

R.T. Kendall: 'Knowing John Paul Jackson Was a Privilege'

I have think of the irony. I never thought I would speak at John Paul Jackson's memorial service. I always thought it would the other way around considering I will be 80 in a few months; he was only 64.

In January 1991, my wife, Louise, and I flew to Anaheim, California, courtesy of John Wimber. I met Mike Bickle the next day and he was keen to have me meet someone. I sat in a room that looked like a doctor's office. In no time my name was called. I was introduced to John Paul Jackson by Mike, although he did not tell John Paul my name or anything about me.

For the next several minutes John Paul told me things about my life that seemed to me to be supernaturally revealed to him. He then prophesied a number of things; some have come to pass, some have not. Those which have come to pass include three books he said I would write and especially that I would have influence one day in South Africa.

When it was all over, as I was leaving I turned to him and said, "Young man, if what you say is true the world will know about it; if what you say is false, the world will know about it." I forgot I said that. John Paul repeated this several times. He said it scared him nearly to death.

Mike Bickle brought John Paul to see me in my vestry at Westminster Chapel in 1993. It was then John Paul gave more prophecies, especially one about our son T. R.—an almost incredible word that came true with amazing accuracy in 1995. The next time I saw John Paul was in September 2001, a couple weeks after 9/11. He then gave me the most astonishing and thrilling prophecy I have ever received.

However, this one has not been fulfilled. A couple years later I preached with him for CLAN in Scotland and did it two years in a row. Subsequently, I became a member of his board of directors. I introduced him to bonefishing in Bimini, Bahamas.

I had hoped we would have a return trip to Bimini this year. Most of all, for some reason I thought that he and I would have some kind of ministry together. We had preached together a few times, were on TV together, did some videos, but most recently a planned trip to India had to be canceled and also one to Hong Kong. So the thought of further ministry with him is now over. I am having to come to terms with life without John Paul.

I spent about 30 minutes making a video for use at his memorial service. Because of time it was edited down to seven or eight minutes. One of the things left out (they had to edit it because of time for other speakers) was John Paul's emphasis on "character is more important than gifting." One would have thought this goes without saying, but, sadly, there were a surprising number of Charismatic leaders who opposed this teaching. John Paul's view regarding character over gifting was one of the main things that made me feel comfortable about him. Holiness is more important than seeing miracles.

But now he is gone. The Lord snatched him away. Yes. It was the Lord. If you think it was a victory for Satan, shame on you! God is bigger than the devil. Why God was pleased to take John Paul is unprofitable speculation. But what is *not* speculation is God's will to do this.

We may never know why. It is none of our business. What *is* our business is to focus on God and trust in His faithfulness and sovereignty. My heart goes out to Diane his wife and their two sons—also those connected to Streams Ministries whose future may be in doubt. But God will look after each of them, be sure of that.

I will miss him. I am pretty sure I will miss him more than almost anyone who reads these lines. I shall seek the face of God more earnestly than ever—not to find out why God took John Paul but what we are to do in days ahead. I have only a vague idea. It will be interesting for me to see if John Paul's most daring words concerning my own future will come true. Don't ask me what they are. I will only say that if they are true, (1) I will be around a while longer and (2) God has plenty for me to do.

I must say that one of the most helpful prophetic words he gave me was some 10 years ago when we lived in Key Largo, Florida. Out of the blue he said: "R. T., you will live to a ripe old age. But if you don't get in shape physically you won't be around to enjoy it" (or words to that effect). I took them seriously. These words changed my life.

Steve Strang gave me exercises which I do regularly to this day. T. R. bought me a special book on dieting. I have no doubt that I would not have come through open heart surgery so brilliantly seven years ago—or be able to travel the world as I do—had not John Paul have given me those unexpected words. And yet I still thought I would die first. I think he did too. I think he was counting on a miracle to raise him up right to his death.

So John Paul was not right about everything. After all, Paul said, "We know in part and we prophesy in part" (1). Also, we prophesy "*in proportion* to our faith" (). And since nobody has a perfect faith except Jesus (John 4:34), none of us of us should expect to be infallible in our understanding of God's word or in our application of it. That is enough to humble us. None of us is perfect.

Many of us have a lot of thinking to do. I know I do. I don't think we should be hasty in trying to figure things out. I do suspect that there needs to be a sea change or paradigm shift in much of our thinking about the prophetic realm. For my

part, I am a “word” man. I don’t claim to have a prophetic gift. I only want to know what *God* wants me to know—nothing more.

One last thing (for now). I myself have made a big deal about prophetic people not saying “the Lord told me” when they utter their words. The habit of saying “the Lord told me” is the hardest to break for people like this. But John Paul not only agreed with me but asked me to share this perspective at his last Convergence Conference with 70 or 80 prophetic people present. I was very forthright with them—fully expecting them to be against me. If they were, they didn’t show it. In fact, all I talked with agreed with me. Whether they will be able to put into practice what I talked about—not saying “the Lord told me”—remains to be seen. It is my view that you and I should not say “the Lord told me this or that”; it is transgressing the Third Commandment not to take the Name of the Lord in vain or misuse His Name (; Matt.5:33-37).

To make the audacious claim “the Lord told me” means that God swore an oath to you which in turn means you can’t get it wrong. But thousands do get it wrong, which goes to show the Lord *didn’t* tell them after all. I fear that our desire to say “the Lord told me” is not out of the wish to give Him glory but to make ourselves more credible—which is not right to do.

I thank God for John Paul. It was a privilege to know him. Let us honor him but without esteeming him too much—or God will be displeased with us.

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10 Things Your Pastor Doesn't Like to Hear Right Before His Sermon

I've actually assembled more than 10 things church members have told pastors immediately after they preached. But these are 10 responses where pastors have had the most visceral reactions.

1. "I am going to be late for lunch because you preached so long."
2. "You must not have had much time to prepare that sermon."
3. "My former pastor preached a much better sermon from that text."
4. "I wish {fill in the blank} would have heard that sermon."
5. "You act like you weren't feeling well while you preached."
6. "I'm sorry I fell asleep while you were preaching. Your voice just puts me to sleep."
7. "Your subject/verb agreement was incorrect three times in your sermon."
8. "I wish you wouldn't preach from the Old Testament."
9. "Let me tell you what you missed in your sermon."
10. "Are we ever going to be done with this sermon series?"

Pastors often take 10 to 20 hours to prepare a sermon. They pray for God to speak through them. They preach with

conviction and fervency. And then they hear one of these sentences.

These 10 responses are close approximations of what pastors have actually told me. I am sure there are many more. Let us hear what they are.

Thom S. Rainer *is the president of LifeWay Christian Resources. For the original article, visit .*

5 Realizations That Can Help You Find Inner Peace

If advice on finding inner peace is what a man is seeking, he will find no shortage of it with just the slightest research. The world will count on us believing that the more we get, the happier we will be.

But where does that leave us? It leaves most men stressed out and trying to live up to expectations that aren't attainable. Many men are as riddled with anxiety as women; they just hide it in different ways.

Peace is acquired from the action of giving. This is not something we are taught as men. It's something we learn only from experience. We are created to help and protect one another.

Peace is derived from helping a person up with a hand and a smile, not kicking him back down. This applies to how we lead our families and participate in our marriages. In this article, we will take a look at how to truly become at peace. Here are five realizations that can help you find inner peace:

1. Assets do not equal worth. Far too many men were taught the mindset that the more a man acquires the more his personal value increases. It's a poison that too many have been tricked into drinking. Needing the bigger house, the better car, and the latest and greatest of everything, our self-worth becomes tangled up with depreciating materials. Peace is found in giving, not getting.

2. Sexual conquest is not power. A man's natural sex drive is used against him by robbing him of both his money and his soul. It's not meant to be cynical to say that sex sells. It does. Big time. Sex is not about power, conquest or alpha male stuff. Sex is awesome because two souls committed to one another by marriage have merged as one in the most intimate act human beings are capable of. This key aspect of a man's inner peace can be gained through true intimacy with his wife and that's where our focus needs to be.

3. Envy is a personal wrecking ball. In the creative world of music and writing, I learned an important lesson long ago. It doesn't matter how good you think you are, somebody is always better. That applies across the board. We are to focus on being the best version of ourselves and not have one eye always on the other guy, envious of what he has. That transfers our energy and peace away. Reel it back in by practicing patience, contentment and seeking personal growth. You're amazing because you were created to be.

4. Be your own man. "Don't let other people decide who you are," said Bob Goff. That could possibly be the most important short sentence you'll ever read. For me, I spent half of my life, to this point, trying to live up to other's expectations, and I've spent the other half happy and thriving. You will never find inner peace being somebody you aren't. It's impossible.

5. Sincere prayer equals peace. Prayer is the most powerful tool we have at our disposal. It is essential, not only to our

inner peace but to our personal growth and joy, we have a sincere and meaningful prayer life. Prayer is the direct connection our soul has to its Creator. A man who will not bend his knee to the higher authority will never know peace. This is where faith becomes real and tangible. It's where we are molded.

Prayer will lead us where we are meant to be and that just so happens to be, where inner peace also resides. Never confuse inner peace with being comfortable. If we are where we are supposed to be, it will remain constant in us through all storms.

Sound Off: What are some ways you have learned to bring inner peace back into your life?

Huddle Up: Get together with your friends and discuss different ways possessions have owned you in life.

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Can This 'Golden' Herb Reverse the Symptoms of Depression?

Rhodiola rosea, also referred to as Golden Root, is an adaptogen of the herbal world. It is indigenous to Asian Arctic regions, European, and North American mountainous areas.

This flowering plant was once used by Scandinavian Vikings and Emperors of China. In the past it was well known for building strength, but today it is used to treat depression as well as assist people who wish to lose weight. Rhodiola provides numerous wonderful health benefits to boost positive well-being.

Lose Weight with Rhodiola

Obesity is now considered a global epidemic and statistics from WHO reports that it has more than doubled in the last 35 years. More than 1.9 billion adult individuals were diagnosed as overweight in 2014, and over 600 million of these adults were considered obese. Astonishingly, in 2013, 42 million children who were below age 5 were overweight and/or obese. It is believed that rhodiola can be an effective weapon in the battle against this dangerous epidemic.

An active property known as rosavin is found within rhodiola. This compound has shown an ability to assist the body in the fat burning process. Rosavin activates an important enzyme referred to as lipase. This enzyme effectively breaks down fat molecules. The Georgian State Hospital conducted a study in which rhodiola was used in conjunction with a low caloric diet to treat patients who were overweight. In comparison, those who received rhodiola lost 11 pounds more than those who only underwent caloric restrictions.

Rhodiola raises the amount of red blood cells in the body, which increase energy levels by fueling the body with increased ATP. ATP is an essential fuel for the cells of the body. Raised energy levels help you stay active and increase the likelihood that you will want to remain active. Physical activity is a key component in any weight loss regimen. As mentioned above, rhodiola is an adaptogen which regulates stress and reduces cortisol levels. Cortisol is believed to be a key factor in weight gain, most especially within the abdominal area.

Depression and Rhodiola

Rhodiola may also be used as an effective treatment for depression as well as improve overall brain function. The compounds found in rhodiola encourage brain receptors to be more sensitive to both serotonin and dopamine. These are neurotransmitters scientifically known to increase cognitive function. They also activate pleasure centers and produce feelings of well-being and contentment.

A government clinical trial conducted by the University of Pennsylvania researched the effectiveness of rhodiola rosea as a treatment for depression. The participants who received rhodiola showed marked improvement in their depression symptoms as well as emotional stability and insomnia over those who instead received a placebo. The participants who were not given rhodiola as treatment showed no such improvements.

Another clinical trial which consisted of 150 participants being treated with rhodiola for a 30-day period. Upon completion of this trial, full remission of depression symptoms was reported by 66 percent of the participants. Another added benefit of this type of treatment is the lack of serious side effects that are generally associated with the use of prescription grade anti-depressant pharmaceutical.

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For the original article, visit .

A Season of Spiritual Warfare: Jezebel's Witchcrafts Rising

When I wrote *The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel* in 2012, I got sick six separate times. I literally didn't completely heal from one infirmity before another one manifested—and I had several out-of-the-blue migraines in the middle of it all.

Given that I rarely get sick, eat organic foods, exercise at least five days a week, sleep plenty, drink lots of water, pray for divine health and otherwise lead a healthy lifestyle, it was abundantly clear that this spurt of various ailments was a spiritual attack. The enemy didn't want me exposing the works of Jezebel and released spiritual witchcraft against me.

The Bible talks about Jezebel and her witchcrafts in 2 Kings 9:22. I believe infirmities are part of Jezebel's witchcrafts. Witchcraft is a spiritual force that the enemy uses to attack us. I don't know if this qualifies as a "fiery arrow of the evil one" that Paul describes in Ephesians 6, but I do know that we're in a spiritual war and it heightens this time of year. The question is, why?

Why So Much Spiritual Warfare?

False Mary worship seems to empower the Queen of Heaven, also known as Jezebel. Some actually refer to Mary, the mother of Jesus, as the Queen of Heaven. Let me be clear: I have nothing against Catholics. This is not about a religion or a denomination. It's about spiritual practices in which *some* are engaging, perhaps unknowingly. This false Mary worship

magnifies another entity over Jesus—and opening the door for spiritual witchcraft.

During this time of Lent, year after year, I discern the rise of a Jezebel spirit. I get emails and Facebook messages from people all over the world crying out for help as they watch their health deteriorate, their relationships come under attack and various other circumstances rise up against them.

What's going on? When Mary is lifted up to a place where only Jesus belongs, it unleashes demonic activity in that territory. As demonic activity increases, people report feelings of oppression, fatigue, strong warfare against the mind that makes you feel like quitting and even physical manifestations for which doctors can't find a reason. In other words, all hell can break loose.

When witchcraft is particularly heavy in the spiritual climate, my eyes actually burn. Everything seems like a much bigger deal than it really is because witchcraft works to take your eyes off Jesus by magnifying the problem. The enemy can use people to release witchcraft against you through word curses, but this spiritual force seems to sometimes hang over your head like a dark cloud—unless you break it.

Battling Jezebel's Witchcrafts

When it comes to witchcraft, we have to withstand it. The Amplified Bible says to “be firm in faith [against his onset—rooted, established, strong, immovable, and determined]” (1 Pet. 5:9). It's easy enough to give in to witchcraft, especially if you don't know what is attacking you. So again, when you feel like giving up, when you feel tired for no reason, when you have strong confusion, when you are fighting an intense battle in your mind and when infirmities are manifesting, it could be witchcraft. Resist it at its onset. Cast it off. Submit yourself to God. “Resist the devil [stand firm against him], and he will flee from you” (James 4:7,

AMP).

Again, submit yourself to the lordship of Christ. Exalt His name. Thank Him for His blood. Rejoice in the Lord. Praise and worship carry breakthrough. That's often all it takes to change the spiritual climate in your home. And worship is where we should start because He is worthy of our adoration.

If worship doesn't break the witchcraft, take authority over it in the name above all names. Witchcraft has to bow at the name of Jesus. But make sure you don't have any common ground with the enemy. Repent for any rebellion in your heart, and surrender your will anew to God. Remember, we are more than conquerors in Christ, and no weapon formed against us can prosper—not even witchcraft. Our job is to be spiritually discerning enough to catch the devil at his onset, resist him, rebuke him and praise God for the victory. Amen.

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3 Ways to Keep Your Marriage

Strong After the Wedding

After months of preparation the wedding finally arrives. You say “I Do” to your beautiful and wonderful wife and take off into the adventures of married life.

As I wrote that first paragraph above, I started to question the word “preparation.”

The word preparation typically means the coordination of wedding events, clothing, food and so on. It includes all of the stress to make sure everything goes as perfect as possible. It is your wedding day after all.

But what about preparation in terms of how to lead your wife after the big day? How are you going to handle communication issues? How will you figure out how to deal with old relationships of the opposite sex? How will you lead your wife spiritually? I struggled with these areas and want to share some of my story.

Do you remember your first job? Do you recall the excitement, but also the nervous feeling deep within your stomach? Do you remember not knowing how to do anything or not knowing anyone? This is kind of like the beginning of marriage. Schooling might have helped prepare you for that first job, but you still don’t know what to expect and you still have a lot to learn. It’s all part of the process right?

If that’s the case, why wouldn’t we understand marriage to be a process? It is a time of new beginnings, but also a time of adjusting to new surroundings and people (your wife). You’ve watched relationships over the years, most likely including your parents or a couple very close to you. You’ve seen relationships and how they interact on television and movies. How hard could it be?

Well, depending on your approach and leadership, it could be

very hard or fairly easy.

For myself, it was hard—surprisingly hard. I use the word surprisingly because I honestly thought getting married and moving in with my girlfriend of seven years would be easy. It was what we had wanted for years.

We were trying to finish college and plan for our wedding. We attended a few sessions of marriage counseling, but I honestly thought I had it all figured out, so I really didn't pay attention too hard. This goes back to that learning and growing in your new or first job, but I had no idea the same principles applied to marriage.

The wedding takes place and it's wonderful. The honeymoon takes place and our relationship is roaring with intense love and desire. A year goes by and we started to experience some issues. Another year goes by and we started to drift further apart.

As we approached the third year, we fought often and were unhappy. We couldn't communicate between ourselves, we couldn't come to tell other people about our issues and God was far from our priorities. We had no idea what we were doing and our relationship was fading fast.

As most couples do these days during hard times, we considered divorce.

As we went through that hard time though, I really started to think about marriage and our potential divorce. I had loved this woman for years and now I want to be separated from her? We had done everything to keep our marriage strong, right? We were prepared to get married, right? Well, we found out we were wrong. Way wrong, and we started to make repairs.

Since we didn't properly prepare for marriage before we got married, here are some changes we made and some ideas for you to consider. If you fall into the same category of not really

knowing what marriage is or didn't properly prepare either, I suggest you consider the following:

Jesus at the Center Personally

If you're preparing for marriage, just recently got married or are in troubled times and need an answer, then you need to review your heart thoroughly. You need to honestly ask yourself if Jesus is at the center of your life personally. Do you spend time with God alone? Do you work to improve your walk with Christ daily?

It is essential to have Jesus at the center of your personal life before you invite your wife into your life.

Jesus at the Center of Your Marriage

Once Jesus is firmly planted at the center of your personal lives, He can then easily be centered in your marriage. Among all of the chaos in your marriage and lives, Jesus needs to always be a top priority. As the husband, you can be an effective leader by making sure this happens and is maintained. If Sunday is coming, you should be making the call to attend church or a class at church. If there is a need or not, you should be pursuing a time of prayer with your wife. Don't sit back and wait for her, take the lead and do it now!

It is essential to have Jesus at the center of your marriage in order for it to grow and thrive physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Yearly Training

Before I was married and for a couple years afterwards, I would have never thought of attending a marriage class or conference. I probably would of have thought the idea was crazy. But again, going back to your first or new job, what is the one thing you had to keep engaging in? Training. Training is key to learning a new job and all of its tasks and it's

also essential for maintaining a great marriage. Every young couple needs to wake up, get humble and get trained. Conferences and classes have made huge differences in our marriage. We now have a rule that we attend at least one marriage training event every year.

It is essential to have continued training in your marriage in order to maintain it and allow it to grow.

I could go on and add more items, such as communication, sex and intimacy. But I am interested in hearing your thoughts on effective leadership in your marriage.

What kind of training did you receive before marriage and how did it help or not help you? What advice would you add to this list for newly married couples?

Manturity is a blog built on establishing spiritual maturity in today's man. The goal is to assist men in building better marriages and help them grow in maturity and explore different aspects of manhood. features new weekly blog posts, daily social-media updates and a powerful resources page. Stay up to date with the Manturity blog communities on Facebook and Twitter.

For the original article, visit .

How Do We Enjoy the Sweet Life Without Poisoning Ourselves?

Much has been written lately about the dangers of sugar substitutes. Countless studies have proven that these

seemingly sweet, harmless, figure-friendly substances are actually snarling wolves in fluffy white sheep's clothing.

Take a look at just *a few* of the adverse effects of one of the most popular artificial sweeteners on the market today, Splenda, also known as Sucralose:

- It tricks your taste buds. Splenda is 600 times sweeter than table sugar. Evidence suggests that exposing your taste buds to these high-intensity sweeteners makes them less receptive to natural sources of sweetness, such as fruit. When your taste buds become dulled to the extreme sweetness, you'll likely find yourself seeking out sweeter and sweeter foods.
- They make you overeat. Artificially sweetened foods could trick you into overeating because of the way they feel in your mouth. High-fat, high-sugar foods taste both sweet and dense, signaling to your brain that they're high in calories. But artificially sweetened foods often have a thinner consistency and texture than sugar-sweetened foods and thus, aren't as satisfying, which can quickly lead us to binge.
- The website lists a variety of consumer complaints from Splenda consumption, such as: blurred vision, gastrointestinal problems, migraines, seizures, dizziness, allergic reactions, blood sugar increases, weight gain and more.

With facts such as those in mind—as well as personal experience!—I always tell my clients to check their food labels and pass up anything that contains: Aspartame, Acesulfame Potassium (K), Saccharin, Sucralose, Equal, NutraSweet, or Splenda (Sucralose). To save yourself some time, you can probably assume that any product that claims to be “low-calorie,” “sugar-free” or “diet” includes one or more of these harmful additives.

So now for the question of the day: How do we enjoy the sweet

life without poisoning ourselves?

First, a long answer (but bear with me, this is educational!): While healthier sugar substitutes do exist, such as Xylitol and Stevia, they are still heavily processed. Coca-Cola's brand, Truvia, in fact, extracts its stevia via (I had to say "via" twice!) a patented 40-step process! Many times, "natural flavors" are included in these "natural" products, which, according to former FDA head David Kessler, are a *"food carnival" in your mouth*. And if you didn't know, carnivals can be creepy ...

"Natural and artificial flavors play an interesting role in food. They're essentially providing the taste and often they're added to make the food more appealing, or to potentially replace something that's lost through processing, storage or in some cases even from pasteurizing," said David Andrews, senior scientist at the Environmental Working Group, in an interview with CNN.

According to the CNN article, added flavoring, both natural and artificial, could contain anywhere from 50 to 100 ingredients. And like Splenda, they're not as innocent as you'd like them to be!

"The mixture will often have some solvent and preservatives – and that makes up 80 to 90 percent of the volume [of the flavoring]. In the end product, it's a small amount, but it still has artificial ingredients," Andrews says.

"Ultimately," wrote the article's author, "the difference between natural and artificial flavors often comes down to miniscule distinctions."

But what about agave nectar? That's healthy, right? Not so fast. While it used to be quite popular, agave nectar has been proven to be highly refined and high in fructose. You can learn more about it [here](#).

Okay, now time for the short answer to relieve our, to quote Juliet, *"sweet sorrow"*

My favorite sweetener is one the Bible mentions dozens of times, six times alone in Proverbs, a book of wisdom penned by the wisest man on earth!

"My child, eat honey, for it is good, and the honeycomb is sweet to the taste" (Prov. 24:13).

Honey—*raw* honey, I should emphasize—boasts a plethora of health benefits; its heavenly taste is just the icing on an already-delectable cake! Check out these facts:

- Anti-Bacterial, Anti-Viral, Anti-Fungal (can even be used topically to treat infection)
- Treats coughs/upper respiratory infections
- May promote better blood sugar control
- Experimental evidence indicates that consumption of honey may improve blood sugar control and insulin sensitivity compared to other sweeteners.
- Contains antioxidants
- Improves HDL cholesterol
- Boosts immunity
- Pre-digests starches for you. If you leave your raw honey on bread for 15 minutes, the amylase enzyme begins to break down the complex sugars/starches in the bread, making it ultimately easier to digest for you.
- Pure honey is a healthier choice in diabetic diet than table sugar and any other non-nutritive sweetener, such as Splenda, saccharin, and aspartame.[3]
- Honey is now recommended to take before bed to support a healthy night's sleep.

Here are a few simple and delicious ways to enjoy honey:

- Mix it into your oatmeal or tea in the morning.
- Add it to smoothies or protein shakes.
- Spread it on a piece of toast (Ezekiel bread is my

favorite!)

- Mix it into your yogurt, or top off your own homemade parfait with it!
- Use it as a dip for fresh fruit.
- Make a vinaigrette dressing with it: 1 tsp. raw honey, 1 tsp. organic soy sauce (or coconut aminos), 1/3 cup olive oil, 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- Make honey lemonade: Blend 1 cup raw honey with 1 cup lemon juice. Add 6 cups of cold, filtered water.

It would behoove us to be reminded of this proverb of King Solomon's on honey, lest we follow in the paw-steps of Winnie the Pooh and get our heads stuck in a honey pot:

"Have you found honey? Eat only as much as is sufficient for you, lest you be filled with it and vomit it" (Prov. 25:16).

Like many things in life, moderation is key when it comes to enjoying honey. The recommended serving size for honey is one tablespoon, and exceeding 10 servings a day is highly discouraged. An excessive intake of honey can cause gastric problems, such as stomach cramps, bloating and diarrhea. If you continue to over-indulge on honey, long-term gastrointestinal problems could occur, impeding the absorption of nutrients. Due to honey's high acidity, too much of it can erode tooth enamel, as well as the lining of your esophagus, stomach and intestines, which can then lead to acid reflux. (I hope Pooh was spared from these maladies!)

I pray this article has been informative and helped you to see both artificial sweeteners and raw honey in a new light! And when it comes to future questions you may have about other new "Health" or otherwise "revolutionary" foods on the market, consider going to the Word of God for guidance before you buy into them. If the Lord created it and His servants, like Solomon, spoke well of it, then it follows that it's advantageous for us to consume. Conversely, if man made it and is trying to profit from it whilst concealing unflattering

research about it, then chances are good it's something we should steer clear of.

"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally and without criticism, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).

For the original article, visit .

Is Your Doctor Overdosing You on Blood Pressure Drugs?

For years we've been told that high blood pressure is the "silent killer" and that too many people put their lives in danger by not taking medications to control it.

Now, a new study indicates that the opposite problem is prevalent: Blood pressure often is *overtreated*, and it increases patients' risk of kidney failure and death.

Researchers at Kaiser Permanente Southern California studied the records of almost 400,000 people with high blood pressure who were being treated with medication.

They found that patients whose readings were between 130/60 and 139/79—a range doctors consider "prehypertension"—had the lowest kidney failure rates. Patients with readings considered ideal by experts—below 120/80—were at substantially increased risk.

"Many studies of people with high blood pressure have shown that bringing extremely high blood pressure with the top number ranging from 190 to 200, down to readings of about 150 show resounding improvements in the risk for strokes, kidney

failure and heart attack,” said study leader nephrologist and hypertension expert John J. Sim, M.D.

“So, we made the assumption that if we further lowered it, even to levels under 120, that would be even better,” he told *Newsmax Health*. “The truth is there are no studies that have demonstrated that.”

Doctors often prescribe drugs with the goal of bringing systolic blood pressure readings (the top number) down to the 120 range and even below. This may be a fatal mistake.

In Dr. Sim’s study, patients whose top (systolic) readings dropped into the 120 to 129 range were at a 12 percent increased risk of death or kidney failure, but those whose readings fell to 110 to 119 were 81 percent more likely to die or suffer kidney failure.

Dr. Sim emphasizes that this does not apply to people whose blood pressure is naturally low—only those whose hypertension is brought down with drugs.

He also emphasizes that it is essential to treat those who have extremely high blood pressure. “We don’t want people to get the wrong idea that treating those with high blood pressure is wrong—it saves lives,” says Dr. Sim. “But there is definitely a group that’s being overtreated.”

Symptoms of low blood pressure include dizziness, weakness and lightheadedness, which can be especially dangerous in the elderly, who are more at risk for falls and fractures.

If you are being treated for high blood pressure and you are consistently getting readings under 120, Dr. Sim suggests having a talk with your doctor to see if you can reduce your medication dosage, or even eliminate it.

“The most important thing is to get blood pressure under control, but we need to be reasonable with our approach,” said

Dr. Sim. “There’s enough evidence to show that if you have high blood pressure and we use medication to bring it to under 150, there’s a benefit.

“But we also are finding that if you bring blood pressure too low, not only is there no additional benefit, there also are adverse outcomes such as kidney failure, falls, high potassium, and death.”

For the original article, visit .

Eating Out Can Be Both Delicious and Healthy

The National Restaurant Association estimates Americans spend 49 percent of their food budget at restaurants. With America’s fast-paced lifestyle, many parents feel they do not have time to prepare family meals, leading to an unhealthy reliance on fast-food restaurants. Meanwhile singles or couples without children at home have discovered that eating out regularly is easier and may be more economical. I don’t recommend that you eat out all the time, but all of us will eat out from time to time—it is part of modern life.

The good news is that you can eat out and still enjoy a balanced, healthy meal. Most restaurants serve unhealthy food, so you can’t eat just anything. In addition, portion sizes are often distorted. If you hope to control your weight, there are basic principles you must understand when deciding what dishes to order at restaurants.

- Choose sparkling water or unsweetened tea with a wedge of lemon or lime.

- Take two to four PGX fiber capsules with 16 ounces of unsweetened tea or water to help prevent overeating.
- Avoid the bread. If possible, ask that it not even be placed on the table.
- Choose an appetizer with vegetables and meats such as a shrimp cocktail. Avoid any that are deep-fried, high in starch and fats (i.e., quesadillas or corn bread) or bread-based.
- Order your salad with the dressing on the side and with no croutons, cheese or fattening side items. It's best to bring your own salad dressing spritzer or use olive oil and vinegar.
- Add a bowl of broth-based vegetable or bean or lentil soup to fill yourself up before the entrée.
- Choose entrées with meat, fish or poultry that is baked, broiled, grilled or stir-fried in a minimum amount of oil. Avoid anything deep-fried or pan-fried.
- Meat portion sizes should be 3 ounces for women and 3 to 6 ounces for men. If the portion is larger, ask the server to put half in a to-go box.
- Limit sauces and gravies. If you must have them, ask that they be put on the side.
- Ask that vegetables be steamed without butter or oils (unless you prefer them raw).
- Choose sweet potato over white potato when possible. Because these are high-glycemic foods, keep portion to the size of a tennis ball.
- If you choose a dessert, share it and only take a few bites. Savor those bites.

One of the easiest ways to avoid sabotaging your weight-loss goals is planning. This will help you avoid unhealthy foods and overeating. Never go out to eat when you feel ravenous. I guarantee that you will eat too much of the wrong foods. Have a healthy snack such as a large Granny Smith apple or a pear before leaving the house. This will pre-fill your stomach and help prevent overeating.

In addition, plan what and where you will eat before leaving home. I also suggest patients plan an early dinner, usually between five and six o'clock, so they will finish early enough to burn off some calories before going to bed. You may also want to consider sharing an entrée with your spouse. Also be sure to slow down while eating, and chew every bite thoroughly, putting your fork down between bites. All these "little" things go a long way in controlling hunger and weight.

Fast-Food Restaurants

Choose a grilled chicken sandwich or a small hamburger. Throw away the top and bottom bun, and squeeze your burger between two napkins to remove excess grease. Cut the hamburger in half and then place both halves of the meat between two lettuce leaves.

Avoid mayonnaise and ketchup; choose mustard, tomato, onions and pickle. You can also order a small salad and ask for fat-free dressing (or use just a small portion of a regular packet). For a drink, order unsweetened iced tea or a bottle of water. Instead of french fries, order a baked potato when available, using only one pat of butter or 2 teaspoons of sour cream.

If you eat at a sub shop, choose turkey, lean roast beef and chicken instead of bologna, pastrami, salami, corned beef or other fatty selections. Choose a 6-inch sub, eating it with the smaller bottom of the bun and not the top portion. Use plenty of vegetables, and top with vinegar; avoid or go easy on the oil. It's best to further cut calories by ordering it in a lettuce or pita wrap.

Italian Restaurants

Start with a soup—minestrone, pasta fagioli, or broth-based tomato—and a large salad. Limit bread and olive oil, which has 120 calories per tablespoon. Good entrée options include

grilled chicken, fish, shellfish, veal and steak. Avoid fried or Parmesan dishes, such as chicken or veal Parmesan. Ask for your vegetables to be steamed, and avoid the pasta or have it cooked al dente, which causes it to have a lower glycemic index value.

Don't overdo it on the pasta; the amount should be about the size of a tennis ball. Avoid fat-filled creamy sauces, cheese and pesto sauce.

Mexican Restaurants

Avoid the deep-fried tortilla chips, and choose tortilla soup without the chips or black bean soup as appetizers. Be wary of entrées smothered in melted cheese, which automatically increases the fat count. Choose fajitas with chicken, beef or shrimp. Avoid the tortilla, and make your fajita with lettuce wraps. Add such ingredients as salsa, onions, lettuce, beans and guacamole. Avoid cheese and sour cream if possible, since restaurants rarely serve nonfat varieties. As for beans, choose red or black but not refried, since they are high in fat. Avoid the rice. If a salad is available, enjoy a large one before your entrée.

Asian Restaurants

These are usually good choices, provided your meat or seafood is baked, steamed, poached or stir-fried. Steaming is usually the healthiest method. Instead of fried rice or fried noodles, choose brown rice. If permitted, substitute a serving of rice with vegetables. If that is not possible, don't eat more than a tennis ball-sized serving of rice.

Avoid sweet and sour, batter-fried, or twice-cooked food (which is high in fat and calories) and oily sauces (i.e., duck). For an appetizer you can choose wonton or egg drop soup instead of deep-fried egg rolls. Sushi is fine; some restaurants prepare it with brown rice.

Indian Restaurants

Many Indian foods contain large portions of ghee (clarified butter) or oil, so it's best to find a restaurant willing to limit the amount they use on your dish. Tandoori-cooked (roasted) or grilled fish, chicken, beef and shrimp are good choices. Avoid deep-fried foods and sauces, such as masala sauce and curry sauce, which are high in fat. If you must have them, get them in a small side dish. Also, it's best to avoid the breads—a major element of Indian food. If you have any, however, choose bread that is baked (*naan*) instead of the fried *chapatis* bread.

Eating healthily is not a diet but a lifestyle. So follow this lifestyle every day. There will be times that you will slip, especially on holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings and other special occasions. However, never give up. Simply get back on the program, and you will again start burning fat and building muscle.

If you reach a plateau or if you are unable to lose more weight, simply avoid high-glycemic carbohydrates, which include breads, pasta, potatoes, corn, rice, pretzels, bagels, crackers, cereals, popcorn, beans, bananas and dried fruit. Choose low-glycemic vegetables and fruits. If after a month or two of doing this you are still unable to lose sufficient weight, you should choose low-glycemic vegetables and salads and avoid fruits for approximately a month until you break through the plateau. Then reintroduce low-glycemic fruits.

I am praying for God to give you the determination and willpower to follow through on this eating strategy. Not only will you reverse the stinging effects of inflammation in your body, but you will also lose weight—and keep it off! In doing so, you will take care of your body, God's temple, and live a full and abundant life to His glory. Eat right and live in divine health!

The preceding is an excerpt from Reversing Inflammation (Charisma House, 2015) by Don Colbert, M.D. Copyright © 2015 by Don Colbert, MD. All rights reserved.

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Is There a Spiritual Side to Sex?

It's silly not to talk about the No. 1 issue, the No. 1 temptation, the No. 1 economic engine in culture for men—and that's sex.

Testosterone never goes away; your sex life isn't just a physical thing. God knows where your sex life really is—on the inside. There is so much sexual confusion, so much brokenness. I have never met a man who hasn't, in some way, been impacted or broken in the area of sex in one form or another.

God's mind on sex is very positive. Sex is a gift. That's how He created you. Sex is a good thing. He wants you to use that aspect of your life for positive things, not to misuse or abuse it.

God hates sexual sin, not because He hates sex, but because He loves life. Our identity as God's men, our energy and expression sexually is to honor, worship and glorify God.

But the message from culture is that sex is a compartmentalized, private aspect of your life that you really shouldn't talk about a whole lot, and that it's a deeply personal and individualized choice and experience. It's almost a separated functionally in our physical and spiritual lives.

Unfortunately for all of us, culture is wrong, and you can't separate sex and spirituality because God created it. It is not just another bodily function. It's not just another pleasurable experience. It's far more than that. To deny the spirituality of sex is disastrous in your life and the lives of those you've hooked up with.

Let's take a look under the hood. We are going to look at the body. We will eventually go body, mind and spirit, but for this series, we are going to look at the physical aspects of sex and masculinity.

What is going on in your body? Men have testosterone. Our male physical development hits its peak at an early age. It has this bell curve we are all familiar with, but did you know that men have what we would call a man period—or a man's cycle?

Women get blamed for their week of the month. It's not a good time and they are suffering all the time. You know, she's in a bad mood, with good biological reason.

After doing some research, I realized that men have a period too—or a man cycle—connected to their testosterone. I'm going to prove to you emphatically, from your own personal experience, that this is true.

Testosterone levels are highest when: morning or evening?

Testosterone is highest in the morning. That's why you are going hunting in your shorts in the morning. When you wake up, that's when there is blood flow. I don't know why God did that, but for men it's highest in the morning and lowest at bedtime.

Do you know that men also have *emotional cycles* related to their testosterone levels? It runs in a four- to six-week rhythm.

There are also periods of low testosterone levels, whether you're older or younger. The lowest levels are generally in the spring, usually in April. The spring would be the male sexual winter. When we are in that season of four to six weeks, the key feelings that men have are apathy and indifference.

The peak time is November. I don't know why that is, but maybe that's why it's football season.

Here's where it's actually more serious. Testosterone is very intimately linked to your level of stress, anxiety, depression, aggression and mood. This is very important because negative emotions have a negative impact on the people around you.

Is this a physiological thing? Is this fate? Can we control our hormones' behavior?

Yes, testosterone has the ability to produce more stress, depression, aggression and anger in your life, but you have control over that. It's all about who you are: your beliefs, your values and where are you going to go with those negative emotions and the impacts of testosterone in your life.

That's where we'll go in Part Two, because if there is a natural physiological presence of testosterone, and I'm single, I'm married, I'm more mature, my body is more mature or I'm single again, where do we go with it?

Kenny Luck is the president and founder of Every Man Ministries. As the former men's pastor at Saddleback Church in California and current leadership pastor at Crossline Community Church, Kenny has found the proven way to improve men's ministries around the world. *Sleeping Giant* is this blueprint, and gives men the tools they need to lead and understand their own men's ministry. Watch Kenny's teachings at [www.sleepinggiant.com](#) and start your men's group today!

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