

Watershed Over Kansas

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Two men, nearly the same age, made headline news in Kansas earlier this year. One man, Dennis Rader, was arrested in our hometown of Park City, Kansas, February 25, 2005, in connection with the murders linked to the “BTK” serial killer case.

- http://www.kansas.com/mld/kansas/news/special_packages/btk/
- <http://www.wichita.gov/news/announcements/02-28-2005a.htm>

The other man, Steve Fossett, took off from Salina, Kansas, some 70 miles from our hometown, in the Virgin Atlantic GlobalFlyer three days later, on February 28, 2005, in an attempt to set a world record by flying solo, non-stop around the globe. My oldest son and I are grateful to have had the opportunity to witness Mr. Fossett’s historic and heroic take off and landing as well as to shake his hand and to speak briefly with his sponsor and friend, Sir Richard Branson.

- <http://www.virginatlanticglobalflyer.com/Home/index.jsp>
- <http://www.kstatecollegian.com/article.php?a=5169>

The sixty year old Steve Fossett landed safely back in Kansas March 3 after successfully completing his record-setting flight. On March 9, Dennis Rader turned 60 years of age in the Sedgwick County jail while awaiting his preliminary hearing.

The contrast formed by the dramatically different events that took place in these two men’s lives is reminiscent of the watershed of the Great Divide formed by the Rocky Mountains. They took vastly different courses in their lives because of the vastly different thoughts each man chose to entertain and act upon.

Both men dreamed dreams. Dennis Rader, who confessed June 27 to the killings, chose lustful fantasies that turned into horrible, violent nightmares for his victims and their families.

- <http://www.kansas.com/mld/kansas/11996841.htm>
- http://www.kwch.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=KWCH%2FMGArticle%2FWCH_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1031783526116&path=%21news%21local
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BTK>

Steve Fossett, on the other hand, dreamed far different dreams, dreams of pioneering adventure, of achievements that would inspire others to pursue ever expanding new frontiers.

- http://www.stevefossett.com/html/main_pages/aviation_globalflyer.html
- <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/05063/466135.stm>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Fossett
- http://www.scout.org/front/0502Fossett_e.shtml

Consequently, like two drops of rain that fell nearly at the same time but on opposite sides of a watershed, these two men’s lives progressed in entirely opposite directions because their thoughts “fell” on opposite sides of a great divide. The one choosing to entertain dreams of violence born of lust progressed well into the destructive side of the great divide of possible

human expression. The other, who chose to follow dreams full of life and adventure, progressed well into the constructive side of this great divide.

As with these two men, God has placed before each one of us a great divide. On the one side is the way of life. On the other side is the way of death.

See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. (Deuteronomy 30:15)

And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. (Jeremiah 21:8)

Which side of this watershed of life and death we end up on depends upon the thoughts we choose to entertain and act upon. Those who choose life do so by thinking on things which are just and true (cf. Psalm 1:1,2 & 119:112-114).

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things (Philippians 4:8)

Those who choose death greedily welcome destructive thoughts of violence and of evil into their minds (http://www.kansas.com/mld/kansas/news/special_packages/btk/12002114.htm).

*... your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. ... Their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: **their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.** (Isaiah 59:2-7)*

*This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: **who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.** (Ephesians 4:17-19)*

Jesus explains further.

*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed **evil thoughts**, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: **all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.** (Mark 7:21-23)*

Do not our Lord's words describe Dennis Rader who wrote the following cryptic message (including improper grammar) while eluding capture?

"I can't stop it so the monster goes on, and hurt me as well as society. Society can be thankful that there are ways for people like me to relieve myself at time by day dreams of some victims being torture and being mine. It a big complicated game my friend of the monster play putting victims number down, follow them, checking up on them, waiting in the dark, waiting, waiting.... the pressure is great and sometimes he run the game to his liking. Maybe you can stop him. I can't. He has already chosen his next victim or victims. I don't know who they are yet. The next day after I read the paper, I will know, but it to late. Good luck hunting." (http://www.kansas.com/mld/kansas/news/special_packages/btk/history/8321038.htm)

Jesus warned that those who yield to this monster, the devil (the enemy of our souls), will do his works of murder born of lust (cf. Romans 6:23 & II Peter 2:14).

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:44)

Those who yield to this monster, the devil, greedily pursue lustful thoughts at the expense of others, even unto death.

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (James 4:1-4)

It is not a coincidence that this passage of scripture, penned by the apostle James many years ago, so fittingly describes a murderer like the man identifying himself as BTK. Just like the people in Noah's day, Dennis Rader's actions were evil because his thoughts and fantasies were evil (cf. Psalm 10:4).

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5, KJV)

Sadly, James' words describe the condition of many men's hearts in these last days as well.

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. (Luke 17:26-30 KJV)

In other words, there are and will be many more individuals in our day that will choose to entertain and act upon destructive, evil thoughts and imaginations. And if they persist in this

path, though they may not have as yet progressed to the same exact extent as did Dennis Rader, they will eventually end up far into the death side of the watershed.

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Romans 6:16)

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. (Galatians 6:7,8)

And so Jesus warns,

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. (Luke 21:36).

Thankfully, as Isaiah has testified, there is hope for those who have entertained evil thoughts of lust and death, if they will but repent and forsake them and turn to the Lord:

*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man **his thoughts**: and **let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.** (Isaiah 55:7; cf. Isaiah 59)*

Therefore, please do not let the lesson of the watershed that was recently put on display in Kansas go unheeded! Fight the good fight of faith by keeping your thoughts pure and for the Lord.

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, **and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.** (Hebrews 4:12)*

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) **Casting down imaginations**, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and **bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ**; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. (II Corinthians 10:3-6)*

Choose life. Choose thoughts of life by heeding the counsel of a righteous father who wrote the following words of life:

*O remember my son, and learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God; yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; Yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest, let it be in the Lord; **yea, let thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord for ever**; counsel the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good. (Alma 17:68,69)*