

## **Spiritual Nourishment**

Just as the body needs nourishment in order to be healthy, so also does the soul need spiritual nourishment in order to stay healthy. It is the sustaining quality and quantity of that nourishment that determines the overall health of these two components of every human being. As physical beings we all take in food in order to satiate hunger, as well as for the enjoyment it provides. Most do not necessarily think much about the nutritional value, often assuming that if it is called food, and it tastes good, then it is food, and therefore it has some and probably sufficient, nutritional value. The truth however, is that much of it contains toxins, and also empty calories that put on fat while nutritionally, the body starves. It seems also that today, the majority of people do little of their own food preparation. Instead they buy prepared food to eat at home, or they eat in restaurants, fast food places and snack bars.

Many of these, along with nearly all items found in the central part of any supermarket, provide what merely masquerades as real food, but it's not food that nourishes, it merely fills. The non-foods contain, or are in themselves, primarily tasty, slow acting obesity and sickness makers.

In the supermarkets, if you read the list of ingredients and understand what they are, you will soon recognize the truth of this statement. Even on the outer perimeter in the supermarket where some real foods may be found such as meats, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, there are many health issues to be considered as well. Nearly all of these foods may contain various amounts of harmful insecticides, pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones, heavy metals, antibiotics and other contaminants. Many of the fruits and vegetables may have also been genetically modified, the seriously detrimental effects of which are only now being understood. Additionally those great looking fruits and vegetables are not all they may seem to be in some other respects. That's because they can only feed us what they have been fed. If grown in minerally depleted soils, they do not contain the minerals we tend to credit them with having, and that we must have in order to be healthy.

So it is spiritually with many, even those who call themselves Christians. They may do a little scriptural reading at home, but much of their spiritual sustenance may be of the “take home” or “at home” variety found on radio, T.V. and “Christian-like” journals. Primarily however, it is in the “religious restaurants” called churches where most seek to get their spiritual nourishment. They may attend such churches weekly (or weakly) and participate in the singing, rote prayers, and listen to a sermon. From these, they tend to believe that sufficient nutritional food for the spirit has been received to last a week or more. This may be true, but there is also a good chance that their spirits are actually receiving “junk food” through which they are being spiritually poisoned and starved, even when they consider themselves to be well fed. Generally, what many get week by week is more of the same, as the spirit\soul starves while growing fatter and sicker (translate that to complacent and “ill” informed). On the other hand, some will feel full, yet not spiritually satiated.

This is not unlike in the physical realm when our bodies seem to crave for something even after we have eaten a huge meal and feel stuffed. This craving is the crying out of a message of desperation, that it is starving for nourishment, not simply for more food. Again, that’s generally all the body gets, more of the same, as it too grows fatter and sicker. Those who are knowledgeable about nutrition and care about their health, will choose their restaurants carefully, and be quite discriminating about what food they eat. They will also do most of their own food preparation at home. Junk food is not part of their diet. So it is also with those who seek good spiritual nourishment. They choose their spiritual restaurants with care, and also do much of their spiritual food preparation at home, or in homes, by feeding hungrily on God’s Word, and through serious small group Bible studies. It’s likely that one day soon, these small groups will be the only sources of such spiritual nourishment as Bible believing Christians are forced back into the “catacombs”.

There are statistics that indicate that among the forty-plus “advanced” nations of the world, the United States ranks lowest in overall public health, even though it spends on

“health” as much as all of the other nations combined. How can this be? Statistics also indicate that around fifty percent of the population is considerably overweight. Is there any doubt that there is sufficient consumption of what seems to be food? The issues here are complex and multi-faceted. However, in the context of the subject, a major portion of the answer is that the population grows fatter and sicker because it is literally, but unknowingly eating itself into starvation, sickness, and an earlier death for lack of nourishment. People are starving themselves into serious illnesses while they overeat and ingest toxic substances. Real food is nutritious satisfying and health enhancing.

Much of what is believed to be food today is largely empty calories laced with various toxic substances. People eat for taste and texture, not nutrition. Even when they are nutrition conscience, the slick advertising and labeling are such that a perception of nutritional value is created where little or none exists. Only those who make it their business to study, understand and seek genuine full-spectrum nutrition are able to escape the syndrome of deficiency induced sicknesses, and pharmaceutical dependencies that only deal with symptoms. Why all this discussion about physical problems where the subject is spiritual? It is because the parallels, as mentioned above are uncanny when closely examined. What is here observed is but a very small part of this similitude.

Looking discerningly at today’s “spiritual restaurants” we can soon see that many are merely junk food outlets and snack bars, feeding people tasty platitudes, homilies, half truths, and touchy-feely non-convicting Bible verses that send them home fat, dumb, happy, and unknowingly starving. Fat, because they have been over filled with words that seem, but are not, spiritually nutritious. Dumb, not dumb, but ignorant, ignorant of biblical truths that would allow them to understand what constitutes real spiritual nutrition. Therefore they cannot recognize junk food from real food, even when it is preached from the pulpit, or in the media. Happy because they believe that they have been really nourished. It is tragic enough when the pulpit issues nothing but sweet empty calories, sandwiched between a few of the more comfortable Bible verses.

However, what about places like one of the biggest spiritual restaurants in the country called the Crystal Palace. There, I understand the main theme centers around the

definition of sin as being a lack of self-esteem. Can there be anything more toxic for the soul to feed on than this? How easy it seems to mislead, and to deceive those who want to be deceived because they dislike the convicting taste of the truth found in real spiritual food. This spiritual poison dispensary/restaurant is but one of a rapidly growing number of similar “Christian” stockyards into which lost sheep are led to be entertained as they are being spiritually slaughtered. Most of these soul- poison distribution centers are quite subtle and masquerade very effectively as “Christian” ministries and churches as they proceed to assure the damnation of souls.

Having chosen to draw a parallel between problems encountered dealing with physical and spiritual nourishment, perhaps a brief summary of a few of these parallels might be helpful. The handful I’ve chosen are but a few of many that describe the similarities surrounding the long and parallel decline of physical and spiritual nutrition in this country. Here is what we might see regarding this matter if we compare the situation say, one hundred and fifty years ago, with that of today? We will first examine a few of the physical declinations.

- All food was “organic” and “natural”. Chemical fertilizer had not yet been invented, and wasn’t needed because the soils were fertile and in no need of additives. Organic farming, that is the rotation of crops and use of farm waste to recharge the soil, was the norm. All nutrients and major minerals as well as trace minerals needed to produce health- providing food were in the soil, until around the 1930’s. Unlike today, there were no insecticides, pesticides or herbicides or genetic modification applied to contaminate or adversely alter the food. It was as God had intended it to be, absent from man’s destructive manipulations.
- Meat and dairy products were healthy end products of natural grazing on nutrient rich grasses. The meat was absent the antibiotics, growth hormones and “foods” designed to fatten, but not at all to provide nourishment to the meat.
- Milk was natural and highly nutritious. There was no “lactose intolerance” because milk had not yet been de-natured through pasteurization. This kills all enzymes and beneficial bacteria while at the same time depleting it of much of its vitamin and mineral content. As a result, it needs to be fortified in order to

presumably, but not effectively, put back some of what should have never been removed. (Milk is fortified with D-2, a minimally assimilable version of the D vitamin) Calves die when given their own mother milk that has been pasteurized. Later homogenization completed the process of turning one of nature's best foods into a chemical that some cannot digest and everyone should avoid. I drove to Connecticut or upstate New York to buy raw milk, and even had it shipped from California before I discovered closer sources.

- Table Salt – was unrefined sea salt, or salt mined from prehistoric underground sources which contain over 80 trace minerals necessary for good health. Today it is pure industrial grade sodium chloride having been stripped of all of the needed minerals, and instead, contaminated with small amounts of chemicals that preserve color and keep it from absorbing moisture so that it will pour more easily. It is now a harmful chemical to be avoided regardless of any blood pressure issues. Yet it is an almost unavoidable major component in most prepared foods because it is cheaper, and often more chemically compatible with other “food additives.” This chemical is used extensively for taste enhancement and to increase shelf life for the benefit of the “food” producers. After this chemical became widely used, so did the proliferation of goiters. This serious enlargement of the thyroid gland was determined to be due to a severe iodine deficiency. This, of course was the result of having denatured salt so that it contained no iodine, or any other of the beneficial minerals. This problem was “fixed” by adding iodine to the chemical salt. So now we have “iodized salt” with perhaps just enough to prevent goiters, but not nearly enough to promote good health.
- Flour – was made of whole wheat and contained all the nutrients with which God had blessed it as a major staple food. Today, most flour is bleached and stripped of all essential nutrients, rendering it almost pure carbohydrate. Token synthetic “enrichments” have been added but it remains basically of little value as a nutrient. This denaturizing of a wonderful food seems to have been done in order to render it more versatile for baking as well as for taste, texture shelf life and

- cosmetic reasons. These “benefits” have cursed man with another intolerance, called gluten intolerance.
- Rice – is another nutritious food stripped of its nutritional values for some of the same reasons cited above for flour, making it also not much more than pure empty calories.
  - Sugar – I’ve read that a century ago, sugar consumption in this country was very small, perhaps as little as ten pounds per person per year, while now it is about equivalent to the average person’s weight, of about 150 to 170 pounds or more per person per year. Some researchers have found disturbing parallels between increased sugar consumption and the growth of a number of very serious degenerative diseases. When one understands what sugar does to the body, it would be difficult to conclude that the two statistics are not intimately related. It should be noted that all of the so-called sugar substitutes used extensively today are even more dangerous to physical health.

There are many more examples of what has been done to human health due to “advancements” in civilization, but the above should be sufficient to make the point and establish the physical side of the physical-spiritual parallels of nutritional, degeneration and pollution.

Now let us see if we can identify the similarities in the decline of available spiritual nutrition during this same period.

- In those earlier days, biblical literacy was very wide spread as it had been since before the founding of the Republic. This was as close to a genuine Christian country as had ever existed, with a large majority of Bible-understanding, Bible-believing people. Of course, there were many non-believers, pseudo-Christian religions, false teachers, and cults, as well as other non-Christian religions as have always existed. Although there is no direct connection; I believe that one could draw a reasonable analogy between sugar consumption then and now, with the ratio of non-Christian to Christian population then and now. That parallel need

- not stop there, but could also apply to diminished spiritual health as a deviation from biblical Christianity that has continued to grow in the “Christian” churches.
- Compare the stripping of wheat and rice of nearly all of its nutrients with the stripping away, or should we call it, avoidance of many essential scriptural verses, especially those that tread on political correctness, or anyone’s tender sensibilities. Verses that impose constraints, require change in lifestyle, demand obedience, or in any way suggest repentance, or accountability, or unselfish love, are scrupulously avoided, from many pulpit messages either because they are not believed, or out of fear of emptying pews. With these stripped away, and without repeated strong affirmations of the Gospel and other nutrition-rich doctrines and verses offered by the “whole-grained” Word of God, the spiritual health of many has been lost.
  - Sweet sugar-coated sermons are in vogue today as never before. In these earlier days past, when sugar was minimally consumed, there weren’t many sweet nutritionless sermons heard either. Sermons were not merely comfort foods but real food that expounded the truth of the Gospel, the call to repentance, and to obedience. They were “meat, potato and vegetable” sermons, from the whole food Word of God that really nourished the needy souls, and drew them nowhere else but to the saving faith. I’m reminded here of Revelation 10:10 where John is given a little book and told to eat it, not literally, but to read it and fully assimilate it. As he did, it was sweet as honey in his mouth, but in the belly it was bitter. The very perceptive John may have first enjoyed perhaps the sweet thoughts of Jesus’ imminent return to rule on earth. These may have turned bitter as the realization of the ensuing sheep and goat judgment, and its resulting condemnation of so many souls. Sweet sermons “taste” good but in the belly where digestion takes place as a prelude to the separating out and assimilation of nutrients, the non-food can become quite bitter and toxic, even if it doesn’t produce noticeable symptoms. Sweet sounding sermons pleasant to the ears, are often absent of spiritual nutrients as are sugar candies to the flesh. Of course, artificial sweetener can be likened to false teaching, both having even more toxic effects respectively, on body and soul.

Are these simplified similarities between the physical and spiritual contrived, or merely coincidental? I suspect that a more through examination of the characteristics and history of these and others banes to physical well being would reveal even a far more persuasive case regarding their relationship to the end-times deceptions, apostate teaching and other spiritual deprecations spoken of in Scripture.

Just what is spiritually nourishing food, and why is it that it can be so difficult to differentiate from junk food? The why part of this question is easy to answer, but not necessarily so easy to really appreciate or to remedy. The answer is simply biblical ignorance. The physical food analogy fits here very well. Do you know what you are eating in terms of its toxicity as well as its nutritional value? With prepared foods, do you read the labels before you buy in order to see what they contain? Do you understand from the label what is beneficial and what is not, what is food and what is not, what nourishes and what slowly poisons? Let us look at high fructose corn syrup HFCS as an example of how one can be easily and tragically misled. All sugar can cause health problems, but HFCS is even more dangerous as are also most artificial sweeteners. High fructose sounds good! It has the image of being good because nearly all fruits and berries taste sweet because there fructose content. However, HFCS is made through the extraction and processing of corn making it a far different sweetener.

We all know that fructose is the kind of sugar that is in fruit so even though it is sugar, it must be better than regular sugar, right? WRONG!!! High fructose corn syrup is a highly refined and very cheap chemical, twice as sweet as regular sugar, and is, of course derived from corn. Many ailments such as bowel disease, heart problems, diabetes, and cancer have been closely associated with this particular toxic substance. Being cheaper than sugar is the main reason that HFCC is so widely used in most prepared foods. Technically, it can be called “fructose” because of its similar molecular structure, but it’s far, far from being the essence of fruit. Aren’t many churches that call themselves “Christian” also far, far from containing the essence of the real Jesus? Hasn’t the proliferation of non-saving false Jesuses been as effective in disenfranchising souls from



eternal life, as has the increased use of HFCS and other toxic “foods” been to plaguing the physical body causing sickness and earlier death?

When we read the label on a food package can we even pronounce the names of the ingredients, much less know what they are, or whether or not they are harmful? Did you know for instance, that what the label calls “natural flavors” almost always include MSG a very harmful food additive? Is that sermon we so appreciate and that seemed to strike directly at some struggles we were dealing with, a genuine spirit-directed message? Or is it simply a worldly message hardly distinguishable from one out of “Psychology Today” magazine, although deceptively flavored with a few innocuous Bible verses? Are we knowledgeable enough of Scripture to know the difference? These are not rhetorical or academic questions.

In their respective categories, a true well informed answer to each is vital, if physical and spiritual health is to be provided and maintained. Ignorance is neither bliss nor excusable. Knowledge of truth is readily available to correctly answer all of these questions. Acquiring and living by truth is essential if one is to live in good health physically, and to own that promise of eternal spiritual life with our Savior. If we will but exchange some of our wasteful amusement time for a time of more praying and learning about these matters, we will be amazed at how appreciating and rewarding to our bodies and our souls their effect will become.

Lastly, in answer to the question, “what is spiritual nourishment”, I offer the following. All spiritual nourishment comes from the Triune Godhead and is given to us through His inerrant Word because He is the Author of every word. Absent the digestive and assimilating power provided by the Holy Spirit as He interprets the Word for all who earnestly seek it, the reading of Scripture is as nutritionally useless as a bubble of air passing through the digestive system. In my opinion, God’s Word has been best translated in the King James Version of the Holy Bible because it is a word-for-word translation of the best of the best manuscripts. Although there are a number of confusing and sometimes misleading translational difficulties in all versions, in the 500 year history

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of the KJV these have become well known and have been reconciled by many competent faithful expositors. The Holy Spirit will provide any prayerful, sincere, dedicated and persevering soul seeking truth, with all the necessary nourishment right out of God's inerrant Word. It tastes good too, both in the mouth and stomach! Try it you'll like it!!

P.S. If the above regarding food seems far-fetched, overstated or unbelievable, please consider this. In 1994, I was told that I had 6 months to a year at most to live due to an untreatable, metastasized terminal cancer. Eighteen months later, through proper nutrition and natural, so-called alternative therapies, I was completely cancer free and have continued to be so for the last 20+ years. Our Lord led me back to health, and has continued to lead me to intensely study health enhancing things, and to apply them to my daily life. I share with others what I have learned whenever I can. What I have here written regarding nutrition is only a tiny bit of the available information about which conventional sources are ignorant, or are reluctant to discuss. Very little, if any of this information can be found in the curriculum of most schools that teach about nutrition. Just remember, sickness is a big, and very lucrative business. As they, say just follow the money, if you can, and you'll discover why the USA spends the most on "health" care and yet has the sickest population.