

53. Rooftop Panorama



The structure of the working week and the term provides a framework for living, but what of vacation times? Regular timetabled spiritual disciplines can fall away once we leave the campus with its regulatory bells and routines. David chose to be away from the battle and took his midlife brooding to the rooftop, (2 Samuel 11:1-5). Adultery and murder stalk him, sin crouches at his door ready to pounce, (Genesis 4: 7). What is unreasonable and unholy somehow transform into a balanced option and acceptable to a well-rounded person of faith. The teacher likewise, finds her feet in a shop or nightclub or someplace that in the company of a faithful colleague she'd never enter. Her mind and perhaps acquaintances urge her forward. The spur of curiosity cajoles her to respond in a way that in a more sanguine situation, would see her take flight. She wouldn't get into bed to sleep having released a snake in her room, nor would she act out of major defiance and wickedness. No, its folly that takes over as she allows the cavalcade of justification to take her towards choosing satiation, or revenge, apart from God. Once she indulges the vice, like in a fairytale, the pleasure ebbs in intensity, (2 Samuel 13:15). She emerges knowing her inner and outer world is tainted.

Like you and I, she needs cues and powerful amber lights all the way up the stairwell to the roof. Once on the rooftop the altitude seems to amplify the tendency to folly, and foolish ventures seem justifiable and sane. The expectations of those we love and respect, the routines of prayer and the framework of evident grace are guardrails in term time. We need similar aids to keep our bearing true and discernment sharp when outside our community and apart from our army of colleagues in ministry. We need the miracle when we are ascending the stairs to the roof, while there is still time and sufficient momentum

to find alternatives that are not destructive. God promises a way out before we over commit ourselves to the path of folly. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Sin is lying in wait for you, ready to pounce; it's out to get you, you've got to master it.
Genesis 4:7

*No sooner had Amnon raped her than he hated her - an immense hatred. The hatred that he felt for her was greater than the love he'd had for her.***2 Samuel 13:15**

Let's not pretend this is easier than it really is. If you want to live a morally pure life, here's what you have to do: You have to blind your right eye the moment you catch it in a lustful leer. You have to choose to live one-eyed or else be dumped on a moral trash pile.
Matthew 5:29

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it. I
Corinthians 10:13

Stay alert; be in prayer so you don't wander into temptation without even knowing you're in danger. There is a part of you that is eager, ready for anything in God. But there's another part that's as lazy as an old dog sleeping by the fire.
Matthew 26:41

When they arrived at the place, he said, "Pray that you don't give in to temptation."
Luke 22:40

David on the roof. (2 Samuel 11:1-5)
Jesus facing temptation alone. (Matthew 4:1-11)