

Diagnostic Tool for Besetting Sins

Hebrews 12:1, *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.*”,

Step 1 — Identification (Be Ruthlessly Honest)

Answer yes or no:

1. Does this sin return quickly after repentance?
2. Does it intensify under stress, fatigue, or success?
3. Do I justify it because “I still get things done”?
4. Do I minimize it by comparison to others?
5. Does it weaken prayer, joy, or clarity?
6. Would I be uncomfortable describing it plainly to another godly man?

If yes to 3+ → this is likely a besetting sin.

Step 2 — Categorization (Where It Attacks You)

Identify the primary domain:

- **Mind** (fantasy, resentment, pride)
- **Body** (lust, substance use, appetite)
- **Emotions** (anger, fear, despair)
- **Will** (control, stubbornness)
- **Time** (work, avoidance, distraction)

Besetting sins usually dominate one primary domain.

Step 3 — Supply Line Analysis

Answer concretely:

- When does it usually happen?
- Where does it happen?
- What mood precedes it?
- What lie makes it feel reasonable?

Sin almost always enters through a familiar door.

Step 4 — Opposite Grace Prescription

Besetting Sin	Opposite Grace to Practice
Pride	Humility & confession
Anger	Meekness & patience
Lust	Reverence & self-control
Control	Trust & submission
Fear	Courage & faith
Sloth	Diligence & discipline

Grace weakens sin by retraining desire.

Step 5 — Brotherhood Commitment

Ask yourself:

- Who knows this about me?
- Who has permission to ask hard questions?
- Who will notice if I drift?

No answers = no plan.

Mortification is not about suppressing urges or managing appearances, but about Spirit-empowered warfare against entrenched sin. Besetting sins thrive in isolation, habit, and rationalization, and they are killed only by naming them honestly, starving their supply lines, strengthening opposite graces, and walking in accountable brotherhood—always by the power of Christ’s cross and the Holy Spirit.