

Sin, The Worst Evil

“All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me” (Matt., 4:9)

Temptations to sin can come from three sources, the world, the flesh and the devil. Our Lord could be tempted **only externally**, and only by the world and the devil. These tempters could exert their influence on Him only from outside; they could not affect His mind and His will. Nevertheless, He allowed such external temptation to molest Him in order to teach us how we should act in time of temptation. Like Him, we must **resist the first impulse to sin** when it makes itself felt in our soul.

It is only when **we act in this manner** that we can hope to escape the worst evil that can befall us in life, sin. From time to time we should remind ourselves that life is a battle between good and evil and that if we wish to avoid sin we must fight courageously.

No misfortune that can come into our lives **is as great an evil as mortal sin**. Sickness, loss of fortune, disgrace in the eyes of our fellowmen, even death cannot compare to the dreadful catastrophe of defiling our souls by even one mortal sin.

We must be imbued with the spirit of Christian faith to appreciate this truth. People of the world will **lightly commit mortal sin day after day**, and apparently not be troubled. No Catholic who accepts the teaching of his Church can regard sin as anything except a terrible tragedy.

The momentary pleasure or gratification that sin gives bears no comparison to the ruin of soul and the rejection of sanctifying grace that result from sin. **Mortal sin is truly the death of the soul**, for it means that the life of grace has been deliberately cast out.

One who sins mortally subjects himself to the power of the evil spirit. He has cast God from his soul and accepted Satan as his master. He has yielded to the persuasion of the devil repeating the promise which he made to Christ nineteen centuries ago, *“All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”* He has refused to imitate Our Lord, whose reply to temptation was, *“Begone, Satan.”*

Practical Application

One of the objectives of Lent is to urge Catholics to purify their souls of sin. **Today**, at the beginning of this holy season, **ask yourself if your soul is in mortal sin or in sanctifying grace**. If you are aware that you have yielded to temptation and driven God's grace from your soul, resolve to go to confession as soon as possible. We have already begun the period for the fulfilment of the Easter duty, the annual holy communion.