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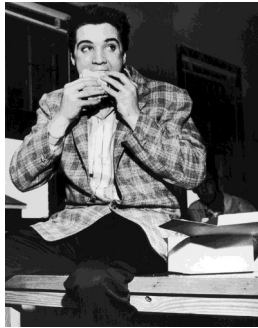
IS IT REALLY WORTH IT?

On a recent trip to the Northwest, an unexpected treat occurred when we stopped for lunch at a locally owned diner that specialized in sandwiches. The service was exceptional and the food was far superior to what was served at chain restaurants. The bread was freshly baked, the lettuce crisp, the cheese from a local dairy and the meat also from a local source. Words cannot capture the absolute, amazing delight upon first bite and it held all the way until the last. Mmm, it was worth every penny.

Can the same be said with respect to, as an example, of a Wendy's Quarter-Pound hamburger? Quick answer, no. What about an Arby's Beef & Cheddar? Again, no. It simply isn't worth it. On top of which, do you realize the effort involved to un-do the choice to chow down. It will take sixty-one minutes of jumping rope to work off the Wendy's hamburger. The Arby's sandwich, to work off the calories it would take a fifty minute bike ride. Worth it? Hardly

I must admit that I am near the bottom of the list of those who pay attention to calories, but I have strongly urged to be more discerning as to what I consume. But doesn't it make sense if we are to be circumspect of what we eat, then it must also be true that we should be mindful of our media consumption. The psalmist, David, noted in the 101st psalm in the third verse, *"I will set no worthless thing before my eyes..."* Solomon wrote, *"Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."* (Proverbs 4:23)

Recent research has shown that what we see and hear can stay in our mind for a significant amount of time and can have a powerful influence over our behavior. So "social media" and other things of that ilk tend to "stick to the ribs", kind of sort of like the tenacious way fat holds on and makes it so difficult to lose. "A moment on the lips, forever on the hips."



Day by day we are bombarded by a vast variety of ways in which media seeks to infiltrate each one of us with content which at times is questionable to say the least. As children of God we need to become discerning consumers. At a minimum asking self, if it is worth the time? Practice due diligence. *"Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."* (Colossians 3:2)

Cell phones and such like are ubiquitous; bringing the saturation level of information/communication to the fore-front. Toddlers and children of all ages seem to have ready access to phones, laptops and tablets. Teenagers, young adults and for that matter the vast majority of society is fixated on their devices, absorbing whatever is set before their eyes and ears. Perhaps it would be good to remember what Paul wrote in Philippians 4:8, *"...whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute..."* In short he is saying whatever is praiseworthy, is what we need to be feeding on, "...let your mind dwell on these things." Noted philosopher Will Durant is quoted as having said, "The mind is formed by what it takes in." So, ask yourself is it really worth it? (wbe)

THE BULWARK