

THE WAR WITH THE THOUGHTS

‘thoughts’: λογισμοι, lo-geez-mee

The Eight Terrible Temptations*

1. Gluttony
2. Fornication
3. Greed
4. Sorrow
5. Discouragement
6. Anger
7. Vainglory
8. Pride

In the West these temptations developed into the list of ‘Seven Deadly Sins’ with an emphasis on personal guilt. In the Orthodox Faith, these are the impersonal, primary temptations for man living in the fallen world. They are idols and false gods. They are foes to be conquered in the Name of Jesus Christ.

*Blessed Evagrius of Ponticus (375 AD)

The Strategy of an Evil Thought

1. Assault: Thought first enters a person's mind
2. Interaction: Person opens up a dialogue with the thought
3. Consent: Permission granted to the thought's urge
4. Defeat: Taken hostage and more difficult to resist
5. Obsession: Thought becomes entrenched in the nous

The Life of Fellowship with My Neighbor

According to the Pachomian Tradition

- 1) Contemplation of Scripture is the foundation.
- 2) We reading, recite, and meditate on Scripture.
- 3) We are called to minister to others to reconcile them to God.
- 4) We bear responsibility for the welfare of others.
- 5) Scripture commands to both love and correct.
- 6) If we do good to a bad man he will come to an understanding of the good. This is Gods love: to take pains for each other.
- 7) Communal life exposes weakness and allows growth.
- 8) We admit our faults, and identify and preserve our strengths.
- 9) Only within fellowship with others (koinonia) can perfect healing, enlightenment, and growth take place.
- 10) We assume our neighbor sees our weaknesses better than us.
- 11) Self-effacing members of a community are far superior to those who live as anchorites.
- 12) The integrity of the community is measured by effort and growth, and renewed effort after failure; not on the achievement of purity by some parties.
- 13) We assume our neighbor is spiritually superior to us.
- 14) We are pained to find ourselves having to correct our neighbor.
- 15) We long for their salvation more than their approval.
- 16) We repent, and forgive all who repent.