

Your One True Source of Real Comfort

When I was a kid, I can remember going to church on Sunday nights with my family. After church, Dad would stop and we'd all get ice-cream cones. If it was summer, we'd sit outside at the picnic tables, talk and laugh.

We considered this a true treat because my parents were barely middle class. We lived in an 800-square-foot house with one bath and three small bedrooms. We rarely went out to eat, so getting ice cream from any place besides the small freezer on top of our small refrigerator was a highlight.

I remember those times because of their rarity and the pure joy that accompanied being together with my whole family. As we get older, we go in search of those blissful moments. When we can't find them because all those we love are gone, we try to recreate them. So we do it by going out for ice cream, donuts, brownies, cookies, cakes or fast food of any sort.

Bliss Factor

When we do this, we are looking for that joy element or what the food manufacturers call the "bliss" factor. This is how much sugar a manufacturer can put in a product before the customer actually tastes that there is too much.

It's that perfect blend where the customer says, "Wow, that tastes awesome. I have to have some more." But they don't say, "Yuck, that tastes like pure sugar," even though sugar is the main ingredient.

The definition of bliss is "perfect happiness or great joy." That's how manufacturers sell their product, by delivering exactly what we want: great joy. And foods with high sugar content will give us that in the moment.

More Happiness

The sugar is mainlined to our brain where we get a “high” or a jolt of bliss. But then it wears off fast. When it does, we want more. I mean, who doesn’t want more happiness?

We’ve been programmed to give that to ourselves at special times: birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, graduations, baby showers, bridal showers, going-away parties, retirement parties, even funerals.

It’s no wonder when I became an adult what I wanted to do in order to celebrate finishing a big project at work, receiving an award for an article I had written, finishing a publication on or before a deadline, cleaning my house, doing my laundry, getting the grocery shopping done, fixing supper or doing the dishes. I wanted bliss! I wanted to feel happier.

Adult Choices

My choices had grown much larger than a dime ice cream cone. Now, I could bake cookies or brownies or cake, or go get a baker’s dozen of cinnamon crunch bagels, fried cinnamon rolls or huge chocolate chip cookies and eat as much or as many as I wanted.

I knew, in order to feel that special feeling of joy I felt as a child, I needed more of those kinds of food. If that sounds like an addiction, it is.

It is addiction born of a very emotional response to simply wanting to recreate that feeling of happiness I felt as a child eating an ice cream cone with my family or sitting around my grandmother’s table at Sunday dinner and having a myriad of desserts to choose from.

Negative Emotions

It also explains why when we are angry, worried, stressed, frustration, confused, lonely or just plain mad at the world,

we go to the foods that recreate in us that feeling of happiness.

This feeling is both emotional and physical because foods high in sugar and carbohydrates, the kinds of foods my mom and grandma called “starches,” do evoke a physical feeling of well-being. This gets enmeshed with the emotional memories.

While we are responding with food to what we are feeling, we rarely stop to think about what we are doing, because it feels like the response is just what we have always done. It’s how we have reacted since from as far back as we can remember.

It is part of us, but it is part of our memories. We can keep those great memories, but we must recognize where our desire to constantly eat comfort foods comes from and allow God to begin to redirect and heal us. We are trying to feel bliss all the time because the other feelings drive us crazy.

Real Comfort

The truth is that God has provided all that we need in terms of comfort and bliss in the person of the Holy Spirit. He is “the Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor–Counselor, Strengthener, Standby,” (John 14:26 AMP).

When I said yes to accepting Christ as my Savior, the Holy Spirit made His home inside my body. “What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own? (1 Cor. 6:19, MEV).

He’s always with us. We can go to Him for what we need, but instead we want the more tangible, physical pleasures that certain foods bring us. How do we change that?

Finding True Bliss

I had to understand that the foods I was thinking were bliss-giving were actually death-bringing. They were contributing to

hastening the end of my life here on earth. At 430 pounds, I had been given five years to live. I needed to make some changes, and thank God I did and have lost 250 pounds.

What I learned is that God gave us the only one true Comforter. Certain foods may comfort for a moment, but He brings lasting comfort.

“When God fulfills your longing, sweetness fills your soul” (Prov. 13:19a, TPT). This is true sweetness, true bliss. There is nothing else like it.

God longs to fill us completely with Himself, but we’re so full of the counterfeit sweets that there is no room left over.

We try so hard to make ourselves feel what and how we want to feel. We must let God show us the source of our negative emotions. Let Him comfort you instead of running to false comforts. {eoa}

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