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## The Virtues: Seven Habits of Champions

by Marcellino D'Ambrosio, Ph.D.

[www.crossroadsinitiative.com](http://www.crossroadsinitiative.com)

### SHOW #1: VIRTUE-THE POWER TO BE LIKE CHRIST

- I. **Weakness – strength**
  - A. 2 Tim 1:7 “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power and love and self-control.”
  - B. Strong, loving, and wise
  - C. Meekness is strength under control
  - D. Virtue comes from the word in Latin for man, manly, strong. “Virile”. Fruitful.
  - E. Leadership
- II. **Christ Came for the Healing (restoration) of our humanity: *gratia sanans***
  - A. To bring us to reach the greatest potential of our nature
  - B. Sin corrodes our humanity, dehumanizes
- III. **Christ came for the Elevation (divinization) of our humanity: *gratia elevans***
  - A. To bring us beyond our own nature to the supernatural
  - B. 2 Pet 1:4, make us sharers in the divine nature by grace
  - C. Sin cuts us off from supernatural life
- IV. **The human person as enfleshed spirit**
  - A. Not mere animal, not angel, not “ghost in the machine”
  - B. Spirit realizes self by interaction with the world through the body
  - C. Spirit expresses self by interaction with world through the body
  - D. Two way street
- V. **Sin: not bad because it is forbidden: forbidden because it is bad**
  - A. Sinful acts weaken & destroy, though in a hidden way
  - B. People do them because they seem to gain some good;

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appearances deceive!

C. Example of wolves lust for blood in the Alaskan winter

**VI. Thought > Act > Habit > Lifestyle > Destiny**

**VII. Role of passions** (e-motions): to move us to the good

**VIII. Habit**

- A. Repeated action creates a certain ease, power, in doing that action
- B. Virtue means “power”: an act becomes natural for a person.
- C. Vice the evil corollary.
- D. Difference between a act of virtue & virtuous act: latter springs from the soul with energy, promptness, & perseverance
- E. More intense act (evil or good) increases the power of virtue or deepens the bondage of vice
- F. Analogy of weight lifting: A new max. No pain, no gain!

**IX. Cardinal Virtues: The Human or Natural virtues** (CCC 1804-5)

- A. There are as many moral virtues as there are species of good acts. Thomas treats over 50 in his *Summa*, but not an exhaustive list.
- B. Cardinal means hinge: on these 4 virtues hinge all others
- C. All other moral virtues are “annexed” to one or another of these
- D. Theological virtues presuppose and perfect them. Aquinas taught that grace builds on (heals, perfects, divinizes) nature.

**X. History & Hierarchy of four cardinal (natural) virtues:**

- A. Anterior to Plato. Don't know origin. Handed down because other thinkers realized the centrality and importance of these four virtues.
- B. *Wisdom* 8:7 Wisdom “teaches moderation and prudence, justice and fortitude, and nothing in life is more useful for men than these.”
- C. St Ambrose (ca. 390 AD) apparently first to call them “cardinal”
- D. Hierarchy as traditional as the number
- E. Recognizable as necessary for human life by any reasonable person. Perfected and divinized by power of grace.