

**The 7 Things God Hates**  
**A Heart That Devises Wicked Plans: When Imagination Turns Dark**  
**Dr. John Carmichael**

**[Pro 6:16-19 NASB95] 16 There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: 17 Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, 19 A false witness [who] utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.**

- Most sins don't start in public. They start in private.
- Before the lie is spoken... Before the harm is done... Before the betrayal unfolds... It was imagined.
- Proverbs says God hates "a heart that devises wicked plans." Not just wicked actions. Wicked plans.
- This is the most interior sin in the list. This is about imagination, intention, and mental rehearsal.
- And here is what makes this sobering: You can look holy in public, while cultivating corruption in private.
- But here is the hope: Revival never starts at the altar first. It starts in the heart.
- This sermon is about searching, not shaming. Surgical, not condemning. We expose the interior life while inviting Spirit-empowered transformation.

**What do we need to know about when our imagination turns dark?**

**Here are five truths we need to know about when our imagination turns dark.**

**I. SIN BEGINS IN THE HEART**

- a. [Mar 7:20-23 NASB95] 20 And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. 21 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting [and] wickedness, [as well as] deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride [and] foolishness. 23 "All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."
- b. Jesus dismantles the idea that sin is merely external.
- c. The problem is not environment. The problem is the interior workshop of the heart.
- d. [Jas 1:14-15 NASB95] 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.
- e. Desire conceives before behavior manifests. Sin is born long before it is visible.
- f. The battlefield is imagination and intention. If the enemy can influence imagination, he can influence destiny.
- g. Application: Guard what you rehearse mentally. Refuse fantasy that contradicts God's will. Interrupt sinful imagination before it conceives. Ask yourself: "What am I feeding my inner life?"

**II. A CORRUPTED MIND PRODUCES CORRUPTED LIFE**

- a. [Rom 1:28-32 NASB95] 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; [they are] gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and although they know the ordinance of God,

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that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

- b. When truth is suppressed, thinking becomes distorted. Sin darkens reasoning. It normalizes what once shocked us.
- c. [Pro 4:23 NASB95] 23 Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it [flow] the springs of life.
- d. Guarding the heart is active.
- e. The Spirit sanctifies thought life, not just actions. Holiness is not only what you don't do. It's what you don't dwell on.
- f. Application: Evaluate your media intake. Repent of recurring thought patterns. Replace toxic mental scripts with Scripture.

**III. THOUGHTS MUST BE TAKEN CAPTIVE**

- a. [2Co 10:3-5 NASB95] 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 [We are] destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and [we are] taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,
- b. Notice: It does not say God takes every thought captive. You do. This is cooperation.
- c. [Phl 4:8 NASB95] 8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.
- d. What you dwell on shapes what you desire.
- e. You cannot pray away imagination you refuse to discipline. The Spirit empowers discipline, but you must participate.
- f. Application: Identify recurring sinful thought patterns. Speak Scripture out loud to confront them. Create accountability for secret struggles.

**IV. WE WORK BUT GOD WORKS DEEPER**

- a. This is where balance matters.
- b. [Phl 2:12-13 NASB95] 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for [His] good pleasure.
- c. There is tension here: You work out. God works in.
- d. We must: Confess. Cry out. Surrender. Guard. But transformation at the root level is a work of God.
- e. [Psa 51:10 NASB95] 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- f. David does not say, "I will fix my heart." He cries for divine surgery.
- g. Revival always begins in the heart before the altar. When the Spirit purifies imagination: Desire changes. Intention changes. Plans change.
- h. Application: Pray daily for heart transformation, not just behavior management. Invite the Holy Spirit into secret places. Fast from influences that pollute imagination.

**V. THE HOLY SPIRIT RENOVATES THE HEART**

- a. This is where hope rises. God does not just expose wicked plans. He replaces them.
- b. [Eze 36:26 NASB95] 26 "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
- c. God changes: will, desire, inclination

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- d. The Spirit doesn't only convict. He transforms. You are not stuck with your current thought life.
  - e. Application: Ask the Spirit to replace sinful imagination with holy imagination. Dream again, but with sanctified desire. Let God reshape ambition, vision, and creativity.
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- **Sin is conceived in the imagination, but the Holy Spirit sanctifies the heart and reshapes our desires from the inside out.**
  - This sin is invisible. No one may see your plans. No one may hear your thoughts. But God sees the workshop of the heart.
  - And He hates corrupted imagination because He loves your destiny.
  - The same Spirit who convicts also cleanses.
  - The same God who exposes also renews.
  - Revival does not begin when you lift your hands.
  - It begins when you surrender your heart.