

St. Anthony Mary Claret's Examination of Venial Sins

The soul should avoid all venial sins, especially those which pave the way for grave sin. It is not enough, my soul, to have a firm resolve to suffer death rather than consent to any grave sin. It is necessary to have a like resolution to venial sin. He who does not find in himself this will, cannot have security. There is nothing which can give us such a certain security of eternal salvation as an uninterrupted cautiousness to avoid even the lightest venial sin, and a notable, all-extensive earnestness reaching to all practices of the spiritual life — earnestness in prayer, and in dealing with God; earnestness in mortification and self-denial; earnestness in being humble and in accepting contempt; earnestness in obeying and renouncing one's own self-will; earnest love of God and neighbor. He who wants to gain this earnestness and keep it, must necessarily have the resolve to always avoid especially the following venial sins:

1. The sin of giving entrance into your heart to any unreasonable suspicion or unfair judgment against your neighbor.
2. The sin of introducing talk about another's defects or offending charity in any other way, even lightly.
3. The sin of omitting out of laziness our spiritual practices or of performing them with voluntary neglect.
4. The sin of having a disordered affection for somebody.
5. The sin of having a vain esteem for oneself, or of taking vain satisfaction in things pertaining to us.
6. The sin of receiving the holy Sacraments in a careless way, with distractions and other irreverence, and without a serious preparation.
7. . Impatience, resentment, any failure to accept disappointments as coming from God's Hand; for this puts obstacles in the way of the decrees and dispositions of Divine Providence concerning us.
8. The sin of giving ourselves an occasion that can even remotely blemish a spotless condition of holy purity.
9. The fault of advertently hiding from those who ought to learn them, one's bad inclinations, weaknesses, and mortifications, seeking to pursue the road of virtue not under the direction of obedience, but under the guidance of one's own whims. **Note:** *This speaks of times when we might have worthy direction if we seek it, but we prefer to follow our own dim lights.*