

Affluenza

IT'S FLU SEASON again, only there's a not-so-new strain that is out there that is more vicious than any germ...

Its Latin name is *affluenza-gottabuyitis*. The symptoms affect us all unless we are inoculated with the contentment serum that comes only from having something in our lives that is more valuable than all the things that money can buy.

You might have affluenza if you get frustrated by all the stuff you have filling your life and yet you make frequent trips to those who sell more. You might have affluenza if you are too ill or frail to come and sit in a comfortable place of worship, but manage to negotiate the aisles at Wal-Mart. You might have affluenza if you are actually interested in some of the junk mail that you get, especially the weekly sale ads. You might have affluenza if you would lose at Bible quizzes, but know all the answers on The Price Is Right. And finally, you might have affluenza if you actually know how many shopping days are left until Christmas.

If you have affluenza and want to get over it, here is the cure:

- 1) Take a dose of reality. Recognize that "I need" and "I want" are not the same. Realize how many people in the world live without the latest (you name it) and get along just fine.
- 2) Get a shot of compassion. Consider the last time you bought to please yourself and how your purchase brought joy for such a short time. Now think of how a gift to someone who is truly in need will bring you joy that lasts.
- 3) Don't make any purchase without prayer. That includes giving God thanks for your daily bread and for the bounty that allows us to have many more things that make us comfortable and that give us a pleasant way of life. While you pray, seek God's will instead of just seeking to satisfy your own cravings (cf. James 4:13-5:7).
- 4) Get a booster shot of contentment. God is so good and He has blessed us in so many ways with so many things.

Let us never take our eyes off the truly valuable things of God which are everlasting and replace greedy affluence with gracious thanks.

"Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these ye shall be content." (1 Tim. 6:8)

- Roger Wright, via KneEmail, Forthright Magazine, Berryville Church of Christ, Berryville, AR

Life is more than the things we store.

News & Notes

CONFESSIONS: Santana Noland, Briston Lavant.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER: Donald Parsons, Pat Allison, and Joyce Murdock.

SUNDAY NIGHT SINGING: Following the service tonight and Jan. 28th.

CARE & SHARE BEARS: Each Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. All the ladies are invited to participate.

ELDERS TO SPEAK: Sunday evening, Jan 28th. This has become an annual event for our elders and the church here. Plan to be here for a review of the past year and the plans for 2007.

PANTRY: Canned fruit.

SICK & SHUT-IN: AT HOME: Jack Board, Mary Beth Robinson, Denise Noland, Helene Wilson, Lloyd Cowdery, Mabel Sprout, Virginia Rickerd, Karen Rice, Fred Rayl, Jr. (Ilene's son), Bette Gentry, Fred & Jean Larrimore, Sr., Fred Larrimore, Jr., Cheryl Stackpole, George & Betty Dunn (Pat Wright's parents). **NURSING HOMES: Fox:** Ray Baker, Ruth McMahan. **Calcutta Health Care:** Glenn Beagle, Virginia Clutter (sister-in-law of Eva Stefl). **Nentwick:** Ruby Kenny. **Rivendale:** Ione Asher. **Weirton Geriatric Center:** Edna McKitrick, Ila Plum.

A Train Whistle

I didn't realize how much I missed it - a train whistle, that is. I grew up in the oil-field town of Odessa, Texas. A town enlivened by constant train whistles signaling the carrying of petroleum in every direction, and warning of the danger in crossing the tracks.

Some three years ago we moved from Little Rock to the bedroom community of Maumelle. Then I heard it late at night - a distant train whistle with its lonesome, but welcome sound. I now find myself straining each night to hear it again. Why? Because it lures me back to precious memories of the past. It speaks of parents long gone, a loving home life, and the precious days of childhood. It yields thoughts of church, and a large group of young people who now faithfully serve as leaders in the body of Christ. That whistle calls me to remember, and provides a soothing path to sleep.



Strange isn't it, how a sound designed for warning can come to mean something completely different! Or, there's another possibility. The warnings can become so familiar that we cease to pay attention. As far as we are concerned they have lost their original intent. Take for instance the following:

- "Remember Lot's wife."
- "You shall not follow a multitude to do evil."
- "Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong."
- "Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."
- "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise."

These, and many more, are spiritual train whistles designed to warn us of danger. Wisdom dictates that we heed them.

- John Gipson, Little Rock, AR, via *Bulletin Digest*

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