

Why Even Comfort Foods Can't Fill Your Inner Emptiness

What are you hungry for right this very moment? Most of us would probably mention some sort of food, even if we have just eaten. The thought of hunger most always takes us to food.

Let's face it, though, most of the time the lack of food is not why we are hungry. Our hunger goes deeper than that. It goes to the very core of why we are alive in the first place.

We Hunger

We hunger for acceptance. We hunger to be seen and heard. We hunger to make a difference in a world where divergent ideas starve our ability to have an opinion at all.

So when we say we are hungry for a piece of your favorite dessert, maybe we are just filling a void inside us. That emptiness says, "I know there's more to life than this, but for now, I'm just going to stay out of everyone else's way and eat cake."

Overeating comfort foods is really just a cry for connection, significance, personal power and the meaning of life and its purpose.

God-Shaped Vacuum

"There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man, which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ," Blaise Pascal, a French mathematician who was also a Catholic is quoted as saying.

He hit the nail on the head. Still there are many people, even those who call themselves Christians, who still struggle with feelings of emptiness.

I know I did, and I know for myself one of the main sources of that was feeling I didn't matter ... enough.

A good friend of mine once told me, "You can't save everyone in the world." Helping people out of jams, pulling them from the fire of their circumstances, pointing them in the right way has always been a passion of mine. I answered my friend by saying, "No, but I can die trying."

Desire Gone Wrong

This was spoken out of a true desire, but for most of my life, I was going about it in the wrong way. As a result, this desire contributed to me gaining up to over 430 pounds. (I'm so thankful today that when I finally began listening to God, I lost over 250 pounds and have kept it off for more than five years.)

I knew I had gifts that God had given me, and I knew God's desire is for all people to come to Him, so I was trying my hardest to get everyone I knew to the place where they could accept Him, even in the midst of their personal struggles.

All my self-effort resulted in me feeling like a failure, because no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't save everyone in the world. So, when I didn't see the results I wanted, I would feel as though I failed God.

I wasn't good enough, and when I wasn't good enough at writing a story to bring more people into a deeper relationship with God, or wasn't good enough at sharing the way out of a situation with someone headed the wrong way, I felt ashamed. I felt I had let God down.

Filling the Void

Weren't my good works supposed to make God notice me? Weren't they supposed to help fill the emptiness inside me that would make me feel like I mattered just a little bit?

Still, though, the void, the emptiness was still there. So I filled it myself with the only thing I knew to stave off the emotional hunger inside. I filled it with the foods I loved, the ones that were always there to comfort, protect and be a companion to me.

I didn't understand that good works would not fill the void. Perfect church attendance wouldn't fill it either. Neither would worrying about everyone and trying to help fix their problems.

Sharing my gifts and talents with everyone and not charging while going into debt only made matters worse and just made me feel used and even emptier.

Who Is God?

It took me a long time to understand that God is not just my sidekick or even my associate who helps make *my* plans come true. As Elisabeth Eliot, author and missionary, explained, we cannot assume God will always act the way we think He should or support our plans of how we think things in our life should go.

"This is a God of our own creation, a counterfeit god," Eliot said in her book *No Graven Image*. "Such a god is really just a projection of our own wisdom of our own self."

In the book *Walking With God Through Pain and Suffering*, Tim Keller said, "In that way of operating, God is our accomplice, someone to whom we relate as long as He is doing what we want."

God, though, the real God, our personal sovereign God of weighty glory is not our accomplice. He is God. He is the one who makes the plans, and we are the ones who carry them out, but only when we realize that it is not in our strength, but His that we operate. And we follow His bidding, not our own.

God's Glory

The hole I was trying to fill and a vast emptiness because it had to do with my limits as a human being. I am not God. I am made in His image, but I am not Him.

For me to accomplish anything worthwhile here on this earth, it must be by His power, and it must always point back to God's glory.

God is not who we think or imagine Him to be. He is much more than we can think or imagine or dare to dream of.

God's Infinite Beyondness

His glory is as Keller described "God's infinite beyondness ... His weightiness ... His supreme importance. If anything matters to you more than God, you are not acknowledging His glory. You are giving glory to something else."

This especially holds true of what we try to do for God, rather than what God asks us to do. If we follow His lead the way won't always be easy, but it will be faith-filled. It will be a God-honoring life.

As Jesus said we will have everything in abundance, more than we can expect, life in its fullness until we overflow (John 10:10).

Taste and See

When our lives are completely full and overflowing, our hunger problem will be solved. Our emptiness will no longer be a problem. There will be no voids in our lives because we will understand that at any time we can "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. 34:8).

As Paul said, "We view our slight, short-lived troubles in the light of eternity. We see our difficulties as the substance that produces for us an eternal, weighty glory far beyond all

comparison, because we don't focus our attention on what is seen but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but the unseen realm is eternal" (2 Cor. 4:17-18, TPT).

What are you hungry for? I'm hungry to experience the eternal weighty glory. What we do here on earth is not nearly as important as making sure we are always looking for the glory of God.

When have you experienced that glory in your life? {eo}

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This article originally appeared at .