

## **The Walk – Part Two**

### **CHANGE YOUR DIET**

“YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT”

*What goes into our bodies becomes a part of us, in a way. If it's good stuff, we derive nourishment and strength from it. If it isn't good, we may become ill. But can the intake of food make us righteous or even defile us?*

What our bodies “feed on” is important to many of us, albeit for different reasons. The popular interest in food seems to be an all consuming passion these days, and there is no end to discussions of where to go for the best restaurant, market, etc., as well as the type of cuisines that may be enjoyed.

Some people obsess (and perhaps rightfully so) over their daily intake of food; that is, their diet (the “di” part means day). They may observe special rules for the preparation and eating of food for a variety of reasons. In scripture, we find that the Jews have rules and traditions regarding food. One interesting example appears in Matthew 15:2, where Jesus was rebuked by the Pharisees and teachers of the law for not having His disciples wash their hands before they ate! He responded with a parable denoting the Pharisees as blind guides. Asked by the disciples to explain further, He said that it isn't what enters the mouth that defiles a man, but that which comes out of the mouth, for that comes from the heart:

“Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them. “Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean'. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man 'unclean'; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him 'unclean'.” MT 15:16-20. In verse 8, He refers to Isaiah's prophesy, “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but **rules taught by men.**”

Is what comes out of our mouths important? Jesus said, “But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” MT 12:36-37

Clearly, the Christian should pay careful attention to the state of his heart, for this is the very source of our thoughts, words and, as we saw in the previous message on “Motivation”, our deeds as well.

The book of James (3:8) says “but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” How then, are we to get control of our hearts and consequently our tongues?

The quick answer is to simply let Jesus have control of our hearts and ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit. But how is that kind of change accomplished? Especially if our hearts

are already full of the world's worthless treasures and the many spirits that go with them.

*What the world wants to feed us*

How much room you have for Jesus? That is, what objects, activities and interests are you pursuing for self, that take up your time and fill your heart; that is to say what are the loves of your life?

Are you joining the world in what it goes after for its satisfaction? Today, many seemingly innocent things captivate the human psyche: shopping, eating, sports, politics, Hollywood entertainment, beer varieties, the fastest boat or car, etc. These pursuits take up our time and fill us for a little while; and they motivate us with all kinds of spirits, but are not truly fulfilling; they are subtle addictions which we often cannot let go of and so hunger to return to them for more pleasure. The politically correct agenda so prominent today also beckons people to come and partake of “the spirit of the age”; and widespread are the occult disciplines, such as tarot cards, astrology and witchcraft where people look for answers. At the extreme, some people are ravenous for certain secret pursuits that are not fit to be discussed. (“For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.” Ep 5:12) The “born again” reader will certainly understand and recognize the more serious addictions which are prevalent in today's world that cause great suffering, for they are nothing new.

*“Rules taught by men”*

People also look for answers in various religions or cults, often seeking those with tenets and rituals that match their

lifestyles and values. Tozer speaks of the tendency of some churches to preach a “soft god” rather than a holy and righteous one. When this occurs people need not change their lives at all; they remain unfed in the core of their being even though they have acquired great knowledge and have disciplined themselves to be better than they ever were before, (or so they think). You should not deceive yourself in this assessment, for no amount of “work” will make you fit for His kingdom.

The Christian, who through God's grace has been led to the knowledge of His Son Jesus as their personal Saviour, rejoices to think of their salvation from the **penalty of sin** through His shed blood on the Cross at Calvary.

Yet, these chosen ones of God need to continue exercising throughout life their right to become His children (Jn 1:12); taking up their own cross and following Jesus so closely that they are one with Him and thereby experience freedom from the **power of sin** that He offers, and the ensuing life changes that they so desperately desire.

The bottom line is this: a change may sound good to you, but you can't do it if you're full up and a 'slave to sin'. Sin is whatever you love that is not of God and removes Him as your first love. Addiction to anything not of God means that we are slaves to it and therefore serve another master. What are you “chewing on” now that has captured you?

If you are truly sated to a point of disgust with what the world has to offer and wish to be weaned from it, you need Jesus; for as there is none other who will save you from the

wages of sin, there is none other who will see you through the lifelong walk of sanctification and ensure the change essential for your continued growth into His child and heir. What other person do you know of who is pure, honest and unsullied by the world whom you would trust because they cared enough to die for you? No man can do it (Is 49:7-9).

*Changing your Diet to the "Bread of Life"*

In Romans 12, the apostle Paul says that our spiritual act of worship consists of offering our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. He continues by saying "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind".

True seekers will soon realize that we are talking about a spiritual change which will require far more consideration than what we are going to eat at the dinner table. Even so, we should mention that our loving God knows us very well and understands that in the face of such a radical shift of focus, we might start to worry about a lack of earthly food and so gives us this assurance found in Mt 6:25, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about our life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" 26 "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

*Life is more than food*

"It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (MT 4:4 and see DT 8:3 also)

*The prophets and others spoke of this truth*

From Jeremiah 15:16 - "When your words were found, I did eat them."

From Isaiah 55:2 - "Why spend money on what is not bread and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me and eat what is good and your soul will delight in the richest of fare"

From Psalm 119 - "The word of the Lord is eternal (v89) - sweeter than honey to my mouth (v103) - a lamp to my feet.

And Jesus himself, taught us to pray "Give us our daily bread."

*Jesus is The Bread of Life*

Jesus said "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John 6:51

Dear reader, are you concerned with this statement? The Jews certainly were and asked "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (verse 52)

And Jesus continued:

"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him." John 6:56

John 6:57 "Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will

live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven.”

This idea was difficult, even for the disciples for they said in verse 60, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

Aware of their questions, Jesus gave further explanation in John 6:63 and said “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing, The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life”

What did Jesus mean by this? One indication can be found in John 17:22-23, where Jesus' prayer reflects a desire for the closest of relationships, “22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them, even as you have loved me.”

### *Becoming One with Jesus*

Consider what Jesus said: His words are spirit and life – the flesh counts for nothing (nor does the food that we eat). Think of our manner of earthly living; do we eat once and then go on our way, never to eat again? If the spirit is more important than the flesh, we should now have some idea of what we must be about and how often this spiritual activity should fit into our daily life.

### *One thing*

Luke 10:38-42, tells of Jesus' visit to the home of the sisters Martha and Mary. After His arrival, Mary promptly sat at Jesus' feet to listen to Him, while Martha worked on the

preparations by herself. Upset by this, she asked Jesus if he cared that Mary was not helping her, even to the point of asking Him to “Tell her to help me!” 41 “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken from her.”.

*All Jesus, all the time*

Christian, we should all be as Paul in Philippians 1:6, who was confidently stated that “...he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Nevertheless, an effort is needed on our part to participate in God's sanctifying work to the degree that we must truly desire to seek His face and learn His will for our daily walk.

Two key areas are worth highlighting: first; continually repent and pray for God's help in removing from your heart the love you have for the worlds' worthless “treasures” and second; be careful to abide in His Word for spiritual nourishment as you ask Him to fill your heart with His love in order that you truly and completely change into His child and worship Him as you ought.

With regards to the first effort: through every moment of the day, seek to listen as you are apprised of your sins by the Holy Spirit; be quick to take the necessary action of repentance which is suitable for each sin.

With regards to the second effort: cultivate daily habits that keep you close to His Word by setting aside times to read the



Bible, pray and worship. As the physical body requires daily nourishment, so our soul needs to be fortified by the Word for the spiritual battles we encounter in this world. Not the least of which, is the battle we all have with SELF.

Below is a limited list of readings that may be helpful as you change your diet:

*Make room for Him – overcome sin -*

1. Test the spirits (both within and without) -  
1<sup>st</sup> Jn 4:1, and master sin - Ge 4:7
2. Stay alert, be aware - 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9
3. Have no fellowship with works of darkness -  
2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.” Psalm 34:8

*Look to Jesus always -*

1. Read and study the Bible daily – praying for insight when your understanding fails you.
2. Inquire of God – Proverbs 16:1-3
3. Listen to the Holy Spirit – Romans 8,  
1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:19a
4. Pray without ceasing – Philippians 4:4-8
5. Meditate on all the things He gives you –  
Psalm 119 – Note that this type of meditation is a “chewing over” or thoughtful recollection of recent revelations, trials, occurrences, etc., experience by the believer; not to be confused with the mindlessness associated with worldly practices.