

Sunday 6th September 2020

What are you like at following instructions, especially when constructing things? When I was a young lad I was very impatient when it came to making up model kits. Once I had opened the box, I would grab hold of the biggest pieces and start putting the model together. The instructions of how to construct the model were usually found underneath all the pieces, which was no good to an impatient youngster, who just wanted to get the thing put together.

The result often meant there were bits left over, so the model was incomplete. My mum often told me that I should take my time. Unfortunately, I followed my father's example, who would often rush into D.I.Y. jobs without assessing it first. This led to some lively discussions between my parents!!

Now-a-days, if I have a piece of flat pack furniture to put together I find the instruction sheet first. Then I make sure I have all the parts required before I commence the task of assembling the item. The result, hopefully, is that all the pieces have been used, in the right places and that the piece of furniture is fit for purpose.

The Bible is full of various types of instructions. For example, Moses and Aaron gave the Israelites very clear guidelines for the Passover, which was about to take place. You can read the step by step instructions in Exodus 12:1-14. Attention to detail was vital, you could say it was a matter of life or death.

The end product was eating the roast lamb. Some, may have been impatient and just wanted to get to meal time and miss out a step or two, like sprinkling the blood of the lamb around the door posts, "would it really matter if we miss that bit out," some may have been tempted to say.

The directions that Moses and Aaron gave the people was a directive from God Himself. The blood on the doorframes was a sign to the Almighty that inside that house were His people. Anyone missing that step out would have paid a hefty price for not being more diligent!!

I guess the most famous set of instructions in the Bible is the ten commandments. You could argue that they are the most famous instructions

ever produced. They certainly form the basis of many countries' laws, including our own.

In Romans 13:8-14 Paul states that the commandments can be summed in a four-letter word, LOVE. Love for God and love for our "neighbours". If you have such love you are not going to murder, steal, covert etc; v 10 says "Love does no harm to its neighbour. Therefore, love is the fulfilment of the law."

During this past week, members of the Hampton Mission Partnership have been encouraged to pray for their immediate neighbours, those that live in their road. Maybe this is an instruction we could all follow!!

Amen

Paul Barker
Hampton Mission Partnership