

College Thieves.

Not all gamblers are thieves, but most thieves are gamblers. The unfortunate sucker who loses "borrows a stake" to recoup his losses. Keep this in mind if you miss anything.

Habitual Sin.

Not many men of any intelligence are habitual sinners because they love sin. They hate sin, and loathe themselves for sinning. Their biggest difficulty is that they will not fortify their wills against sin by the graces of Sacraments.

The Purpose of Amendment.

Habitual sinners are worried about the firmness of their purpose of amendment. This is bad psychology. Their purpose of amendment is real and firm enough; what they are trying to get in reality is an assurance that they will not sin again-- that their present purpose will be effective in the future.

The Right Psychology.

Read the pamphlet "How to Make a Good Confession". It will tell you that a sound will not to sin again may be perfectly compatible with a judgment of the intellect that you will sin again. Seek advice on this point. Don't try to doctor yourself when you neither know psychology nor theology.

The Sacraments for Habitual Sinners.

St. Philip Meri once had a penitent who related this story: The penitent was addicted to impurity. He came to the saint in despaire. St. Philip absolved him, and made him promise to come back to confession the next day. It was the same story again. St. Philip forced him to come back for thirteen successive days. At the end of that time he was cured. No matter how weak your will is, the graces of the Sacraments can fortify it until it acquires a real power of resistance.

Pitting Good Habits Against Bad.

William James lays down some useful rules for the acquisition of good habits. Starting with the proposition that we should "make our systems our ally instead of our enemy, he proceeds:

- "1. Make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, as many useful actions as you can;
- "2. Never suffer an exception to occur until the new habit is securely rooted in your life;
- "3. Seize the very first opportunity to act on your resolutions and on the emotional promptings in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain;
- "4. Launch yourself with as decided an initiative as possible;
- "5. Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise each day. Do hard things because they are hard."