

Theology of Food

Ecclesiastes 3:11-13 He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. I know that *there is* no good in them, but for *a man* to rejoice, and to do good in his life. And also that every man should eat and drink, and **enjoy** the good of all his labour, it *is* the **gift** of God.

Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 Behold *that* which I have seen: *it is* **good** and comely *for one* to eat and to drink, and to **enjoy** the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it *is* his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this *is* the **gift** of God.

Introduction

- Food is important – it's really important to some people
- We have TV shows and programs about food and how to prepare food, websites and cookbooks with recipes, restaurants of varying types and cuisines, and we have various times for eating – breakfast, second breakfast, lunch, dinner supper, snacks, desserts, appetizers etc.
- Think about all of the various food diets: atkins, south beach, mediterranean, keto, paleo, low carb, low fat, low calorie, intermittent fasting, carnivore, clean eating, whole 30, vegan, cabbage soup diet, grapefruit diet, liquid diet (why can't there be a cookie diet)
- The Bible speaks about food – Genesis starts out with Adam and Eve eating the fruit that God told them not to eat – God gave manna to the Israelites in wilderness for 40 years – Jesus fed 5,000 people with fish and bread – and the Bible ends speaking about a future Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Heaven

I. Definitions

- A.** Food – substance consisting essentially of protein, carbohydrate, fat, and other nutrients used in the body to sustain life, for growth and to furnish energy
- B.** Meal – any of the regular occasions in a day when a reasonably large amount of food is eaten, such as breakfast, lunch, or dinner (supper)
- C.** Snack – a small amount of food eaten between meals

- D.** Diet – a special course of food to which one restricts oneself, either to lose weight or for medical reasons
- E.** Fasting – abstinence from food or drink or both for health, ritualistic, religious, or ethical purposes
- F.** Feasting – an elaborate and usually abundant meal often accompanied by a ceremony or entertainment often called a banquet
- G.** Anorexia – an eating disorder characterized by restriction of food intake leading to low body weight, typically accompanied by intense fear of gaining weight and disturbed perception of body weight and image
- H.** Bulimia – an eating disorder characterized by regular, often secretive bouts of overeating followed by self-induced vomiting or purging, strict dieting, or extreme exercise, associated with persistent and excessive concern with body weight
- I.** Gluttony – characterized by a limitless appetite for food and drink and overindulgence to the point where one is no longer eating just to live, but rather living to eat

II. Extreme Positions about Food

- A.** Gluttony and overindulging – no restraints on eating
- B.** Over obsession about thinness, looks and weight
- C.** Anorexia – fear of weight gain or being fat
- D.** Punishing yourself by not eating
- E.** Bulimia – eating and then purging your stomach

III. Biblical Principles and a Theology of Food

- A.** God gave us food for daily nourishment
 - 1.** Adam and Eve were given vegetables, fruit and plants for food
Genesis 1:29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.
 - 2.** After the flood mankind could eat meat
Genesis 9:3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

3. The New Testament speaks about God revealing to Peter that all kinds of meat were clean to eat

Acts 10:9-16 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

- B. God has promised to provide food for us – we should not worry about food

Matthew 6:25-26 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Matthew 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

- C. What we eat and how we eat should bring glory unto the Lord

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

- D. Food is a good gift provided by God for our nourishment and pleasure

Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 Behold *that* which I have seen: *it is good* and comely *for one* to eat and to drink, and to *enjoy* the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth,

and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this *is* the gift of God.

- E. There is a principal of giving thanks to God before eating – we should also be thankful for those who grow or raise food, process it, package it, sell it, deliver it and prepare it

Acts 27:35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat.

- F. There are times when fasting from food is appropriate – a meal is replaced with a time of prayer; fasting is an opportunity to remind our bodies that we need and want God more than food

Matthew 6:16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

- G. There are times when feasting is appropriate – there will be a heavenly feast someday at the marriage supper of the Lamb

Genesis 21:8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the *same* day that Isaac was weaned.

Revelation 19:9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

- H. Recognize that we can become controlled and addicted by food and drink
- 1 Corinthians 6:12** All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

- I. We should use food to be a blessing to others – a time for fellowship, conversation and outreach

Mark 2:15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

1 Peter 4:9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

- J. We should seek to honor others and their choices and preferences when we choose to eat together

Romans 14:13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

Romans 14:21 *It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.*

Romans 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

1 Corinthians 8:13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

IV. Practical Thoughts

A. Lessons to learn as a child and to teach your children

1. Try new foods – even the things you don't think you will like
2. No complaining about what is being served – be thankful

Philippians 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

B. Lessons for all of us to learn

1. There is such a variety of foods that we can enjoy from various areas of the country, cultures and time periods
2. Your body has limits on food – eat within your personal limits – that which is good for you, that which your body can tolerate, that which you enjoy
3. Don't be too busy to eat healthy or to eat regularly
4. Comfort food should not take the place of the God of comfort
5. Enjoy your food, but don't make being a foodie an idol
6. Eat only as much as is necessary to maintain a healthy body and fully enjoy every bite as a gift from God

Conclusion

- Spiritual bread is just as important than physical break

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Psalms 34:8 O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.