercy. Justice is always at the service of order, so if you choose the common good first, you are always choosing justice first. When you govern a community attentive to personal needs, you develop a sense of mercy. We are a culture of justice because we are only looking at the common good. Everyone has to follow the global order. Therefore, a culture of justice which leads to despair.
 - b. Remedy – Christ shows us that each one of us is unique, as He died for *each one* of us and offers His personal love to *each one* of us. The cross becomes a sign of an endless gift of mercy.