

August 25, 1977

The Circle of Sin

Strike out against the circle of sin. If I respond to you with anger, I sin.

Calumny — The malicious uttering of false charges and misrepresentation. The fear of those more gifted than I am. This fear causes me to envy. This fear leads me to calumny. In fear of my own worthlessness I fear that others will outshine me and show up my worthlessness in sharp contrast. Envy is sadness over the other's blessing, which I see as a threat to myself. Envy is a sin against love, because true love always appreciates and rejoices in the welfare and happiness of others. All the blessings of others are my blessings.

Something is wrong if we have on the spot, quick judgments.

Calumny = Detraction = carping criticism. Detraction is the denial of another's good qualities. Carping criticism is the forever looking at the other's defects. When I am envious and tearing down people, deep down I am crying for love and appreciation, while I am meting out the opposite to others.

Sloth — is a fear of love's costs. It is true that so much of our sin is reaction of the failure of others to love us. Someone failed to pay the high cost of loving. No one wants to be lonely and unloved. No one really wants to be unloving. Yet it costs something to love, and we tend to draw lines limiting how far we will go. Fear is the root of this failure to love. I fear the cost of loving. I fear to surrender myself in loving, because I am afraid that in loving I will lose something I hold dear. I fear I will lose my independence, my comfort, my possessions. The joy I would find in love is replaced by sadness over the cost of loving. This sadness causes loss of enthusiasm and saps away my vitality. Thus I end up in the sin of sloth. Sloth is sadness over the cost of loving. Sadness (powerful demon) causes heaviness and inertia. The sadness over the price of loving is a sin against love and joy. Sloth is our enemy to community; an obstacle to be exposed to the roots. It draws definite lines in how far it will go. Its limits become evermore narrow, (cotton — 48 hours) for failure to love shrinks the capacity to love.

My sloth says — do not bother me now, no matter how badly others need my love and attention. Sloth leads to all sorts of negligence and omission. A slothful one never has any sins to confess. The most deadening sin of all is apathy. Not realizing that we have done anything wrong. Apathy is the highest degree of sloth. Apathy is the lack of feeling, or interest, or concern. Indifference complacency is the refusal to do more; the inability to do more. Satisfied where you are; self satisfaction. Unaware of deficiencies, unaware of actual dangers.