

Is Breakfast Overrated?

Breakfast, it has long been said, is the most important meal of the day. But new research suggests that may not necessarily be so.

In fact, a spate of new studies by several universities—published in multiple articles in the August issue of *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*—are challenging how conventional health experts view the first meal of the day, *The New York Times* reports.

Researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and other institutions, for instance, have concluded breakfast plays virtually no role in weight loss. The findings are based on a study of nearly 300 volunteers who were randomly assigned subjects to skip breakfast, always eat the meal, or continue with their current dietary habits

After 16 weeks, the researchers found no one had lost much weight, regardless of whether someone ate breakfast or skipped it.

In another new study, researchers at the University of Bath tracked metabolic rates, cholesterol levels, and blood-sugar profiles of 33 people randomly assigned to eat or skip breakfast. After six weeks, their body weights, resting metabolic rates, cholesterol, and most measures of blood sugar were unchanged, regardless of whether people ate breakfast or not.

The findings suggest that in terms of weight loss, “breakfast may be just another meal,” said Emily Dhurandhar, the assistant professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham who led the study there.

10 Ways Millennials Are Shaping the Local Church

They are the largest generation in history. In the United States alone, they number more than 78 million, even larger than the seemingly ubiquitous Boomers.

They are the millennials. They are changing our nation, our world and our churches.

For the purpose of this post, I want to focus on changes they are already bringing to our local churches. I have the benefit of a large research project on the millennials, plus the ongoing conversations I have with members of this generation. And I have spoken with countless leaders in churches about their experiences with millennials.

Keep in mind that the birth years of the millennials are from 1980 to 2000. So the oldest member of this generation is 34, while the youngest is only 14. But their impact is already noticeable, and it will be for years to come. Here are 10 ways they are shaping local congregations today:

1. More of them are attracted to smaller venues. They are thus one of the reasons for the incredible growth in the multi-venue model of churches and the growth of new churches. Leaders of smaller churches should be encouraged by this trend as well.

2. They see culture as something to influence, rather than an enemy to denounce. Many Millennials truly have a missionary mindset. They are turned off by those who constantly rail against people.

3. They like to cooperate with others. They do not view other churches and Christian organizations as competitors. They are attracted to congregations that are working with other congregations.

4. They abhor worship wars. I have a previous post on this topic called "What Worship Style Attracts the Millennials?"

5. They love churches that love their communities. One of the first questions a Millennial will ask a church leader is, "What is the church doing to influence, impact and minister to the community?"

6. They are attracted to churches that emphasize groups. The millennials want to be a part of a congregation that has healthy small groups, Sunday school classes, home groups or other groups.

7. They want to be trained on their schedule. The millennials truly desire training. But they are accustomed to having that training available when they are able to hear it or view it. Such is the reason that many churches are going to video training while having "live" worship services and small groups.

8. They will question almost everything. This generation will want to know why a church does what it does. The most unacceptable answer is, "We have always done it this way."

9. They are slow to join and slow to leave. Church leaders are often frustrated that a Millennial takes so long to commit to a local congregation. But they are intentional and thorough. Once they commit to a church, they are less likely to leave, especially over petty issues.

10. They want to be involved. If a church does not have an intentional plan to get millennials involved in ministry quickly, they will not reach this key group.

I love this generation. I love their enthusiasm, their commitment, and even their questions. They are one of the reasons I remain an obnoxious optimist about the revitalization of local congregations.

I would love to hear from some of you millennials. And I would love to hear from some of the older folks like me who are interacting with this generation. Your comments are always more valuable than my posts.

Thom S. Rainer is the president of LifeWay Christian Resources. For the original article, visit [.](#)

How to Change the Life of a Fatherless Boy

Once I spoke to 40 young men, ages 14 to 17, in the Orange County, Florida jail. They looked normal enough, but those boys were major offenders incarcerated for serious crimes: rape, murder, robbery, weapons and (mostly) drugs.

Ninety percent of them raised hands to indicate they had no father in the picture.

At the beginning of my message, I walked around and handed each young man a name tag and a Sharpie. Halfway through my talk, I asked each boy to write his name on the tag and stick it to his chest.

Then I went and knelt in front of each boy, one-by-one, read his name tag, looked him in the eye, and said, "Carlos Rivera (or whatever was on his tag), God knows your name. He loves you very much. He knit you together in your mother's womb. He

knows every word you speak before it comes to your tongue. He knows when you sit and when you stand. He knows everything you have ever done and will do, and He wants to forgive you. He has good plans for you. If you will reach out for Him, He is already reaching out for you. You can change your life if you want to. God wants to adopt you and be your father. Do you understand this?"

At first I heard a couple of snickers around the room. Yet, each time I knelt in front of one of those boys, I could see an aching hunger in his eyes for encouragement. Each boy looked directly into my eyes as I spoke to him and absorbed what I was telling him about his identity. Every one of them acknowledged that they understood what I was telling them.

At first, a few boys didn't put on their name tags. When I came to one of them I quietly said, "Go ahead and put your name tag on, and I'll come back to you." With only enough hesitation to "stay cool" they all did, because they all wanted to receive this blessing.

Toward the end I knew that I had missed about three boys. I was pretty sure I knew which ones, but to be absolutely sure I said, "To whom have I not spoken yet?"

One young man cried out and pointed to his friend, "You haven't done him yet!" His friend had a sheepish look on his face, but I could tell he really didn't want to miss out.

When I was done I offered an opportunity for these young men to repent of their sins and put their faith in Jesus Christ. Several did, and several others indicated they already had since coming to jail.

As they were dismissed at the conclusion of my message I said, "I'm a hugger, so if any of you need a hug, come up and see me before you leave." Frankly, I'm still not sure why I said that, but the next thing I knew, 12 young prisoners had lined up to get a hug. I gave each young man his hug, exchanged

words, and then he went into the hall where guards handcuffed him to another prisoner for the walk back to their cells.

Why did I do this? I'm certainly not qualified to give these boys "the" blessing of a father, but I wanted to give them "a" blessing. I wanted them to know their identity—who they really were created to be. I wanted them to know that they were not alone—that God promises to be "a father to the fatherless" (Psalm 68:5). And I wanted them to know Jesus Christ was available to them even though they had done bad things.

Yet it's not just young men in prison. It's young men *everywhere*. In fact, a young man with a *neglectful* father is in nearly as much jeopardy as a young man with an *absent* father.

Jesus Christ will change the lives of our fatherless and poorly fathered boys. And the way He has ordained for that to happen is for us who care to love and disciple them. If not us, then who?

Until every church discipled every man ...

Patrick Morley *is the chairman and co-CEO of Man in the Mirror Ministries.*

10 Questions to Ask After Cancer Diagnosis

It's the diagnosis everyone dreads: You have cancer. But if you find yourself in this position, getting the answers to 10 key questions can help you mobilize your efforts and figure out the best treatment options, notes Bavesh Balar, M.D., a

board-certified hematologist and oncologist on staff at CentraState Medical Center in Freehold, N.J.

In an advice column for the *LiveScience* website, Dr. Balar notes that remarkable strides have been made over the past 20 years in treating cancer, but more than 1 million people in the United States are still diagnosed every year. Nearly half that many die from cancer-related conditions.

As devastating as a cancer diagnosis can be, it's important to understand some basic facts about the diagnosis in order to begin moving forward with a treatment program and "prepare for battle," he says.

With that in mind, Dr. Balar recommends 10 questions every cancer patient or family member should ask the treating doctor:

1. Is the kind of cancer I have treatable? Any and all cancer discussions should begin with this question, so you have a clear understanding of your prognosis.

2. What kind of cancer do I have? Where is it located? Has it spread? Your treatment plan will be based upon this information, whether it involves surgery, chemotherapy, medication, radiation or other therapy, as well as recovery.

3. What stage is my cancer? Staging is a key marker to determine how advanced the disease has become, which will in turn help guide treatment. Staging ranges from 0 to stage 4, based on the size of the tumor, lymph node involvement, and whether the cancer has spread from its original location to other places in the body. The stage is determined after the tumor and lymph nodes are removed and examined by a pathologist.

4. Should I take or continue using supplements (vitamins, etc.)? The answer depends on what kind of cancer you have and your treatment plan. Many people take supplements to boost

their immune system, health and nutrition. But it's important to recognize that some supplements can lessen the effectiveness of certain cancer treatments, so you should discuss any you may be taking with your doctor. Also, be aware that it's also important for cancer patients to consume high-quality food.

5. Will I be in pain? What medications can ease the discomfort? Many cancer patients experience pain from the disease and certain therapies. Cancer treatments can lessen or alleviate pain, but pain-management specialists can also suggest ways to minimize discomfort for patients undergoing therapy.

6. When should I tell my family and friends? This is really up to you. It is a very personal preference. Dr. Balar recommends telling closest family members (spouses, siblings) before talking with others. An oncologist can also be part of the conversation with the family to address questions and concerns.

7. What is the standard treatment for the cancer I have, and are there downsides? It's important to understand the benefits, risks and any potential side effects of treatment. Sometimes, there are choices you can make in how to attack the cancer. Some treatment plans are more aggressive than others, and most therapies have at least some side effects you should know about.

8. Can you recommend colleagues for a second opinion? It's a good idea to have at least two medical opinions about how to treat your cancer. That's the best way to determine whatever choice you make is the best one and is informed by more than a single person.

9. How will cancer treatment affect my daily life? Cancer treatment can be difficult and even debilitating to some degree, so you should have an understanding of what lies

ahead. It may be comforting to know that work, social lives, and even physical activity can continue, in some capacity, during treatment.

10. What cancer support services are available? Support from friends and family members are key to assisting patients with the physical, emotional and financial impacts of cancer. But some professional services, including palliative care, can also help lighten the responsibilities and lessen stress for everyone involved.

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8 Myths About Israel's Iron Dome Defense System

After a week of quiet, it is back on. Hamas is firing rockets (sometimes 10 at a time) all over Israel.

But it's all paradise in the Holy Land, because we have the Iron Dome. Or is it?

While the U.N. Humans Rights 'cartel' says we have unfair advantage over the terrorists who attacked us and even hinted that we should share our Iron Dome technology with Hamas, there are some myths about its effectiveness.

1. IronDome is 100 percent effective. While the Iron Dome has been a miracle in so many ways, 10 percent of the missiles evade it. That means one out of every ten missiles the Iron Dome targets will get through. While these are pretty good odds, we are talking about a living, functioning society. Imagine San Francisco being bombarded with rockets. I use San

Francisco because of Nancy Pelosi's absurd declaration that *Hamas is a Humanitarian organization*—or at least the Qataris assure her of this (by the way, the Qataris, those fine humanitarians told the leader of Hamas that if he signed the Egyptian ceasefire, he could be kicked out of the country).

Thank God for His intervention. Today a rocket slammed into an Ashkelon mall *injuring no one!* All my in-laws are from Ashkelon.

Another soldier reports targeting a Hamas missile with the Iron Dome but missing three times. He said the rocket would've hit close to Tel Aviv's tallest building, but at the last minute, a powerful gust of wind redirected it into the sea. Thank God, but still, we must live with these near misses.

2. Because of the IronDome, Israel's economy has been unaffected. My friend Yosi works as a cook at a beachside restaurant in Ashkelon. When we delivered a check to him and his wife to help with their expenses, he was going to work for the first time in three weeks. Hamas had agreed to a ceasefire. Of course, by the time we left, the Iron Dome was taking on incoming fire. That was one of the eight ceasefires that Hamas has broken.

Yosi is back home.

Israel's tourism industry has taken a hit. Who wants to come to a country that is being bombarded with Rockets? Families are not going out to eat. Jobs are being lost. Wages can't be paid. Hamas knows this—the media doesn't tell you.

Sure, it is easy to say that this is nothing compared to what Gazans are going through—and that is true. But Israel is taking on fire simply because we exist as a Jewish state. Gaza is taking fire for blatant, belligerent and illegal targeting of noncombatants by their Terrorist leaders. Israel has no choice.

3. Israelis must be enjoying the action knowing that the Iron Dome will protect them. I shot this video while seeking protection from an incoming rocket. When it was all over and I got back on my bike to ride home, I broke down in tears over the absurdity of living in a country where terrorists indiscriminately target civilians to murder them—and then other countries justify it.

I am a 49-year-old man—and I was in tears. Imagine being a 5-year-old boy or girl ... Living in Ashkelon, not Tel Aviv ... where every night you have to run for your life—several times! It is traumatizing, illegal and inhumane. A country cannot be expected to live like this.

I was driving home from Ashkelon last week when I saw traffic stopped on the other side of route 4. On the other side, a car was engulfed in flames. While I am sure there was no one inside, as we are told to leave our cars as soon as the siren sounds, it doesn't lessen the emotional trauma on children seeing that image.

The aforementioned Yosi has been sleeping in a tiny protective room with no air conditioner in 90-degree heat, along with this wife, child, mother-in-law and sister-in-law.

4. The Iron Dome quietly does its job. My brother-in-law has an Iron Dome battery almost next door to his home. I don't have the exact stats, but of the over 3,400 rockets fired at Israel from Hamas, Ashkelon has been a favorite target. I would guess that about 15 to 20 rockets a day are launched towards the coastal city.

Each time, a siren sounds that is designed to wake you up quickly. Then, if the Iron Dome believes the rocket is a threat to civilians, it targets the rocket. My brother in law told me, "Each time it is like a plane taking off"—*from his backyard*. Try getting a good night's sleep.

5. Once the Iron Dome hits it's all is good. This is true, unless shrapnel falls from the sky and hits you. In the moments after I shot the video of the Iron Dome taking out its target—a Hamas Rocket meant to kill innocent civilians—a huge piece of shrapnel fell to the ground at a murderous speed, landing in a public park where children were playing.

While I was writing this, Hamas sent 13 rockets to areas all over Israel.

According to Israeli Police, pieces of rocket (shrapnel) fell on Jerusalem's Hebron Road, a major thoroughfare in southern Jerusalem. A boom was heard over the capital minutes before, likely from the interception of the rocket. ()

The giant piece of shrapnel fell in a public park where kids were playing.

6. Israel can shoot Iron Dome anti-rocket missiles forever. Well, hopefully we can, but please understand, each rocket costs \$50,000. That amount is well beyond the average yearly income of Israelis.

7. Hamas Rockets are "not armed." I heard a legal advisor for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas state this. In reality, each Qassam Rocket has between 12 and 44 pounds of explosives in its warhead consisting of metal bearings. You must fact-check EVERYTHING that the Palestinian Authority or Hamas say. The same adviser said Hamas is absolutely not using children as Human Shields, despite the overwhelming proof to the contrary.

8. The Iron Dome eliminates any lasting trauma. Understand that I missed most of this war because I was in the U.S. Since returning, I have only had to run from rockets four times. And still, every sound that I hear, whether it is a car speeding up, a washing machine on the spin cycle, or children playing, I think it is a siren announcing an incoming rocket.

If that is what I am going through, imagine what type of PTSD symptoms the children of S'derot, Ashkelon and Ashdod are experiencing. Fear of going to sleep, dreaming of incoming rockets, thinking that you will die before summer's end or that you parents will be killed ... this is a traumatic experience I would not wish on anyone.

Just today a woman was seriously injured in a traffic accident when the sirens began to blare. So despite the lack of direct success that Hamas rockets have achieved, there is an indirect success that can life altering and deadly.

In conclusion, I would to suggest that every talking head, like Jon Stewart, who assumes that living through a war like this is easy because we have the Iron Dome, come to Israel and rent a hotel room in Ashkelon or S'derot. Let's see how long you last.

And maybe, just over your hotel, to be fair, we won't use the Iron Dome ... as you say it is using *disproportionate force*. But what you will discover, is that when it is you and your family being attacked, *disproportional force is exactly what you will want!*

Ron Cantor is the director of Messiah's Mandate International in Israel, a Messianic ministry dedicated to taking the message of Jesus from Israel to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Cantor also travels internationally teaching on the Jewish roots of the New Testament. He serves on the pastoral team of Tiferet Yeshua, a Hebrew-speaking congregation in Tel Aviv. His newest book is Identity Theft. Follow him at @RonSCantor on Twitter.

For the original article, visit .

Study Links Cardiac Drugs to Breast Cancer

Many older women take drugs called calcium-channel blockers to lower their blood pressure. But new research has found that these widely used medications can double a woman's risk of developing breast cancer.

Calcium-channel blockers relax blood vessels so that blood flows more easily, lowering blood pressure. They are among the most widely prescribed drugs in the United States.

Researchers at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle collected data on 1,907 women between the ages of 55 and 74, who had breast cancer. They compared those subjects with information on more than 880 women without cancer.

The scientists found that women who had used calcium-channel blockers for 10 years or more were at higher risk for breast cancer than those who took other types of blood-pressure medication.

I don't believe calcium-channel blockers are the best choice for reducing blood pressure anyway. I use angiotensin II antagonists or ACE inhibitors (such as lisinopril) as my first line in treating high blood pressure. I prescribe other medications, such as diuretics, if necessary.

Of course, the best way to prevent high blood pressure is to do so naturally. Losing weight is the most effective way. Generally, a loss of 10 pounds results in the need for one less blood-pressure medication.

I also recommend eliminating salt, following a plant-based diet, and walking one hour daily.

Chauncey W. Crandall, M.D., ., *chief of the cardiac transplant*

program at the world-renowned Palm Beach Cardiovascular Clinic in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, practices interventional, vascular and transplant cardiology. Dr. Crandall received his postgraduate training at Yale University School of Medicine, where he also completed three years of research in the cardiovascular surgery division. Known as the “Christian physician,” Dr. Crandall has been heralded for his values and message of hope to all his heart patients.

For the original article, *visit* .

You Might Be a Porcupine if ...

I'm not sure exactly when the moment occurred, but recently I've discovered that I'm an animal ... a porcupine, to be more precise. Let me explain.

For many years, I've been speaking at events around the country. One of the topics I speak on is how to love your family well. I share how it's easy to love people who are sweet, kind and lovable. But then ask, “So how do you love people when they're unlovable? How do you love the prickly porcupines in your life who hiss at you, irritate you, wound you, or cause you pain?”

I then go on to share about the nature of the porcupine. And the most recognizable feature of this rodent is that it intrigues us all with its quills, which can number as many as 30,000. The quills are stiff hairs with barbed tips on the ends. The porcupine has quills on all parts of its body, with the exception of its stomach. The longest quills are on its rear end. When irritated or threatened, the porcupine stamps its feet, growls, hisses, and places his snout between his forelegs and spins around, presenting its rear to the other

animal. If the porcupine hits the animal with its quills, the quills become embedded and can cause enormous pain.

The Porcupine Me

For some years now, my wife, Susan, has joked about my sometimes “porcupine-ish” tendencies. I’d even laugh about it with her every once in a while. But I didn’t think too much about it until recently. Last summer, our team gathered to brainstorm some new topics for my blog. I thought it would be great not only to speak at events about this topic but also to write about it and share it with my blog audience. As we gathered around the table, I held up a picture of a porcupine. I then said, “What’s the first thing you think about when you see this?” One of our team members, Daniel, blurted out, “You!” Everyone chuckled. I even got a kick out of it too.

I then fired Daniel (just kidding). Our team knows I always want them to be honest with me. His comment made me realize that I’m not talking about something I don’t know anything about. I can speak from personal experience as a porcupine and also as a person who has dealt with many porcupines in his life.

Born or Bred a Porcupine?

So, was I born a porcupine, or did I become a porcupine? Is it a genetic predisposition, or have external things influenced me? In other words, is it nature or nurture? I believe the answer is “yes.” It’s both. I was born a selfish creature that wants what he wants when he wants it. I was also raised in a world that has influenced me as well.

You Might Be a Porcupine If ...

Comedian Jeff Foxworthy has a well-known gig where he gives a lot of funny examples of how “You might be a redneck if ...” Well, check out these porcupine characteristics and evaluate whether you think you have any porcupine-ish tendencies.

- Porcupines have sharp quills on its back, sides, and tail, but its belly is tender and vulnerable. So, if you are often prickly, even though you have a lovable, tender side, you might be a porcupine.
- Porcupines are very vocal animals, with a variety of calls including moans, grunts, coughs, wails, whines, shrieks and tooth clicking. If you make a lot of unnecessary grunting, or do a lot of whining or complaining, you might be a porcupine.
- Porcupines are often solitary animals. If you find yourself wanting to be alone a lot, and being with other people too much makes you grumpy, you might be a porcupine.
- When irritated or threatened, a porcupine will turn its back, raise its quills and lash out at a predator with its rump. If you easily get defensive, show your backside, and angrily lash out at others, you might be a porcupine.
- A porcupine's quills have sharp tips and barbs that cause serious pain and make them difficult to remove. If you say or do things to others that deeply wound them and cause long-term pain, you might be a porcupine.
- Porcupines mate in late summer and early fall. this one doesn't exactly fit.

The First Step to Recovery

So, how did you do? Are you, or is someone you love, a porcupine like me sometimes? They say the first step to correcting a problem is admitting you have one, so join me now in saying:

"My name is _____, and I'm a porcupine."

Feel better? Me too!

Now that I've admitted to being a porcupine, I need to share with you that, sometimes, especially in my younger years, I

have gotten irritated or lashed out when things haven't gone my way, when my expectations have not been met, when I've felt disrespected, or when I've been lied to. They're called trigger points. Trigger points are things that make our quills stand on end and evoke our "fight or flight" response.

So, in an upcoming blog, I'll further address those porcupine trigger points and how to deal with them.

Are you sometimes a porcupine? If so, what porcupine traits have you exhibited? Please share in the comments below.

Mark Merrill is the president of Family First. For the original article, visit .

Is a Low-Fat Diet Making You Fat?

If you're cutting back on all fats in your diet, you may be doing yourself more harm than good. That's the upshot of the latest nutritional research that concludes some fats are not only good for us, but they can actually help shed pounds.

In fact, avoiding such fats—in favor of low-fat, high-carb alternatives—can promote weight gain.

Confused? Join the club. For decades, health experts have advised choosing low-fat and fat-free foods—such as margarine, skim milk and unsaturated cooking oils—to lose weight and boost overall health. But that line of one-size-fits-all health advice is being challenged by new studies showing fat is not the great dietary evil we've been led to believe it is.

Brett Osborn, M.D., a member of the American Academy of Anti-

Aging Medicine and author of the new book *Get Serious, A Neurosurgeon's Guide to Optimal Health and Fitness*, explains that not all fats are created equal. Some—such as those found in fish, olive oil, nuts, flax seed, and even certain cuts of meat—are essential for good health. And the real culprits in the nation's obesity epidemic are sugary, high-carb, refined processed foods, many of which carry reduced-fat labels.

“Eating fat does not make you fat,” Dr. Osborn tells *Newsmax Health*. “Carbohydrates, on the other hand, drive insulin levels up. Insulin is an inflammatory hormone. And while we do need it to repair ourselves and to build muscle, it has very, very sinister effects and deleterious effects on our health.”

In this video, Dr. Osborn, a New York University-trained board-certified neurosurgeon with a secondary certification in anti-aging and regenerative medicine, explains that there are different types of fat.

Some—such as trans fats found in baked goods, pastries and fried foods—cause inflammation in the body, which has been tied to diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer and other health problems. But others—such as omega-3 fatty acids found in fish and other staples of the Mediterranean diet—have anti-inflammatory properties and promote health and even weight loss.

“Do not be afraid to have fat in your diet, you just need to have good fat in your diet,” he notes. “So the olive oil, the omega-3s, the fish—have as much as you like and [avoid] fried foods.”

Dr. Osborne also notes that cell membranes are made of omega-3s. As a result, consuming more foods packed with omega-3s contributes to healthy bodily functions, while eating bad fats can cause cell membranes to malfunction, as well as spur inflammation in the body.

“We obviously want to error on the side of ingesting or eating

as much anti-inflammatory fat—the good fat—relative to the bad fat,” he says. “So we want to squelch inflammation.”

Unfortunately, many Americans have bought into the false notion that low-fat foods are always healthier, even though they often contain lots of empty calories, sugar, white processed flour and simple carbohydrates—all of which contribute to weight gain and obesity-related ailments that cost the nation nearly \$150 billion a year in health-care costs.

“The anti-inflammatory fats, which are things like omega-3 fatty acids, which we can get from fish, supplements, walnuts, flax [and olive oil] ... are the things that are lacking in our diet and have been replaced by the inflammatory fats” along with sugary, high-carb processed foods, Dr. Osborn notes.

He adds that residents of nations whose diets are typically high in healthy fats and low in unhealthy fats—such as the Japanese and those in Mediterranean countries—tend to have longer life spans than Americans, according to the World Health Organization.

“The Japanese have a five-year longevity, if you will, advantage over the Americans. Why? Because they eat a lot of raw food, they keep their simple carbohydrate loads down [and] they’re good-fat-to-bad-fat ratio is better than ours,” he says. “It’s all about the balance. You want to keep the anti-inflammatory fats high and the bad fats ... low.

“And again if you have a lot of pro-inflammatory chemicals in your body, you’re going to have accelerated aging and accelerated disease incidence.”

Here are a few foods containing healthy fats:

Fish: Polyunsaturated fats, such as omega-3 fatty acids found in fish such as salmon and fish-oil supplements, have been shown in many studies to lower the risk for heart disease,

boost brain function, ease arthritis symptoms, and help prevent dementia.

Nuts: Natural fatty acids in tree nuts are known to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Researchers from the University of Toronto found that incorporating about two ounces of tree nuts—almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, macadamias and walnuts—into the diet of people with diabetes helped boost their heart health.

Vegetable oils: Olive oil and other vegetable-based fats—such as canola and palm oils—are loaded with alpha-linolenic acid, a type of omega-3. Switching to a diet low in simple sugars and high in healthy fatty oils can help people with Type 2 diabetes control their blood sugar and lower their heart-disease risks, research has shown. “Every night before I go to bed ... I have two tablespoons of olive oil in addition to tons and tons of omega-3 capsules that I take every day because I’m not a fish eater,” Dr. Osborn says. He adds: “I usually tell my patients, my friends who ask me, avoid all non-vegetable carbohydrates because that’s going to keep your natural insulin levels low and that’s going to hopefully confer longevity and reduced incidence of age-related diseases.”

Animal products: Moderate amounts of saturated fat in butter, milk, cheese and even lean cuts of beef, poultry and pork don’t clog arteries and may even be beneficial in moderate amounts. Scientists once thought saturated fat raised levels of dangerous cholesterol in the blood. But the latest research shows there are two different kinds of cholesterol particles—small and dense (the kind linked to heart disease) and large and fluffy (which don’t pose a risk). Saturated fat in dairy foods and animal products raises the level of larger particles that are not harmful, but refined carbohydrates boost levels of smaller, more dangerous cholesterol particles.

Dr. Osborn adds that losing weight must also involve exercise

and other healthy habits, as well as a nutritious diet.

“Nutrition and training, particularly strength training—they’re both parts of the mix,” he says, recommending about 30 minutes a day at a minimum. He also advises keeping your stress levels down, making sure you get sufficient sleep, and making sure your hormone levels are balanced.

“And one other thing: Also understand that your doctor is not going to save you,” he adds. “If you are not taking full responsibility for your health, or getting serious about your health, nobody’s going to do it for you.”

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9 Reasons to Say No to Soy

The information I posted on soy on my Facebook page in March 2013 created a big response. Many people have posted the problems they’ve experienced after consuming soy products. Take a look on my Facebook page.

A small amount of fermented soy is OK as long as it’s organic. Avoid conventional soy; it is the largest GMO (genetically modified) crop in the United States. Here are a few more points to consider regarding soy. It should make you think twice before ordering a soy-milk latte:

1. Soy phytoestrogens disrupt endocrine function and have the potential to cause infertility and promote breast cancer in adult women. These phytoestrogens also cause hypothyroidism and possibly thyroid cancer.

2. In infants, consumption of soy formula has been linked to autoimmune thyroid disease.
3. Vitamin B12 in soy is not absorbed. Consumption of soy actually increases the body's requirement for B12.
4. Soy foods increase the body's requirement for vitamin D. Toxic synthetic vitamin D2 is added to soy milk.
5. Fragile proteins are damaged during the high temperature processing used to make soy protein isolate and textured vegetable protein—often used in packaged foods and even the so-called “healthy” protein bars.
6. Processing of soy protein results in the formation of toxic lysinoalanine and highly carcinogenic nitrosamines.
7. Free glutamic acid or MSG, a potent neurotoxin, is formed during soy-food processing, and additional amounts are sometimes added to mask soy's unpleasant taste.
8. High levels of aluminum, toxic to the nervous system and kidneys, have been found in some soy foods.
9. Soy foods such as soy cheese and ice cream, soy milk, and tofu are so processed that few pesticide residues remain; however, several very toxic pesticides are used to grow soybeans, and 90 percent of soybeans grown in the U.S. are GMO (genetically modified). In the only human-feeding study published on genetically modified foods, seven volunteers ate Roundup-ready soybeans. These soybeans have herbicide-resistant genes inserted into them in order to survive being sprayed with otherwise deadly doses of Roundup herbicide. In three of the seven volunteers, the gene inserted into the soy transferred into the DNA of their intestinal bacteria, and continued to function long after they stopped eating the GM soy.

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For the original article, visit .

4 Tips to W.H.I.P. Your Loved Ones Into Shape

If you're familiar with my writing and areas of interest, then you may know that I get a thrill from finding parallels between our physical and spiritual lives. Most recently, I've been pondering a few similarities I see between Christian evangelism and, for lack of a better term, fitness evangelism.

How people come to accept and follow Christ and how they come to embrace and enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle may have more in common than we think.

Merriam-Webster defines evangelism as "the winning or revival of personal commitments to Christ." I would argue that what I am calling "fitness evangelism" is "the winning or revival of personal commitments to *health*."

Before I go on, I want to make it very clear that one's choice whether to accept or deny Jesus Christ as Lord is the most important decision he or she will ever make. 1 Tim. 4:8 clearly says that physical training has "some value," but

“godliness has value for all things.” The reason I emphasize fitness and enjoy helping others establish healthy workout and nutrition habits is because being in top physical condition:

- **Honors** and **glorifies** God (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Cor. 10:31)
- **Enhances** and **improves** our emotional, physical and spiritual well-being (3 John 1:2; Prov. 17:22)
- **Prevents** illnesses and diseases that can cut our lives short (Prov. 23:20-21)
- **Enables** and **equips** us to handle the physical tasks of everyday life (Prov. 31:17)
- **Sets a positive example** for our children, friends and others around us (Eph. 4:15-16)

Having a physically healthy and fit body should never supersede our desire to purify our hearts and sanctify our souls as we pursue spiritual intimacy with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Now, going back to “evangelism,” what isn’t so succinctly spelled out in dictionaries is the method one should employ when going about the act of evangelizing, a verb meaning “to try to convert (a group or area) to a different religion (especially Christianity).”

I do not wish this article to become a thesis opining the proper tenets of Christian evangelism—we can leave that to the preachers and theologians! However, I do think there are some general guidelines associated with spreading the Good News of Christ that can be applied to our mission to help our loved ones become healthy.

Because acronyms are fun and ever-trendy teaching tools, I’ve created “WHIP” to aid us in “evangelizing” those friends and family who need to start, perhaps for the first time in their lives, taking their physical health seriously.

W: Walk the Walk, Save the Talk

Maybe you've chatted a lot to your husband, best friend, grandmother, etc. about a certain type of exercise you're really into nowadays, such as Zumba, CrossFit, Pilates or indoor cycling. Or maybe you're seeing results from a new nutrition plan you've been following and love to talk about how much better you feel now that you've given up eating or drinking X, Y and Z. Surely my enthusiasm will rub off, and they'll want to do what I'm doing!

I've thought that before ... many times.

When you read the Gospels, you will see that yes, Jesus taught and preached to throngs of people, but He also simply walked a walk that was consistent with His message. As fit and healthy individuals, we don't have to rely solely on speaking eloquently or passionately in order to attract the interest of our audience. If we continue to abide by our convictions imparted by the Holy Spirit and informed by the Word of God, our loved ones will see and experience the fruit our lives produce and, prayerfully, be inspired to adopt such a lifestyle.

H: Have a Positive Attitude

Don't give up on those you love. It may be frustrating to continuously watch them make poor food choices while dining out or when you see nary a vegetable in their fridge and only processed junk food in their pantry, but a pessimistic attitude will only perpetuate the problem, and may in fact discourage them from considering a healthier lifestyle at all.

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing" (1 Thess. 5:11, ESV).

I: Invite Them to the Gym/Park/Trail/___fill in the blank ___with You

Have you ever invited someone to a Christian concert or special sermon series at your church? This probably didn't

require you to lay out the Romans Road to salvation. All you did, I'm assuming, is say, "If you don't have plans this Saturday, I'd love for you to come hear this band with me!" Or, "My preacher is starting a series on Heaven and Hell this Sunday. It sounds like it's going to be really interesting. Want to go with me?"

Is there a 5K or a mud run coming up soon in your city? Does your gym offer free passes to first-timers? If so, invite your friend or family member to go and participate with you. If necessary, ease any concerns or fears they may be feeling by assuring them that you'll remain with them for the duration and go at their pace. For most of us, the first step toward a new routine is the toughest one to make, and having a friend there to support them and hold their hand, literally if need be, can make all the difference.

P: Pray Persistently

This one goes along with "H" in that it's imperative that we stay the course of our loved ones' path to health, most of all spiritually. Sometimes it is challenging to, as they say, "let go and let God," because as prideful human beings we oftentimes would rather arrogantly go to the ends of the Earth to fulfill our desires than humbly go to our knees in prayer to seek God's will and ask Him to intervene.

Keep the people you're rooting for and hoping to positively influence at the top of your prayer list. Ask the Lord to convict them and direct them toward a firm decision to eat healthier foods, stop eating excessively and/or emotionally, and exercise on a regular basis. He knows what is best for them and how to lead them out of their complacency, apathy, stubbornness, what have you, and has lovingly placed you in their lives to intercede for them during your quiet moments of prayer.

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one

another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working" (James 5:16, ESV).

Stay fit, stay faithful.

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