

The Screwtape Letters

Letter 6: The possibilities of danger to hinder your spiritual life

Strategies of the devils

- Keep your patient uncertain about the future. Suspense and anxiety keep them from the 'Enemy.' God wants them concerned about what they do. We want them to think about what will happen to them. God wants them to focus on what they can control. We want them to focus on what they can't control.
- Keep them focused on all things that could happen to them, even though not all the things that could happen will happen. Let them try to practice fortitude and patience against all that could happen.
- A general spiritual law is to 1) keep them from thinking and reflecting on the sin that they are committing and 2) get them to think and reflect on their growing devotion. This can keep them from realizing when they are committing a sin, and help them focus on feeling more devout. This will result in them keeping their religion inward so that it doesn't effect their behavior.
- Since they will always have both love and malice in their souls, get them to direct the malice towards those they know and direct the benevolence toward those they don't know.

Questions

- What are some of your fears or anxieties? How do you sometimes mishandle them? How do you handle them when you handle them well?
- Do you ever worry about a long list of things? How does God want you to think about them?
- Why does the devil not want us to think about our sins?
- Are there people you don't like or love? What is dangerous about that?