

It's Just An Ad

In a twinkling of an eye, a whole new world has become accessible to anyone with a computer and a phone line - the world of digital information. While many are finding on the Internet a wealth of information; marketing companies are gearing-up and producing ads that are custom made for the individual behind the screen. In cyber space advertisements are interactive. Advertisements invite the viewer to comment and respond. This interaction enables marketing companies to alter ads in order to "better serve the consumer." This situation reminds ought to remind us of another advertiser who wants our business - the fallen angel!

The devil "custom tailors" temptation in order to entice us to buy into sin. The enticement changes and evolves as we interact with the ads of evil. All advertisements have a purpose and it is no different when it comes to evil. The goal of the devil has always been to keep us from God.

Why are Greek Orthodox Churches half-full on Sundays, full on March 25th, August 15th, Christmas and Easter and empty during the week - what ads are we paying homage to when we are not praying to God?

WHERE, you find yourself on Sunday mornings IS your Church. WHAT, you find yourself doing on Sunday mornings IS your worship and consequently, your God!
The Church has always armed itself with one weapon - Prayer ! It is only by ceaselessly praying to God, (as the Way of A Pilgrim reminds us) that the commandment to: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself," (Luke 10:27) can be fulfilled. This is our only hope for living in the world without actually worshipping it.

In an article, "Decadence, The Corporate Way," it reveals that advertisers are using language which our generation can relate to in order to sell products. The next generation, our children and grandchildren are known by advertisers of companies, like Calvin Klein as: "People who do only what they want to do." Familiar ads like, "Just do It!" by Nike, or the Don Q rum ad: "When you have a passion for living, nothing is merely accepted. Nothing is taboo. . . Break all the rules." These ads typify this attitude which is eating away at our country.

We are a society which does not submit itself to the living God but has been bought by the god of consumerism - the god of money! According to this false-god, there are no rules, no boundaries, no responsibilities, no accountability.

There has never been a more crucial moment for the Church to be the Church. As any good coach would tell us, one must master the basics before going on to excellence. The basics of Orthodoxy have been and always will be: PRAYER, FASTING, CONFESSION & ALMSGIVING. Without this Holy Triad, we cannot even consider ourselves Orthodox.

Prayer instructs us that we can't just do whatever we want to do. There is a Way to life that has been created by God that can only be known through a life a prayer. Living without praying is equivalent to traveling without a map.

Fasting educates our emotions and re-establishes within us a self-control which enables us to live according to the Way the God. Fasting teaches us that a narcissistic, self-satisfying life does not establish within us the virtues of holiness.

Confession grants us the humility to know ourselves as the greatest sinner and not to judge others. We are accountable to God for the gift of our baptism. It is confession that renews our "baptismal purity" and allows us to wipe out the burden that sin creates within us. Purity of heart then leads to being illumined by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Almsgiving is the fruit of an authentic spiritual life. Our prayer, fasting and confessing awaken within us the love of Christ. His love become incarnated in us the moment we submit our lives to Him.

As the Body of Christ our calling is to be the Church. The only way we can be that which Christ has ordained us to be is by taking hold of the weapon of prayer. The great martyrs and saints perfected the basics only to discover that the basics are all that are needed.

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