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RIGHT ON THE EDGE...

Have you ever allowed yourself to venture so close to the edge of a canyon rim that you could feel the updraft from the valley floor far below? Kurt Vonnegut, the noted author shared his thoughts on standing on the edge, "I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you can see all kinds of things you can't see from the center." However, most people who do peer over the edge find it be both exhilarating and terrifying; and out of fear, a couple of steps backward is taken.



How many out of curiosity have been drawn closer to abyss of sin? Sin most assuredly calls out a siren song of enticement. Consider the example of Moses as found in the 11th chapter of Hebrews as he, "*refused to be called the son Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin.*" (vs 24-25) Imagine how hard it must have been for Moses to turn away from all that went along with being the grandchild of Pharaoh.

Standing on the precipice with respect to sin, how many times have people lost their spiritual balance and slipped off into the darkness? Families along with reputations and livelihoods become the collateral fallout through "innocent" flirtation that progresses to something much more pronounced. Then upon reflection, something is said along the lines of "For the life of me, I thought I had it under control and never thought it would come to this."

The same application can be applied to anything that causes one to succumb to the wiles of sin. Bear in mind what is seen in Ephesians 6:11. "*Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.*" In 2Corinthians 2:11, Paul notes, "*in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.*"

Never, ever think you can flirt with temptation and then walk away unscathed. Surely we are not ignorant, we know the difference between right and wrong, yet we toy with it.

James writes, "*Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.*" (4:17) The progression with respect to sin is really quite remarkable. A little stumble by getting too close to the edge and before one knows it, it is as Jesus pointed out in John 8:34, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.*" Ensnared. Trapped.

All would be well served to embrace the mind set expressed by David in Psalms nineteen, "*Also keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not rule over me; then I shall be blameless, and I shall be acquitted of great transgression.*" (v. 13)

"*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...*" (James 4:8) The ideal would be to move closer to God. To fully see the beauty and splendor of an intimate relationship therein. (wbe)

THE BULWARK