



October 31, 2010

Things That Are Good For Us

Things that are good for us aren't as much fun as things that aren't. Why is that? Exercising is good for us, but its difficult to get into it. It takes time, dedication and perseverance to accomplish it and the results are slow in being realized. The alternative is to do nothing. Just remain stationary and let things happen. No work, no pain, but ultimately, no gain. Education is demanding and a lot of folks would rather only learn what they have to. Gaining an education, however, will prepare us for many other things that can enrich our lives. The alternative to that is to learn by experience and potentially find ourselves lacking when we deal with the rest of the world. Education, like exercise, leads to a certain level of discomfort and requires a lot of time. That may be more than some folks want to do. The result is that we may find ourselves in bad straits at some time in our lives. Brushing our teeth takes time demanding a few minutes every day of concentrated effort. The alternative to that is to have a number of problems with our mouths that we might not otherwise have had. Many times we find it easier to settle for the lowest level of activity and commitment. Many such activities fall outside the realm of our jobs and other commitments, so they remain optional. We can get by without paying attention to them, perhaps for an entire lifetime, but sooner or later the consequences will catch up with us. Spiritually it appears that we look for the easy way out. In spiritual matters we find it easier to allow someone else to study the Bible and then tell us what it says. That may appear to work but what are we being told? Is the individual or organization interpreting the scriptures really following God's word and can they be trusted. We have a tendency to gravitate toward things that are easier and simpler rather than engage in anything that will challenge us, unless there is some gratification involved. The simplest activities provide some degree of comfort. There is a need to change the way we look at things and alter what our conception of good is. Speaking to those who failed to learn and were unable to teach, the writer of Hebrews states, "***But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***" (Heb 5.14). The exercising of the senses comes from training based on the word of God and application of the lessons learned. There is work in being pleasing to God. Paul encouraged the Romans, "***And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.***" (Rom 12.2). Perhaps this is why false teaching is so appealing. There is a great deal of emphasis on the experience of salvation and the effects of being loved by God, but not always enough emphasis on reading and understanding God's word. The absence of knowledge is the problem. There are a lot of good people being lulled into a false sense of security thinking they're Christians when they aren't. The same thing is true of any area of endeavor. It is easier to sit and watch someone on television who is athletic than to exercise to improve our own health. There is more gratification watching television and being entertained than studying and learning a new skill. There is nothing wrong with recreational pursuits but when we don't make time and neglect spiritual things we have a problem. The biggest problem is being unprepared for judgment. Paul indicates the need to be industrious serving God in his writing to the Corinthians. "***Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.***" (2 Cor 5.9). Paul tells us that God expects us to be busy. Things we can do include reading and meditating on God's word, attending services, teaching others and overcoming things in our own lives that keep us from doing more for the Lord. But, it is easier to believe in a God that will allow us to passively wait for the end and go to Heaven where we can keep on resting.

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