

LIVING ON BORROWED TIME?

I recently had forwarded to me an internet article from one of my clients about how the end days of the American economy is near and suggested that we, as Americans, are living on borrowed time. The internet article was written by someone who refused to publish under their real name and instead calls himself "Tyler Durden".

"Tyler Durden? You mean, like the character of dubious integrity from the movie "Fight Club"?"

Yes, that exact one. There was even a picture of the character right next to the byline! For several years I have served families and small businesses by helping them get their financial house in order. Never once have I found an occasion, nay even a reason, to refer to any kind of internet article from anyone who professionally writes under the name of a fictional character to provide financial advice. If you have someone who does....please, RUN!

There are many messages being presented that relentlessly tout themselves as being urgent in nature. They come from media sources, politicians, salesmen, doomsday soothsayers...the list just goes on and on. Many people, however, find those messages lack significance. It is the smaller, more sincere messages for which we need to listen. Those are the ones that will help us focus on the important things, the things we can control, and ultimately cause less worry about living on borrowed time.

Motorcycling has it's own set of mixed messages. We see manufacturers create models titled "Road King", "Wild Star", "LiveWire" or "Scrambler", all of which evoke feelings of strength and speed out on the open road. There is also the seemingly inherent need to find the perfect tone of engine exhaust that is destined to rattle the teeth of anyone within earshot. If that isn't enough, even Harley's latest iteration of its motorcycle audio system is aptly named "Boom!" If the meek shall inherit the earth, then the messages we are led to believe about ourselves, as bikers, will certainly lead us elsewhere when Jesus comes to take us home.

Pulling up a mechanics stool and spending a few moments of quiet, one-on-one time with your iron horse of choice is a great way to get to know your bike on a personal level and will save you countless dollars and days of downtime in the future.

There is an acronym, T-CLOCS, that can help you build that relationship with your bike. By inspecting Tires and wheels, Controls, Lights and electrics, Oil and other fluids, Chassis, and Stands (abbreviated as T-CLOCS), you can more easily understand the smaller, more significant messages about motorcycling that we all need to comprehend.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation offers a modestly comprehensive checklist that you can print and keep on your bike for a pre-ride check. I also keep one on a clipboard in my garage, which hangs near the bike:

http://www.msf-usa.org/downloads/T-CLOCS_Inspection_Checklist.pdf

This list can also work well for doing a check on your other vehicles as well. Kickstands, however, must have been an option on the 2004 Ford F250 trucks, as I can't find it anywhere!

The time you take getting to know your ride is valuable. Make sure you use it. Listening to the urgent messages that are thrust upon us may be exciting and sensational, but they just don't make for safe riding.

Don't live on borrowed time. Check your bikes. Arrive alive. Live to ride another day.

...and "Hey! Let's be CAREFUL out there!"