

GROWING IN GRACE
"The Nutrition of Spiritual Growth"
2 Peter 3:18

INTRODUCTION:

1. Anorexia is a prevalent eating disorder.
 - a) People who develop this disease do so because they have an all-consuming desire to be thin.

2. Anorexia sufferers will starve themselves ignoring their bodies cravings for food.
 - a) All because they have chosen to put their **PHYSICAL APPEARANCE** above their **HEALTH**.

3. **TODAY** - Many Christians are suffering from **SPIRITUAL ANOREXIA**
 - a) **NOW WATCH THIS** - Starving themselves even though God has provided nourishment in His **WORD**.
 - 1) **WHY?** Because of a desire to appear attractive to their world.
 - b) **THE BIBLE IS FOOD FOR THE SOUL!!!!**

4. **Matthew 4:4**

5. **John 5:39-40**

6. We must be absolutely clear that the **BIBLE** is the **INSPIRED WORD OF GOD**.
 - a) **2 Timothy 3:16**
 - b) **Matthew 5:17-18**
 - c) **Isaiah 55:8-9**

7. **Ezekiel 3:1-3**

I. DESIRING THE WORD

1. **1 Peter 2:2**

2. What **MILK** is to the **BODY**, the **WORD** is to the **SOUL**.

3. **1 Peter 2:2**
 - a) **This illustration is critical!!!**
 - 1) Peter is NOT talking about an occasional smack from God's Word.

A. THE REAL DEAL

1. *1 Peter 2:2*

a) "*long for the pure spiritual milk*"

1) "*pure*" - means undiluted, without mixture.

2. There are too many **WOKE, FEEL GOOD CHURCHES** with **SUGAR COATED MESSAGES** aimed at not offending someone.

a) The warning here is, don't be fooled by accepting diluted truth!!!

B. EMBRACING A NUTRITIONAL PLAN

1. It's a given that mothers do not feed their babies for TWO HOURS on SUNDAY, so they can go the rest of the week without feeding.

2. TRUTH!!! **BABIES EAT EVERY COUPLE HOURS!!**

a) Why? Because they get HUNGRY AGAIN.

3. We cannot stuff ourselves on Sunday and live off that until the NEXT SUNDAY.

a) But that's exactly what Christian's trying to do spiritually.

4. Babies eat regularly!!! **Why?**

a) Because they get hungry.

5. Why don't we feed on God's Word more than we do?

a) Either we aren't hungry for it.

b) **Or** because we're trying to satisfy our hunger with cheap substitutes.

6. *Job 23:12*

7. **WOW!!!!** Believers who aren't regularly feeding on God's Word will be malnourished.

8. **VERY IMPORTANT:** When we want to hear from God in His Word more than we want to eat, we are on our way to developing a hunger for the WORD.

C. HUNGER FOR THE BASICS

1. When Peter uses the word "MILK", he is referring to the basics of the Christian faith.

2. *Hebrews 5:12-13*

3. Hebrews 6:1-2

a) "Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine..."

- 1) "Of Christ"
- 2) "repentance from dead works"
- 3) "and of faith towards God"
- 4) "instructions about washings"
- 5) "the laying on of hands"
- 6) "the resurrection of the dead"
- 7) "and eternal judgment"

b) These are foundational, Elementary, basic doctrines of the faith and there is nothing wrong with these.

4. **LISTEN UP:** You can't go to college with only an Elementary Education.

a) Milk is crucial for the New Christian!!!

- 1) But then it's time to move on.

II. MOVING ON TO SOLID FOOD

A. MOVE FROM BABY FOOD

1. Turn to **Hebrews 5**.

2. The writer of Hebrews is grilling up a NICE THICK SPIRITUAL STEAK!!!

a) SPIRITUAL MEAT ABOUT - The Priesthood of Christ in relation to the Old Testament priesthood of Melchizedek

1) **Hebrews 5:11**

a. "dull of hearing" - means to be "Mule headed"

2) That means they were thick-skulled, immature, stubborn and refused to grow.

3) **THEY WE 30** somethings with baby bottles in their mouth.

3. **1 Corinthians 3:1-2, 3**

B. A HUNGER FOR SOLID FOOD

1. **WHAT DOES IT TAKE?**

a) What does it take to move on from drinking MILK to desiring and digesting the **MEAT OF SCRIPTURE?**

1) MEAT is what the HOLY SPIRIT wants us to feed on.

2. **LISTEN UP: BIBLE DOCTRINE IS MILK**

a) Bible Doctrine is Information (Knowledge) for the mind so that the Believer has Basic Biblical Truth.

b) *Hebrews 6:1-2*

3. SOLID FOOD is more than DOCTRINE

a) **KNOWLEDGE - UNDERSTANDING - WISDOM**

b) Solid food is UNDERSTANDING and **WISDOM** which is the **APPLICATION** of TRUTH to the BELIEVERS LIFE.

4. *Hebrews 5:14*

5. NOW WATCH THIS: We know we are mature enough to partake of Solid Food, when we can take DOCTRINE and use it skillfully to make decisions from a Biblical World View.

6. VERY IMPORTANT: WHAT I AM TEACHING YOU IS MILK

a) *1 Corinthians 2:15*

b) My goal is for you to DEVELOP Spiritual Discernment.

III. GRADUATING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

1. What we need to grow from Milk Christians to MEAT Christians.

a) We need to be able to apply the Truths of God's Word to cultivate our relationship with Jesus Christ.

b) The intimacy when applied, especially during times of trials, produces Great Growth.

2. To develop spiritual maturity requires that you read God's Word so you know what it says.

a) **Study the Word** of God so you understand what it says

1) *2 Timothy 2:15*

b) **Memorize the Word** so you have it when you need it.

1) *Psalms 119:11*

c) Take every opportunity to **hear the Word** of God proclaimed and taught so you can learn to live life and make decisions based on it. (WISDOM)

1) *Hebrews 5:13-14*

3. KNOWLEDGE - UNDERSTANDING - WISDOM