THE DAILY BREAD

The Creed of the Apostles



Sin

Knowing the Enemy Within

A FORMATION BOOK BY

Kendall Peterson

The Everyday Apostle

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INTRODUCTION

Know Your Enemy

No soldier goes into battle refusing to study the enemy. He learns how the enemy thinks, where he is strong, how he attacks, what ground he favors. To go to war ignorant of your opponent is not humility or peace; it is the surest way to be defeated. And yet this is exactly how most men approach the spiritual battle, which is the most important war they will ever fight. They mean to be good, vaguely. They have never once sat down to study sin itself: what it is, how it works, where it gets its foothold, how it grows. They are fighting an enemy they have never bothered to name, and losing, and wondering why.

The age makes this worse, because it has quietly retired the word sin altogether. We now speak of mistakes, of issues, of poor choices, of being only human, anything but the old blunt word. This sounds merciful and is in fact a disaster, because you cannot fight what you refuse to name. A man who has no concept of sin has no concept of the thing that is actually killing him, and he will reach for every explanation but the true one. To recover the word, and the hard clarity behind it, is not to become gloomy or scrupulous. It is to finally see the battlefield.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. — 1 John 1:8

This station is reconnaissance. It is the most practically urgent chapter of your formation, because it hands a man the working knowledge he needs for the daily fight: what sin actually is, the all-important difference between the sin that kills the soul and the sin that wounds it, the seven roots from which every particular sin grows, how to find your own besetting weakness, how to cut off the occasions where you always fall, and how to make the confession that raises you from the dead. This is not morbid introspection. It is a map of the enemy's country, drawn so that you can win. Study it like a man who intends to.

CHAPTER ONE

What Sin Actually Is

More Than Breaking a Rule

Before a man can fight sin he has to know what it is, and most men carry a picture that is both too small and too cold. They imagine sin as rule-breaking, the violation of a divine code, as though God were chiefly a lawgiver keeping a ledger of infractions. There is truth

in it, for sin does break God's law. But if that is all a man sees, he will never understand why sin matters as much as it does, nor why it does to him what it does.

Not Merely Rule-Breaking

Sin is better understood as the rupture of a relationship. God is not first a legislator but a Father, and his law is not an arbitrary set of restrictions but the shape of love, the way a good father's house has a way of life in it that flows from who he is. Sin, then, is not merely stepping over a line. It is a turning away from the Father who loves you, a choosing of something else over him, a wound to a relationship. This is why the saints wept over sins that the merely law-minded would have shrugged at. They were not fretting over infractions. They were grieving that they had wounded Someone they loved. Until a man feels sin as a rupture of love and not just a breach of code, he has not yet understood it.

And this is also why sin cannot be measured only by its outward size. The world ranks wrongdoing by its visible damage, and so it reserves the word for crimes and scandals and barely notices the respectable sins of the comfortable man. But if sin is the turning of the heart from God, then a quiet, interior betrayal, nursed in private and visible to no one, can be a graver thing than a loud public failure, because it goes deeper into the one place that finally matters, the orientation of a man's love. God sees the heart, and it is in the heart that sin lives before it ever reaches the hands.

Thought, Word, Deed, and Omission

The Church teaches that a man can sin in four ways, and the list is worth memorizing because two of them are the ones men habitually forget. He can sin by thought, in the resentment he cultivates or the lust he entertains, long before anything shows. He can sin by word, in the lie, the cruelty, the slander, the cutting remark dressed as honesty. He can sin by deed, in the obvious act. And he can sin by omission, by the good he failed to do, the help he withheld, the truth he should have spoken and did not, the prayer he skipped, the duty he let slide. Many a man keeps a clean record of deeds while his thoughts rot and his omissions pile up, and he calls himself a good man because he has never been caught doing anything. The examination of a serious Christian reaches all four.

The sins of omission deserve a special word, because they are the ones a comfortable man is most likely to overlook entirely. He measures himself by what he has not done, the crimes he has not committed, and feels innocent. But the Gospel is full of men condemned not for what they did but for what they failed to do: the priest and the Levite who passed by the wounded man, the rich man who simply never noticed Lazarus at his gate, the servant who buried his talent and took no risk with it. None of them did

anything we would call a crime. Each stands under judgment for the good that was his to do and that he left undone. A man who examines only his deeds will always acquit himself. A man who examines his omissions discovers how much of love is things he never got around to.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. — Romans 6:23

Against God, and Against Yourself

Sin offends God, but it is crucial to see that it also deforms the sinner, and that these are not two separate facts but one. God's commandments are not a test he imposes from outside to see whether you will comply; they are the maker's instructions for the thing he made, the description of how a human being actually flourishes. To sin is therefore not only to offend the Father but to damage yourself, to act against your own deepest good, to become a little less than you were. Paul says the wages of sin is death, and he does not mean only the punishment God assigns; he means the thing sin does by its own nature. Sin is not a harmless pleasure that God arbitrarily forbids and then penalizes. It is a poison that works its own ruin, and God forbids it the way a loving father forbids his son to drink what will kill him.

CHAPTER TWO

The Difference That Changes Everything

Mortal and Venial Sin

Not all sins are equal, and a man's whole spiritual life depends on his grasping the difference, because the two errors that come from missing it are both fatal. The first error says all sins are the same, that a harsh word and a betrayal are morally identical, which crushes a man under a weight God never laid on him and makes the moral life absurd. The second error says no sin is really serious, that God is too kind to let anything a decent man does actually matter, which lulls a man to sleep on the edge of a cliff. The truth, as always, is the narrow path between, and the Church has mapped it with care.

The Three Conditions of Mortal Sin

The gravest category is mortal sin, so called because it is deadly; it kills the life of grace in the soul, the very life of God that sanctifying grace pours into a man. But the Church is precise about what makes a sin mortal, and the precision is a mercy, because it guards a

man from both panic and presumption. Three conditions must all be present together. First, grave matter: the thing done must be seriously wrong, the kind of act Scripture and the Church identify as weighty, not a trifle. Second, full knowledge: the man must know that it is gravely wrong, not in some abstract way but really. Third, deliberate consent: he must choose it freely, with sufficient reflection, not stumble into it half-asleep or be dragged by a compulsion that overwhelms his freedom. All three. Remove any one and the sin, while still real, is not mortal.

This precision cuts in both directions, and an honest man will feel both edges. It restrains panic, because the sin committed in a moment of genuine confusion, or under a pressure that clouded the will, or without real knowledge of its gravity, may not have been the mortal wound a scrupulous man fears. But it also forbids the easy excuses, because the man who knew perfectly well, who had time to think, who chose with his eyes open, cannot hide behind a claim of weakness he did not actually suffer. The three conditions are not loopholes to be lawyered. They are an honest description of what it takes to truly and knowingly turn from God, and a man applying them honestly to himself usually knows the answer.

Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. — James 1:15

Why This Is Mercy, Not Legalism

Men raised on a vague, feelings-based religion often hear all this as cold legalism, a God obsessed with categories. It is the opposite. Imagine a mountain road with a sheer drop, and a guide who tells you precisely where the edge is, which steps are safe and which will send you over. You would not call him a legalist; you would call him the one man on the mountain worth listening to. The distinction between mortal and venial sin is that guide. It tells a man where the cliffs actually are, so that he neither throws himself off in despair over every stumble nor wanders cheerfully toward the edge believing there is no edge at all. A man who knows this distinction knows which of his struggles are skirmishes and which are matters of spiritual life and death, and he can direct his vigilance accordingly.

The modern instinct is to resolve the discomfort by erasing the categories altogether, to say that since God is love, nothing is really mortal and the whole grim vocabulary can be retired. But this is not mercy; it is the removal of the guardrail on the cliff road, and it kills. A God who loves you does not pretend the drop is not there. The Church keeps the hard distinction precisely because she takes your freedom seriously enough to believe your choices are real, that a man can genuinely give himself to God or genuinely turn away, and that it matters eternally which he does. To be told the truth about the stakes is

not to be oppressed. It is to be treated as a free man whose life actually counts for something.

CHAPTER THREE

The Slow Erosion

Taking Venial Sin Seriously

Having drawn the line at mortal sin, a man is tempted to relax entirely about everything on the safer side of it. Venial sin does not kill the life of grace, so why trouble about it? This is one of the most dangerous moves in the spiritual life, and the saints, almost to a one, would not make it. The lesser sins are not deadly, but they are not nothing, and a man who treats them as nothing is preparing his own great fall.

The Danger of the Small

Venial sin wounds the soul without killing it. It does not drive out the life of grace, but it cools a man's love, dulls his spiritual senses, weakens his resistance, and leaves him more vulnerable to the next temptation and the one after that. Think of it as a low-grade infection rather than a fatal wound. It will not kill you today, but left untreated it spreads, it weakens the whole body, and it makes the eventual serious illness far more likely. No man leaps from a fervent love of God into mortal sin in a single bound. He gets there by a long series of small permissions, each one lowering his guard a little further, until the grave sin that would once have been unthinkable has become, by slow degrees, merely the next step.

This is how good men are destroyed, and it is almost never dramatic. It is the small dishonesties that make the large fraud possible, the little cruelties that harden into contempt, the minor indulgences that train the appetite for the major one, the repeated half-neglect of prayer that finally empties a man of the grace he would have needed in the hour of real testing. The enemy rarely attacks a serious Christian head-on with a great temptation; he knows it would be repelled. He works instead by inches, by the small compromises a man permits himself because none of them, taken alone, seems to matter. They matter cumulatively. The erosion is the strategy.

The Deliberate and the Daily

A distinction helps here, and it keeps a man from despair. There is a difference between the venial sins of sheer human weakness, the impatience that flares before you can catch

it, the distraction at prayer, the small daily faults that even the saints carried to their graves, and the deliberate venial sin, the one a man sees coming and chooses anyway, telling himself it is only venial. The daily faults of weakness humble a man and keep him dependent on grace; he should confess them, resist them, and not be crushed by them. But the deliberately chosen venial sin, the fault a man has made peace with and will not fight because he knows it cannot damn him, is the truly dangerous kind, because it is a standing declaration that he will go exactly as far from God as he can without technically falling, and that disposition is the seedbed of disaster.

One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. — Luke 16:10

Why the Saints Wept Over Small Things

It puzzles the modern man that the saints accused themselves so bitterly of faults he would consider negligible. He takes it for either neurosis or false modesty. It is neither. It is the natural effect of love. The closer a man draws to God, the more light falls on his soul, and the more clearly he sees as offenses things he once would not have noticed, the way a spotless window shows every speck that a dirty one hides. And love raises the stakes of small things: a cold word to a stranger is one matter, the same word to a wife you adore is another, though the word is identical, because love makes the offense weigh more. The saints wept over small sins not because they were scrupulous but because they loved greatly, and to a great love no offense against the Beloved is truly small. A man's tenderness of conscience is a fair measure of his love.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Seven Roots

The Capital Sins as a Map of the Heart

A man who wants to fight sin intelligently cannot treat his failures as a random scatter of unrelated acts. They grow from roots, and the Church has named the seven deepest of them, the capital sins, from which the particular sins of a man's life spring. To learn them is to be handed a map of the human heart, and of your own, and a map is what turns a blind fight into a campaign.

Not a Checklist, but a Map

The word capital comes from the Latin for head, or source. The seven capital sins are not simply seven bad acts on a list; they are seven headwaters, seven root disorders in the heart out of which countless particular sins flow. Pride, greed, lust, gluttony, envy, anger, and sloth are not themselves the branches but the roots, and this matters immensely for the fight, because a man can spend years hacking at branches, the individual acts, while the root goes untouched and sends up new growth as fast as he cuts. The intelligent battle goes after the root. When a man identifies which of these disorders is strongest in him, he stops being surprised by his particular falls, because he sees the single source they all flow from.

Pride, the Root of All

First and deepest is pride, which the tradition calls the root of every other sin and the one from which even the rest take their strength. Pride is the inordinate love of one's own excellence, the setting of self at the center where God belongs. It was the first sin, the reach to be as gods, and it is the final one, the sin that can turn even a man's virtues into occasions of vanity. Every other capital sin has pride somewhere beneath it: the greedy man exalts himself through possession, the envious man cannot bear another's superiority, the slothful man will not submit to the effort God asks. This is why humility is the foundation of the whole spiritual life, for it strikes at the root of all the rest. A man serious about sin begins here, with the hardest and most hidden of his enemies, the self that wants to be god.

Pride is the hardest of the seven to see in oneself, because it is the very faculty a man would use to see it. The lustful man knows he is lustful and the angry man knows he is angry, but the proud man is often precisely the one most convinced of his own humility. It shows itself not only in boasting but in subtler forms a respectable man never suspects: the inability to admit he was wrong, the resentment of correction, the quiet contempt for people he considers beneath him, the need to be seen as right and capable and in control, the resistance to asking for help or submitting to anyone. A man hunting for his pride should look less at his obvious vanities and more at his reactions to being humbled, for pride reveals itself most clearly in the sting it feels when it is wounded.

The Sins of Disordered Desire

Three of the capital sins are disorders of desire for created goods, each a good appetite that has slipped its proper bounds. Greed is the disordered love of wealth and possessions, the appetite for having that is never satisfied by enough because it was never really about the things. Lust is the disordered desire for sexual pleasure, torn loose from its place within self-giving love and turned toward use. Gluttony is the disordered desire

for food, drink, and comfort, the appetite for consumption that makes a small god of the belly and the easy chair. None of the underlying desires is evil; hunger, pleasure, and the wish for security are all good and God-given. The disorder is in the excess and the misdirection, the appetite that has broken free of reason and now rules the man who was meant to rule it.

The Sins of the Spirit

The remaining three are colder and more spiritual, and often more dangerous for being less obviously shameful. Envy is sorrow at another's good, the resentment of a neighbor's success, happiness, or virtue as though it were a theft from oneself; it is the sin that cannot rejoice, and it eats the man who harbors it. Anger, as a capital sin, is not the honest flash of indignation at real wrong but the nursed and cherished wrath, the grudge kept warm, the desire for revenge that curdles the heart. And sloth is the subtlest of all: not mere physical laziness but a spiritual listlessness, a sadness or distaste for the things of God, the inner refusal of the effort that love requires. Sloth is the sin of the comfortable, the quiet decision that holiness is too much trouble, and it kills more respectable men than lust ever will.

For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, pride, foolishness. — Mark 7:21-22

CHAPTER FIVE

Finding Your Particular Battle

The Examination of Conscience

General knowledge of sin is not enough; a man must know his own. Just as every soldier faces a specific enemy on a specific front, every man has his own particular weaknesses, and above all usually one, the besetting sin that trips him again and again across the years. To find it and name it is among the most useful things a man can do, and the tool for it is the examination of conscience, the daily practice of turning the light on one's own soul.

Every Man Has a Besetting Sin

The old spiritual writers spoke of the predominant fault, the one disordered tendency that is strongest in a given man and that lies behind the majority of his sins. For one man it is anger, for another lust, for another the pride that must always be right, for another

the sloth that will not pray. A man often does not know his own, partly because it hides, partly because he does not want to look. But finding it is worth more than a hundred vague resolutions to be better, because it concentrates the fight. A man who knows his predominant fault knows where to post the guard, what to confess, what grace to beg, and he stops scattering his effort across a dozen fronts while the real enemy walks through the one he never watches.

There is a reliable way to find it, for the man willing to be honest. Look at the sins you confess most often, and ask what single disorder lies beneath them. Look at what you most hate to have exposed, what criticism stings the sharpest, for the predominant fault is usually guarded by the thinnest skin. Ask the people who know you best and have the courage to tell you the truth; often they have seen your besetting sin for years while you were blind to it. And notice what you most readily excuse in yourself, the fault you have a hundred ready justifications for, because the sin a man defends most fluently is usually the one that owns him. The predominant fault hides, but it does not hide from a man determined to find it.

The Daily Examination

The practice that uncovers it is simple and ancient, and it takes five minutes before sleep. A man looks back over the day in God's presence. He gives thanks for its gifts. He asks the Holy Spirit for light to see himself truly. He walks back through the hours, noticing where he turned toward God and where he turned away, where he sinned and how, and crucially, what led up to it. He expresses sorrow for what he found, and asks God's help for tomorrow, naming the one battle he most needs to win. Done faithfully, this short daily reckoning does what no occasional burst of resolve can: it keeps a man's self-knowledge current, catches sins while they are small, and reveals, over weeks, the pattern he could never see in the moment.

The pattern is the prize. Any single fall tells a man little, but a month of honest examinations tells him almost everything: that he is sharp with his family when he is tired and has skipped prayer, that he falls to the old temptation on particular evenings, in particular moods, after particular company. Sin is not as random as it feels in the moment of defeat. It has triggers, seasons, and well-worn approaches, and the daily examination is how a man maps them. He stops being ambushed by a thing he could have seen coming, because now he has studied the ground on which he always loses.

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me. — Psalm 139:23-24

Honest, Not Scrupulous

A warning is needed, because this practice can be corrupted into its opposite. The goal is honesty, not scrupulosity, and the two must not be confused. The scrupulous man is not holier than others; he is trapped, endlessly re-examining, doubting every absolution, mistaking his own anxiety for the voice of God, until the thought of his sins crowds out the thought of God's mercy. That is not what we are after. True examination is clear-eyed and then done: a man looks, names what is there plainly, brings it to God, receives mercy, and goes to sleep in peace. It is the honest daily inventory of a free man, not the compulsive audit of a frightened one. If a man finds the practice is feeding anxiety rather than freedom, he should take it to a wise confessor and have it set right, for the enemy is as pleased to see a man paralyzed by scruples as drowsing in laxity.

CHAPTER SIX

Cutting Off the Occasions

Near Occasions of Sin

Here is the single most practical piece of wisdom in the whole battle, and the one men most resist: you do not win against temptation chiefly at its peak. You win, or lose, well before that, in the choice of whether to walk onto the ground where you always fall. The man who waits to fight until the temptation is raging, in the situation he knew was dangerous, has already made his real decision and usually lost it. The battle is won upstream.

The Fight Is Won Before the Moment

Every experienced sinner knows, if he is honest, that his falls are not random bolts from the blue. They come in predictable places, with predictable company, at predictable times, through predictable doors. The Church calls these the near occasions of sin: the persons, places, things, and situations that reliably lead a given man to fall. For one it is a certain website late at night, for another a particular bar, or a particular friendship, or being alone with a particular person, or the second drink that dissolves his judgment. The occasions differ from man to man, but every man has his, and he knows what they are even when he pretends not to. To fight sin seriously is first of all to identify your own near occasions, honestly, by name.

The Ruthlessness Christ Commands

And then to cut them off, with a ruthlessness that startles the comfortable modern conscience. Jesus used the most violent images he ever used on precisely this point: if your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off. He is not commanding self-mutilation; he is commanding a seriousness about sin so far beyond our usual half-measures that only shocking language could convey it. Better to lose the thing you think you cannot live without, he says, than to let it drag your whole self to ruin. Most men negotiate with their near occasions, keeping the dangerous friendship, the unfiltered phone, the standing arrangement, while vowing to be strong next time. Christ tells them to stop negotiating and start amputating. The thing that reliably destroys you is not to be managed. It is to be cut off.

This is where a firm purpose of amendment becomes real rather than sentimental. A man who confesses the same sin again and again while refusing to touch the occasion that causes it has not truly resolved to amend; he has resolved to feel sorry. Real resolve shows itself in the walls a man is finally willing to build: the filter installed, the route changed, the number blocked, the friendship ended, the accountability a man submits to because he has admitted he cannot be trusted alone on that particular ground. These walls are not weakness or a lack of freedom. They are the strategy of a man wise enough to know where he is weak and strong enough to act on it before the hour of temptation, when it is too late to decide well.

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. — Matthew 5:29

Custody of the Heart

Behind all of this lies an older idea worth recovering: custody of the heart, and custody of the senses that feed it. The heart is guarded or lost through the gates of the eyes and ears, through what a man lets himself look at, dwell on, and take in. A man who gives his eyes and his idle attention to whatever they crave, and then is shocked to find his heart disordered, is like a man who leaves every door of his house open and wonders at the intruders. Custody of the eyes, of the imagination, of the scrolling thumb, is not prudery; it is the posting of a guard at the gates through which the enemy actually enters. Win the fight at the gate, and you will seldom have to fight it in the citadel.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Raising of the Dead

Making a Good Confession

All the reconnaissance in the world is useless if a man has no way to deal with the sins he finds, and he does: the sacrament of Confession, which is nothing less than a raising of the dead and which a man must learn to use well. If a man takes one practical resolution from this entire station, let it be this: to go to Confession regularly, honestly, and without fear, as the single most powerful weapon the Church puts in his hand.

Why a Man Should Run to It

Men avoid Confession for reasons that dissolve the moment they are examined: embarrassment at saying their sins aloud, a vague dread, the feeling that they will only sin again so why bother, the simple neglect of years. But consider what actually happens in that confessional. A man walks in carrying real guilt, perhaps carrying spiritual death, and through the words of absolution Christ himself, acting through the priest, forgives his sins, restores the life of grace, and sends him out clean. There is nothing else like it on earth. It is not a counseling session or a pep talk; it is an encounter with the mercy of God made audible and certain, so that a man does not have to wonder whether he is forgiven but hears it said. A man who grasped what was on offer would not avoid that room. He would run to it.

Take the most common excuse, that a man will only sin again, so the whole thing is pointless. Turn it around. A man eats again, though he ate yesterday; he does not conclude that eating is pointless because the hunger returns. The life of grace needs feeding as the body does, regularly, and the return of the need is not a sign that the last meal failed but simply the condition of being alive. The man who stays away because he will fall again has mistaken Confession for a one-time cure when it is ongoing nourishment, the regular restoration and strengthening of a soul that is, like the body, always spending the life it is given. Go not because you have finally stopped sinning, but precisely because you have not, and need the mercy that meets you there every time.

The Five Acts of the Penitent

A good confession has five parts, and knowing them turns a nervous mumble into a real act. First, examine your conscience, honestly reviewing your sins since the last confession, using the map this station has given you. Second, be truly contrite, sorry for having sinned, not merely embarrassed at having been weak. Third, form a firm purpose of amendment, a real resolve, however shaky, to turn from the sin and from its occasions. Fourth, confess your sins to the priest, simply and completely, naming the serious ones in kind and number as best you can, without excuses and without performance. Fifth, accept and carry out the penance given, the small act of satisfaction that begins to repair

the damage. These five are not red tape. They are the shape of genuine repentance, the difference between truly turning and merely venting.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. — 1 John 1:9

Contrition, and the Honesty That Frees

One distinction will steady a man who fears his sorrow is not good enough. The Church speaks of perfect and imperfect contrition. Perfect contrition is sorrow that flows from love of God, grief at having wounded the One who is all good; imperfect contrition is sorrow that flows from lesser motives, the fear of hell or the ugliness of the sin. The good news is that imperfect contrition is enough for a valid confession; a man need not wait until his sorrow is flawless to come, for the sacrament itself perfects what he brings. So a man comes as he is, with the sorrow he has, and lets the grace do the rest. And having come, he learns the deepest freedom this station offers: a man who has honestly faced and confessed his own sin has nothing left to hide and nothing left to protect. He can speak of his struggles to his sons and his friends without shame and without performance, as one rescued man telling another where the rescue is found. That honesty, bought in the confessional, is the beginning of every real work he will do for other souls.

CONCLUSION

The Enemy Named

Return to the soldier who would not study his enemy. You are no longer that man. You have looked sin full in the face and learned its anatomy: that it is the rupture of love and not merely the breach of a rule; that it comes mortal and venial, and that the difference is a matter of spiritual life and death; that it grows from seven deep roots, one of which is likely stronger in you than the rest; that it falls in predictable places you can learn to avoid; and that whatever it does to you, there is a sacrament that undoes it and raises you from the dead.

None of this is meant to leave a man staring morbidly at his own corruption. The point of studying the enemy was never to admire him but to beat him, and a man who knows sin this clearly is a man far harder to defeat. He is not ambushed, because he has mapped the ground. He is not crushed by his falls, because he understands them and knows the way back. He is not deceived into thinking himself fine, nor into thinking himself hopeless.

He fights with open eyes, confesses without fear, and gets up every time, which is the whole of sanctity in practice.

But a man cannot win a war by defense alone, and knowing the enemy is only half of what you need. It tells you what to tear down. It does not yet tell you what to build. The next station turns from the vices to be uprooted to the virtues to be grown, from the man you must stop being to the man you were made to be. You have named the enemy within. Now it is time to meet the man you are called to become.

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