



“You shall not consent to impure thoughts or desires”

1. Introduction: a commandment of the heart

The **Ninth Commandment** is often one of the **most forgotten, minimized, or misunderstood**, even among practicing Catholics. Perhaps because it does not speak of visible actions, but of something deeper, more intimate, more silent: **the human heart**.

*“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’
But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has
already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mt 5:27-28).*

With these words, **Christ elevates morality** and reminds us that **sin does not begin in the hands, but in the heart**, in the mind, in consented desires. The Ninth Commandment is not a mere “repetition” of the Sixth; it is its **interior deepening**.

This commandment calls us to **purity of heart**, to the **ordering of our desires**, to live sexuality according to God’s plan, even at the level of thought.

2. What does the Church teach about the Ninth Commandment?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (nn. 2514–2533) explains that this commandment:

- Prohibits **impure desires that are voluntarily consented to**
- Calls us to **interior chastity**
- Invites us to combat **concupiscence**
- Requires an **education of the gaze, of thought, and of the heart**

Concupiscence is that disordered inclination that remains in the human being after original sin. It is not sin in itself, but **it becomes sin when it is freely consented to**.

□ **Temptation is not sin.**



□ **Deliberate consent is.**

3. A profoundly contemporary commandment

We live in an age marked by:

- Constant hypersexualization
- Omnipresent pornography
- Social networks designed to provoke desire
- The normalization of impure thoughts
- The relativization of interior sin

Today more than ever, **keeping the Ninth Commandment is an act of spiritual resistance**, of interior freedom, and of true love for God and neighbor.

The culture says: *"Thinking does no harm."*

Christ says: *"The heart matters."*

4. Why are sins against the Ninth Commandment serious?

Because they:

- **Corrupt the heart**
- **Prepare the ground for external sin**
- **Dehumanize the other**, reducing him or her to an object
- **Weaken spiritual life**
- **Extinguish authentic love**

Impure desire is not love; it is **possession, use, consumption**. And where there is use, there is no gift.



5. Concrete sins against the Ninth Commandment

(A detailed and thorough examination of conscience)

Below is an **extensive and concrete list**, especially intended for a **traditional Catholic** who wishes to make a good and sincere confession.

A. Sins of consented impure thought

- Voluntarily consenting to **disordered sexual thoughts**
 - Taking pleasure in **sexual fantasies**, even if they are not acted upon
 - Deliberately maintaining impure thoughts
 - Consciously returning to an impure thought after having rejected it
 - Nourishing impure memories from the past
 - Imagining sexual situations for pleasure
 - Consenting to impure thoughts during prayer
 - Interiorly justifying impure thoughts
 - Deciding not to fight against impure thoughts
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B. Sins of impure desire

- Sexually desiring a person who is not one's spouse
 - Desiring sexual relations outside of marriage
 - Desiring adultery
 - Desiring sexual acts contrary to the natural law
 - Desiring illicit sexual experiences
 - Desiring to use another person solely for pleasure
 - Desiring to dominate or possess sexually
 - Desiring morally disordered sexual practices
 - Desiring another person's body as an object
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C. Sins of the gaze

- Looking voluntarily with impure intention
- Deliberately fixing one's gaze in order to become aroused



- Seeking provocative images
 - Failing to avert one's eyes when one knows it provokes desire
 - Looking in a lustful manner
 - Consuming suggestive images even if they are not explicit
 - Looking with the intention of imagining
 - Normalizing the impure gaze
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D. Sins related to pornography and sexual content

- Seeking pornography voluntarily
 - Viewing pornography with full consent
 - Maintaining subscriptions to or archives of pornographic material
 - Justifying the consumption of pornography
 - Consuming "soft" erotic content with impure intention
 - Watching series, films, or videos in order to seek sexual arousal
 - Following provocative accounts on social media
 - Failing to avoid near occasions of digital sin
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E. Sins of interior complacency

- Taking interior pleasure in impure thoughts
 - Accepting the pleasure produced by disordered desires
 - Not voluntarily resisting impure desire
 - Mentally replaying scenes or images
 - Delighting in the imagination
 - Seeking excuses not to combat desire
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F. Sins against chastity of heart

- Consciously rejecting the struggle for purity
- Despising the virtue of chastity
- Interiorly mocking Christian sexual morality
- Considering disordered desire as normal



- Refusing to educate the heart
 - Living in a habitual disposition of impurity
 - Justifying interior sin by saying “it does not harm anyone”
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G. Sins of omission

- Failing to avoid near occasions of sin
 - Not fleeing situations that provoke impure thoughts
 - Not correcting habits that feed desire
 - Not praying when temptation arises
 - Not confessing regularly
 - Not striving to grow in purity
 - Not seeking spiritual help when it is necessary
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6. The call to purity: a path of freedom

Christian purity is not repression, but **the ordering of love**. It is not the denial of desire, but **its orientation toward the true good**.

The pure heart:

- Loves without using
- Looks without possessing
- Desires without dominating
- Lives sexuality as a gift

| *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Mt 5:8).*



7. Spiritual means for living the Ninth Commandment

- Frequent confession
 - Daily prayer
 - Custody of the senses
 - Fasting and penance
 - The Rosary
 - Spiritual direction
 - The sacraments
 - A coherent sacramental life
 - Fleeing occasions of sin
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8. Conclusion: God does not ask the impossible

God does not ask for a heart without struggle, but **a sincere heart**. Falling is not the same as surrendering. The Ninth Commandment is not a burden, but a **promise of interior freedom**.

Christ did not come to condemn the sinner, but to **heal the heart**.

May this commandment not be a cause of fear, but of **conversion, hope, and trust in grace**.

| *“Create in me a clean heart, O God” (Ps 51).*