

Why False Teachers Are Absolutely Terrible for Your Health

Headlines like these, which can easily be found everywhere online and which reflect thousands of articles and studies, offer a small sampling of the dangers of our typical diet:

- Just two [portions] of bacon a day raises your risk of cancer: Health chiefs put processed meat at same level as cigarettes, reports the *Daily Mail*.
- Fat around the middle can “double the risk of early death.”
- The world now has a sweet tooth: Soaring sales of soft drinks and more sugar in foods are contributing to a “growing crisis in obesity, diabetes and heart disease.”
- Cancer isn’t all in your genes: Up to 90 percent of cases “could be wiped out by avoiding triggers caused by our unhealthy lifestyles.”
- Revealed, your body on sugar: From weakening the immune system to triggering thrush, this terrifying tool reveals exactly how the white stuff harms our health.

There are also the countless articles on health-promoting websites (such as), with posts like, “The Standard American Diet Is Shortening Our Children’s Lives.” There Dr. Fuhrman writes that this current generation of children may not outlive their parents:

The poor dietary habits of today’s children [are] contributing to their obesity, chronic illness and ill health. [They are] also laying a foundation for poor academic

performance, chronic disease later in life, violent behavior and premature death. But children are not making these choices on their own; children's dietary habits are ingrained by their parents.

If all this is true—and the scientific and anecdotal evidence is really impossible to deny—then we can't go on in willful ignorance, as I did for years. We must ask ourselves if the way we are eating is in harmony with our biblical calling, a calling that includes discipline and self-control. In fact, according to Paul, one of the fruits of the spirit is self-control (Gal. 5:23), with the Greek word meaning “restraint of one's emotions, impulses or desires, self-control.” As commentator F.F. Bruce explains, “‘Self-control’ ... denotes control of more sensual passions than anger.”

When it comes to your eating habits, do you have self-control? When it comes to the passions of the flesh for unhealthy food, are you disciplined? Are you controlling your appetite, or is your appetite controlling you? Some of us say we're willing to die for Jesus, but we're not willing to control our appetites for Him (or, at the least, we're not willing to make a serious effort to control those appetites). This simply doesn't line up. We sing, “I surrender all,” but we practice, “I surrender some.” Or maybe we want to surrender but find ourselves helpless and bound.

Notice what Paul has to say about dangerous false teachers: “For many are walking in such a way that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. I have told you of them often and tell you again, even weeping. Their destination is destruction, their god is their appetite, their glory is in their shame, their minds are set on earthly things” (Phil 3:18-19). Or, as the relevant phrase is rendered in different versions: “their god is their stomach” (HCSB); they “make their bellies their gods” (MSG); “whose God is the stomach” (LEB). How interesting that these heretics were also slaves to food.

Does that describe you? Is your stomach your god? Are you a slave to your appetite?

If so, I have good news for you: God is not condemning you. Instead, He is offering you a better way, a way of discipline, self-control, healthy eating and vibrant life. But if He has convicted you through this chapter, I encourage you to confess your bad eating habits as sin, asking the Father for mercy and forgiveness, believing that Jesus paid for this sin as well and trusting God for grace to overcome. With His help and with a good plan, you can do it.

So cast off the condemnation (when the Lord forgives, He really forgives), stop beating yourself up and determine to quit making excuses for being overweight. There is a lot of light at the end of the tunnel, and every day you take a step in the right direction, that light will shine brighter and brighter. Forward! {eoa}

This article is an excerpt from Michael and Nancy Brown's Breaking the Stronghold of Food, published by Siloam. Copyright © 2017 by Michael L. Brown, Ph.D. All rights reserved.

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