

IN CLOSING...

Are you hungry enough to start a balanced diet? I believe that we are some of the most blessed people on earth. We have the freedoms to go and do whatever we please. We have the capability to make our life style the healthiest and happiest that anyone possibly can. Yet, I look around and notice that everyone does not take advantage of this for one reason or another. It's not my job to judge them, but I will make this observation; We could all do a better job of feeding the right things into our daily lives. Our lifestyles can and do reflect whether or not we are nourishing our hearts and souls. If it's garbage in, then it's garbage out. However, if we think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtue and praise, then we are being obedient. Let's start today and try to feed our souls the right kind of diet.

BEGINNING THOUGHTS...

It seems that everyone loves to eat. Try going out on a Friday or Saturday night and the lines are usually very long. I often think that if I were going to own a business, it would need to be a restaurant. When we have big days at church, homecoming, bridal or baby showers, graduation celebrations or fellowships, food is always involved. Food is the sustaining fuel of our life. We must have food or nutrition of some form to live. So why are so many people malnourished?

Malnourishment is a condition where the body lacks sufficient nutrients to function because of insufficient or poorly balanced diet, faulty digestion or utilization of foods. Sometimes it's caused by people trying to diet. Often it occurs in countries where there is not enough food. Then there are people who are ill and not able to feed themselves. Intervention may have to be made in these cases. This could involve being fed intravenously or through feeding tubes. It's neither pleasant nor natural to be fed in this manner. I've had family members who've experienced this, and they neither wanted nor were happy about this situation. If left untreated, malnourishment can result in misery and death.

A soul that hasn't accepted Christ is lost without hope of an eternal life. Receiving Christ saves the soul. Then nourishment comes by Scripture reading, listening to God's Word, prayer and daily communion with God. It's a buffet of everything pure, honest and noble. Fill your plates and never let your body experience the hunger pains of apathy, sin and neglect or being away from God. He can give you everything you need for a healthy, vibrant life of happiness, peace and joy.

Feeding Our Souls

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FOOD

BODY FITNESS GOAL: Feast on the Word of God, realizing the Word is our food and Christ is the Word.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: *“And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ” (1 Corinthians 10:3,4).*

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (John 4:34).

- Write the Core Development verses on a 3x5 card or in your journal.
- If time permits, pick out a couple of verses from each of the foods listed on p. 25 in *Treasure*, to read aloud.
- Did you find other references? Name some of the ones you found.
- Earthly food leaves us wanting and needing more. Why is that? *(We have to keep replacing the physical food to keep our bodies working.)*
- Did Jesus enjoy physical food? *(Yes, He especially enjoyed fish fries—John 21:8-12; Mark 6:41-42; Luke 24:41-43).*
- Do you enjoy “breaking bread” with friends? *(Acts 27:35)*
- What is the only everlasting food? *(Jesus and His Word—John 6:48, 51; 14:23; Isaiah 55:2; Jeremiah 3:15.)*
- When we feast on the Word of God, how does that nourish our souls? *(1) Gives stability—Matthew 7:24; (2) Growth—I Peter 2:2; (3) Inspiration—2 Timothy 3:16; (4) Joy—Jeremiah 15:16; and (5) Wisdom—Colossians 3:16.)*
- What is the result of enjoying spiritual food? *(We get to eat of the tree of life—Revelation 2:7.)*

COOL DOWN: Close with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for how God nourishes your soul.

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FELLOWSHIP

BODY FITNESS GOAL: Gather together with other believers in worship, praise and exhortation.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).*

- Write the Core Development verse on a 3x5 card or in your journal.
- What does this verse mean to you?
- Go over the questions on p. 27 in *Treasure* and share answers.
- Why should we fellowship with other Christians? *(1) We’re called to—1 Corinthians 1:9; (2) For communion with other saints—Luke 24:15; (3) To feel God’s presence—Matthew 18:20; (4) To warm our hearts—Luke 24:32; (5) To share testimonies—1 John 1:3.)*
- When you worship and fellowship together with a body of believers, what do they become to you? *(Family—Ephesians 2:15,19; John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Matthew 12:50.)*
- Do you enjoy that fellowship with believers? *(Psalm 119:63; Acts 2:42; Philippians 1:3,5; 1 John 1:7.)*
- Why would your soul be malnourished if you don’t worship and fellowship with other believers? *(1) Lack of spiritual insight—John 6:63,64; (2) Lack of fruitfulness—Matthew 13:22 ;(3) Emptiness of life—Luke 11:23-24; (4) Shallowness—Luke 8:13; (5) Wrong associations—1 Kings 11:4.)*
- For Moses to be called God’s friend, do you think he experienced the right kind of fellowship with Him? *(Yes—Exodus 20:21-22; 24:2; 33:9.)*
- Name someone else God walked with? *(Enoch—Genesis 5:22; Noah—Genesis 6:9)*
- Why were they allowed this privilege? *(1) They found grace in God’s sight—Exodus 33:17; (2) Could speak face to face—Deuteronomy 34:10; (3) They believed God as Abraham did—James 2:23; (4) They feared Him—Malachi 2:5; Joshua 24:14.)*

COOL DOWN: Sing “Praise Him! Praise Him!”, *REJOICE The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book*, p. 50. Dismiss by thanking God for fellowship with Him and other believers.

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FRIENDS

BODY FITNESS GOAL: Realize the value of friendships and recognize Jesus as our greatest friend.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: *“A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24).*

- Write the Core Development verse on a 3x5 card and in your journal.
- Go over the activities and questions on p. 29 in *Treasure*.
- Who were some of Jesus' closest friends? (*John—John 13:23, 21:20; Lazarus, Mary and Martha—John 11:3,5; Apostles—Luke 22:14-15*)
- How can we be Jesus' friend? (*By obeying Him—John 15:14.*)
- What great friendship do you think of in the Old Testament? (*David and Jonathan—1 Samuel 18:1,20:17; 2 Samuel 1:26*)
- Name some people in the Bible who were consistent in their friendship. (*Thomas—John 11:16; Priscilla and Aquila—Romans 16:3-4; Ruth—Ruth 1:16; Elisha—2 Kings 2:2.*)
- Do you have friends that no matter how long it's been between time together, you still enjoy them and can pick up talking just as if you were never apart? Why do you think this is? (*Your friendship is: (1) True, unchangeable—Proverbs 17:17; (2) Old friends are to be cherished—Proverbs 27:10; (3) You enrich each other—Proverbs 27:17; and (4) You're better together—Ecclesiastes 4:9.*)
- How long will Jesus love us? (*Forever—Hebrews 13:5; John 14:18; Jeremiah 31:3; Isaiah 54:10.*)
- Is Jesus your friend? (*John 15:13-14*)

COOL DOWN: Close with the song, “What A Friend We Have In Jesus” and the other suggestions listed in *Treasure*.

Feeding Our Souls

FATHER

BODY FITNESS GOAL: Feed our souls by spending time with the Everlasting Father, clinging to Him and ever trusting Him by faith.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: *“But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand” (Isaiah 64:8).*

- Write the Core Development verse on a 3x5 card and in your journal.
- Did you play with mud pies or play dough as a child? Have you ever made anything from clay that was beautiful?
- Read Genesis 2:7,8. Would you have enjoyed seeing this formation come about?
- So who was the first “father” on earth? (*Adam—Genesis 4:1*)
- Do fathers have responsibilities toward their children?
- Name some of these. (*1) Love; (2) Provision of needs; (3) Care and proper teaching; (4) Safe environment; (5) Preparation for the future and on and on.*)
- Notice that love was listed first. What if all a child had was love. Would that be enough? (*No, children have to have a variety of things to thrive and grow in this life.*)
- Read John 3:16. God loved His Son; yet, He gave Him to die for our sins. That is sacrificial love.)
- While here on earth, though, who provided for Jesus' other needs? (*His earthly Father, Joseph, and His mother, Mary. They offered (1) Protection—Matthew 2:13-14; (2) Security and care—Matthew 2:19-21; (3) Gracious words—Luke 4:22; and (4) Raised Him in the proper manner—Matthew 2:23; Luke 2:40-42.*)
- Do fathers need to discipline their children as well as love them? (*Yes—Proverbs 13:24, 19:18,23:13.*)
- Is a father's influence important to a child? (*Proverbs 22:6*)
- Name some fathers in the Bible (besides the Father of the prodigal son) who showed their love. (*1) Jacob—Genesis 37:35,46:30; (2) David—2 Samuel 12:16; (3) Jarius—Mark 5:23.*)
- How does a father feel when His children do well? (*Proud—Proverbs 10:1*)

COOL DOWN: Thank God for fathers and ask Him to increase your faith.