

Feeding the Whole Man

#0029

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—April 21, 1979

Our text this evening is 1 Thessalonians 5:23:

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

The message which is to fit a people for our Lord's appearing approaches man from every side—physical, mental, and spiritual. But may I remind you that whatever side you approach man from, it's the same man. We don't have three men or two men living in one house. We don't have a physical nature, which is divorced from the mental and spiritual. Neither do we have an entity which simply tabernacles in this flesh.

Man, according to the Bible, became a living soul when God breathed into the lifeless form of Adam the breath of life man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). And with that imparting of life from the Creator, all the life's processes began. The heart began to beat, the lungs to breathe, the blood to circulate. The eyes began to see, the ears to hear, the fingers to feel. And back of it, all the brain began to *think*. Man became a living soul.

And so I repeat, we do not look upon man as various entities somehow gotten together for a time. Rather we rejoice in the knowledge that man is one. But we may think of him and approach him from the physical or mental or spiritual side, but it's the same man.

Success in *any* aspect requires attention to *every* aspect. What I mean is, we cannot have perfect physical health if we neglect the mental and spiritual. On the other hand, we cannot have mental happiness and spiritual victory if we neglect the health of the body.

So the Great Physician, Jesus Christ, blended in His ministry these various approaches. We are told repeatedly that He went about teaching and preaching and healing. He united *all* these aspects of ministry because He was dealing with the whole man.

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” That word ‘sanctify’ means to make holy, H-O-L-Y. The apostle prays that we may be made holy wholly, W-H-O-L-L-Y. The two words have some elements in common besides the similarity in spelling. To be holy, H-O-L-Y, means to be wholly, W-H-O-L-L-Y, the Lord's in body and mind and soul. True sanctification then embraces the whole man in every part of our program.

Tonight we're going to study feeding this whole man. Feeding is not all there is to the matter, either physical or mental or spiritual. It's not all there is to health. You can think of other things that enter into health besides the matter of feeding. But I think you'll all agree with me that feeding is one of the most important spokes in the wheel of life, and one of the most interesting and, shall I say, one of the most enjoyable.

Again and again, I'm reminded to be thankful that God made the taking on of our nutrition a happy experience. He could have arranged it like driving up to the gas pump and saying, "Fill her up," [Laughter] and we could have gotten our quota of vitamins and minerals and proteins and calories and all the rest that way. But I'm glad He didn't do it that way. What do you say?

[Audience] Amen.

God intended not only that *eating* should be enjoyable, but the *results* of eating should be enjoyable. And here is where many people don't know all that could be known about it. God intended that the sowing should be a happy experience, and the reaping should be a happy experience.

I want to point out some of the great laws of life that have to do with physical nutrition and some of the errors in dietetic habits. Then I want to find their parallel as we apply these same principles to the mental and spiritual feeding.

When we eat a variety of natural foods in an atmosphere of enjoyment, at regular times, we supply the nutritional needs of the body. Looking at some of the perversions or problems in this matter of nutrition, I'll mention, first of all, undernourishment, or lack of food. There are millions on this planet that go to bed every night hungry. They get up every morning hungry. They never get enough to supply the actual needs of the body. This is not true in general of the masses in America. But looking at our planet as a whole, this is true.

Another problem is the use of irritants along with food. I want you to keep these different things in mind, for we shall find their parallel in the mental and spiritual. The use of irritants. Some people want to pep up their food, so they put pepper on it. Others have other ways of peppering it up. But these irritants may irritate the tender lining of the stomach. They pass into the blood and irritate the blood vessels and irritate the nerves, and in other ways damage the body.

Then there are actual poisons that either along with the meals or at other times are taken into the bloodstream through the stomach or the lungs. I'm thinking of poison such as alcohol, whether diluted in such forms as beer and wine or more concentrated in whiskey and other liquors. I'm thinking of tobacco, whether chewed or smoked; whether in the pipe, cigar or cigarette; some of the same poisons. I'm thinking of caffeine beverages such as coffee or tea, or cola drinks. I'm thinking of many other poisons far too numerous to mention which are filling the bloodstreams and irritating the nerves of millions of Americans today.

Then I'm thinking, number four, of denatured foods. What's in many of these is not bad; it's what isn't in them. It's what's missing—the milling of the flour—so that much of the mineral value and vitamins are lost. The refining of the concentrated sweets, taking away every trace of minerals and vitamins. The refining of fats so that all the natural elements that go with it in the corn or the soybean or peanut are separated and gone. All these various operations that modern scientific manufacturer put these natural foods through, brings us products which lack many of the elements that the Creator put into those foods originally. And the more we eat of them, the greater our lack, and the more unbalanced the diet can be.

Another problem in eating is the problem of irregularity. Eating now and then and sometimes eating a big meal in the evening and sometimes skipping breakfast and sometimes skipping lunch. Meals are eaten at irregular hours spasmodically.

Then there's the problem of eating too rapid—failing to masticate. Eating with one eye on the wristwatch.

And then there's the problem of a poor atmosphere in eating. I'm not thinking particularly of a lack of oxygen, although that sometimes happens. I'm thinking of the mental and the spiritual atmosphere. I'm thinking of eating in an atmosphere where there is a lack of love, poorly, gangly—an atmosphere of differences and strife, or just plain lack of interest in one another.

All of these are problems that interfere with nutrition. Of course, the remedy is obvious, to go the other direction. What a great joy it is to fill our tables with the foods that God created, retaining the minerals and vitamins which He put there, enjoying them in variety, eating at regular times, having time to eat, and doing it in an atmosphere of joy.

While the Bible is not primarily a textbook on the question of diet, it presents some of the greatest nutrition principles found anywhere. There is one thing we can be certain of when we find something in God's Holy Word; it's inspired, and truth, and will bless us as we follow it. I find an interesting expression which is good nutrition:

“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple,
and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their
meat with gladness and singleness of heart” Acts 2:46.

Notice that they were of one accord. There was no strife. And in that atmosphere of love and unity, they ate their food with what? Gladness. That's good digestion, friends. Good digestion.

Now I would like to take the application of these same principles in the realm of the mental and the spiritual. As God has provided a great variety of natural foods for the body which we receive through the mouth and stomach and digestive organs into the blood, so He has provided to build up the mind—the character—through what we receive largely through the eyes and ears. What the mouth and the stomach are to physical nutrition, the eyes and ears largely do when it comes to mental and spiritual nutrition.

If a man, by mistake, gets some poison in his stomach that isn't good for him and imperils his life, he can be rushed to the hospital, and they can pump his stomach out. But just how do you go about pumping *this* stomach out? How do you get rid of the things that are put into the mind through the eye and ear that may be more perilous than poison or spoiled food is to the stomach?

I am thankful that God has given us a great variety of food for the mind and soul which is attractive, which is palatable, which is natural. In other words, it is *truth*. Think of some of the ways that we can build up the mind and the soul; feed this part of our nature.

The world of creation is perhaps the simplest and the nearest, in a way, to all of us. In the plants that grow beneath our feet or by our sides, and the birds that fly in the sky or stop in the trees and sing for us. In the flowers that bloom and in the clouds that amble across the skies. In the glory of the sunrise and sunset. In the majesty of the mountains and the roar of the ocean or the tinkle of the little brook. In all these things, as we come in contact with them, we have the privilege of receiving impressions through the eye and ear that does something to the mind and soul.

Now, I cannot tell you, my dear friends, all the ways in which that operates any more than I can tell you all the ways in which food becomes blood and bone and brain. But I know this: it works. I know that the people who eat good, natural food get good nutrition. And I know that people who expose their eyes and ears to the beauties of nature have influences in their lives that help them to work away from worry to trust, that help them to know the security and the peace which contact with nature and nature's God can bring.

The whole world of science has, in it precious lessons of truth for us. God is the author of science, as He is the author of the Bible. And whatever phase of truth a man investigates, if he has a sincere purpose to find fact rather than fiction, to find truth rather than some human theory, and God can bless him. There are many avenues in science that can lead and do lead directly to God and a knowledge of Him and security and peace.

There is a world of human experience. There is much of interest in books of biography and history. Here we need to be wise in our selection. There's much that's trivial and much that's trash. So since we can't read all the books anyway, why not read the best. That's a good rule in food: we can't eat all the food anyway, why not eat the best. The best that's available to us. And so in books: to select the true, the noble, the inspiring; to select the lives of men and women whom we desire to emulate, remembering that by beholding, we become changed.

The greatest biographies for 6,000 years are found in this wonderful book, the Bible. Here we find history which is unbiased, unmixed with fiction. And so the Bible is indeed the greatest book.

When Sir Walter Scott, the great English author, lay dying, he called his attendant and said, "Bring me the book."

Looking at the great library filled with hundreds of volumes, the attendant said, "Which book?"

Sir Walter replied, "There is only one."

And so indeed the Book speaks to men in all ages and in all [inaudible] with its message of truth. As our opening text prays that we might be sanctified, holy in body, mind, and soul, we remember the prayer of Jesus:

"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth"
John 17:17.

In the realm of human experience, perhaps there is no greater opportunity to feed the soul than the experience of love. God intends that every home shall be a place of love. What a pity it is to starve someone physically. We think with horror of child abuse where children are locked up in some room and perhaps not fed. Our righteous anger rises. But, my dear friends, in many a home, the body is fed but the mind and soul are starved.

Several years ago, a physician reported about an experience in a distant country where in a great hospital in a large city, many orphaned babies were being taken care of. But there were so many of the babies and so few attendants to wait on them, that all they could do was give them their bottles and run on, and the babies weren't doing well.

One of the physicians had a happy thought. He enlisted some mothers who lived in the area who would come in at various intervals and *cuddle* the babies. And as you might think, if you understand things, and you might be surprised if you didn't, the babies' nutrition improved. It wasn't a change in the formula. Children need love. And some of us with gray hairs are still children on that score. [Laughter]

Oh my dear friends, what a great privilege you and I have to share with others the love of Jesus. As we all need to receive love, we need even more to *give* love. In fact, the greatest lover of the ages, Jesus Christ, said,

"It is more blessed..."

More happy, more efficient.

"...to give than to receive" Acts 20:35.

Never think that we can be blessed as we should be merely by receiving attention, affection, love. Love at its best is love that's shared, that's imparted. We're to channel it. We're to be like the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River rather than the Dead Sea.

Now we're going to look at some of those mistakes, problems in physical nutrition, and find their counterparts in the mental and the spiritual. We mentioned that there are millions who are undernourished physically and go to bed hungry. But there are probably even more people undernourished mentally and spiritually than

there are physically. They have no time to read, no time to study. They're just rushing, rushing, rushing.

It's the rat race. And as someone said, "Even if you win the rat race, you're still a rat." There's no success in that game at all.

We mentioned the matter of irritants—the pepper and the mustard and the spices and the vinegar that pep up the diet, but that irritate the lining of the stomach, the blood vessels and nerves. And so in the mental and the spiritual realm, there are many exciting things. In fact, that's one of the keywords in advertising today. Everything must be made *exciting*! Exciting. But what the poor mind needs, at times, is rest rather than excitement. It needs to be built up rather than to be stirred up.

We mentioned the matter of poisons such as alcohol and tobacco. But for every physical poison that enters man through the stomach or the lungs, there is a counterpart in the mental and spiritual poisons which enter man through the eye and ear. There are the fictitious tales, the unadulterated lies, the deadly poisonous errors of doctrines. Heresies disguised or undisguised. There are the scandal sheets, unmitigated garbage, fermented, from which the poisons of envy and jealousy are distilled.

We mentioned the denatured foods. Here we have the mental and spiritual counterparts. We have thousands of books today concerning which it might be said, they may not be lies, but they fall far short of telling all the truth. They are denatured like white bread.

Jesus put it very clearly:

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" Matthew 4:4.

Jesus warned us, in both the Old and New Testament, about adding to His words or taking away from His words. And if poor nutrition comes from eating denatured physical foods, poor mental and spiritual nutrition comes from eating denatured spiritual foods. So beware of books written by human authors; I wouldn't say they should never be read, I would say that some of them have their value. But be sure that you are getting the truth, the whole truth, the unadulterated truth, and that it isn't some refined concoction which has had the essential minerals and vitamins left out.

We mentioned the problem of irregularity in eating, and here again, in the mental and spiritual, we have the counterpart. Successful living includes taking time regularly for study and prayer. Set apart time to be alone with God in nature. Let that be just as important a part of your life as your eating your physical meals.

We mentioned the problem of eating too rapidly and lack of thorough mastication. So we have today, in the mental and spiritual side, people racing through books, boasting how fast they can read. We have the blaring, glaring TV, which causes people to think that they're getting a lot of things in a short time with no

opportunity to masticate. Even if what was being presented was good fare, there needs to be time to digest, time to think, time to meditate on what we're looking at.

Then there is the matter of poor atmosphere. As we need the right atmosphere in order to get the most out of our physical meals, we need an atmosphere of love and peace to get the most out of our study of God's Word, and here is where nature helps us.

We're told that in Jesus' life, He often sought opportunity to go apart from the scene of His labor that He might be alone with God amid the flowers and the trees, listen to the bird songs. And in those surroundings, read the scrolls of the Scriptures.

And so today, if we will take the wonderful variety of truth that God has given us in nature and in His Word and in the experiences of life, and take time regularly to feed our souls and minds as well as our bodies, we can be built up in the most holy faith.

One of my favorite passages is found in this little gem called *The Song of Solomon*. The most wonderful love song of the ages. The second chapter of this wonderful song, verses 3 and 4. Here the bride sings of the love of the bridegroom, and each one of us can identify that bridegroom with Christ, and know that He loves us in an infinite loving way.

"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love" Song of Solomon 2:3-4.

Here are all the elements that we've studied tonight in proper balance and in beautiful arrangements. Atmosphere? Oh, yes. The atmosphere of love. Delicious food served in an atmosphere of relaxation with love blessing all. Let us take time to eat physically, and shall I say even more importantly, to take time to eat spiritually.

And remember that a small amount from the Word of God or from nature or any of these other sources, eaten in a relaxed way, and enjoyed in an atmosphere of relaxation will do us more good than to race through a lot of pages merely hunting information. We need the blessing that comes with communion with God.

"An intensity such as never before, was seen as taking possession of the world. In amusement, in money-making, in the contest for power, in the very struggle for existence, there is a terrible force that engrosses body and mind and soul. In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking. He bids us come apart and commune with Him. 'Be still and know that I am God.'

“Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need” *Education*, page 260.

And then this beautiful passage from the Song of Solomon is quoted:

“As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love” Song of Solomon 2:3–4.

May this be the happy lot of each one here, that your physical nutrition, as well as the nutrition of mind and soul, maybe optimum; that you may be built up in body and mind and soul, and restored at last to the image of the One who made you in His image; that you might reflect His glory through all eternity.

[Testimony service follows]

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