

## What's New



During the course of our lives we are presented with two categories of information. They are “Current Events” and “Enduring Truths” better known as News and History. In general, we shy away from the enduring truths often because they are “Boring” and gravitate towards the current events because they are “Exciting”.

The problem is that while the current events excite us there frequently aren’t any consequences or results revealed in the report so that we have no idea what outcomes those activities yielded. Consequently, there isn’t any discipline or guidance proclaimed and as a result the information becomes more about entertainment than instruction. The “Entertainment Factor” occurs in other forms of communication as well, such as when an author or film director attempt to incorporate an enduring truth into their story, it may not necessarily defeat the entertainment factor and be apparent in the storyline.

Enduring truths suffer from other factors due to their age and the fact that those who reported them are no longer alive and can be held accountable for the narrative. This leads people to believe that through multiple portrayals of the event there could be distortion of what actually happened.

The next factor is probably the most important factor and one that there seems to be little or no control over and that is “The Nature of Humans”. No matter what the faith or ideology of our species each human has declared their freedom of will and choice and is reluctant to relinquish that privilege even to the expense of other humans. We would want others to view us as considerate and even benevolent but when the pressure is on and the situation becomes critical or urgent our true nature may not reflect the afore mentioned characteristics. I can hear some say, “I object to that premise” but I reply that you haven’t been able to visualize the pressure as intense nor the urgency as compelling as it could be. In February 2015, 21 Coptic Egyptian Christians were executed by ISIS and all they needed to do was to renounce their faith to be saved that horrible death. Is that pressure enough? What would you do in that circumstance? That’s probably a circumstance that you wouldn’t even know how you would react to until you were there.

The Bible reports that other factors can influence our “Freedom of Choice”, in Genesis 3 Satan used other human elements such as temptation, emotion, pride, lust and doubt to manipulate the “Happy Couple” to his thinking. These are all bulked into three major components named “Lust of the Flesh”, “Lust of the Eyes”, and “Pride of Life”. They only had one instruction and yet they had more confidence in the “Serpent’s” assertions than that of the “One Who Created Them”. How often do we do that every day of our lives? Don’t say never, after all it’s a sin to lie.

Which brings us to the “Mountain of God”. Since the Israelites were moving into a “New Piece of Real-estate” and a “New Responsibility” (there really was a responsibility along with the acquisition) (just as accepting the “Promise of Salvation” comes with responsibility) they needed a few “Guidelines” for their conduct amongst themselves and those around them. These “Guidelines” we call “Commandments” because as far as God is concerned they are “Non-negotiable”. Starting at Exodus 20 and going through the entire book of Leviticus is the “Mortgage Contract” that the Israelites “Signed” in order to be “The People of God” and to acquire the “Promised Land”.

As Christians we need to familiarize ourselves with the terms of this contract because at the bottom of the contract below the signatures of Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the 70 Elders is Jesus' signature written in His Blood for you.

In the words of Martin Luther, "What Does This Mean", Jesus died as a fulfillment of "All That Stuff" but He said that doesn't mean that it went away rather that with the help of the Holy Spirit we should make a "Concerted Effort" to fulfill the terms of the contract but failure won't obstruct access to "The Kingdom of Heaven" (Free Gift) never the less by reason of our "Love" for Jesus and the "Appreciation" we should have for "His Sacrifice" we should make every effort to carry out and understand all the "Instructions" and "Commands" that Jesus gave us.

Is this a difficult assignment? Many won't even acknowledge a need in their lives for the repentance that begins the process. Others are too busy or see no value in communicating with God through prayer to allot time for that kind of activity. Bible study is the final piece in the puzzle but if you don't or won't complete the first two phases in the process, the final step will not produce pleasing results.

The "Good News" is that "God Loves You" even when you don't love Him, even when you don't acknowledge Him, even when you don't talk to Him and even when you don't believe that He loves you. To get the biggest bang for your buck however, talk to Him. Nothing pleases God more. Tell Him you could be better, ask Him to help you on the where and how part, let Him know you are willing to listen to His instructions and that you will follow through with them to the best of your ability (your ability will improve as you follow through). Most importantly thank Him for Jesus and the incredible sacrifice that He made on our behalf, that makes this opportunity for interaction possible.