

## Spiritual Dieting

I've been trying to stay on a diet for my stomach and getting so frustrated with it. The Lord was so precious and spoke to me about *spiritual dieting*. It wasn't that He wanted to help me control my urges, but change those urges. He wants to give us a new appetite for good things that will nourish us. Wouldn't that be wonderful? Instead of being in a constant uphill battle against the flesh, and praying every day for the strength to overcome it, what if we just wanted spiritual things, to just want to be with Lord, to simply desire all that is good and pure and Jesus? Thank God that is His plan!!!

Just like I constantly watch my food intake and try not to eat what's going to make me sick, I can only do it for so long. Everyday I'm fighting my appetite, what my nature craves. Once in awhile the temptation comes right in front of me and I fail miserably. Then I feel terrible, and have to wake up the next day and prepare for another battle. It is so frustrating, like the movie "Groundhog day" where he wakes up to the same day until he perfects it and can move on. Living like this is much like our Christian walk if Christ has not been revealed as our life. We try so hard: get in the Word "eat right", don't sin or get in sinful circumstances (like eating too many sweets), for we know that this is bad for our spiritual health. We're just constantly fighting, "don't look over there, don't have this in the house, don't be around that for you might be tempted." It becomes our life, our Christian walk, and ultimately our downfall. We become so distracted by ourselves that we lose sight of Jesus!

We can do this for days, weeks, even months, but eventually we will all stumble and fall. But then we just get it under the blood and start all over again! Thank the Lord we can get it under the blood, but what a miserable existence. The word says, "*Can an Ethiopian change his skin, or a leopard his spots?*" We are fighting a losing battle. Instead we could live by a new nature, a new mind, a new appetite! Instead of fighting ourselves and what we want/do by nature, we can live by a new life! That life wants to eat healthy things, that life automatically, effortlessly loves, and desires communion with the Father and the Son. That life will react the way the Lamb does.

Imagine if you didn't have to try to resist that jelly doughnut, but you just had no taste for it and instead you really wanted a salad!! That is what it could be like. Mostly we see that we have two options: we can be legalistic and try to control our flesh, or we have this incorrect view of grace – like I can eat 50 jelly donuts and just not gain any weight. But that's not what grace is! There are spiritual and physical principles. The Lord could supernaturally touch you, but if you ate all those doughnuts everyday, chances are you're going to get bigger. Grace means that He provided Himself for us to partake of and live by His nature. Instead of giving us the strength to win our daily battle against the jelly donuts, He gives us new appetites, new taste buds!! We don't have to focus our every thought and strength on resisting the flesh, we can be transformed by the renewing of our mind as we look into His glorious face, instead of looking into our own! Hallelujah, then we are free to focus on Jesus and His heart, and His needs and His body.

I realized that fear comes in during this “diet”, fear of failure, fear of the consequences of getting sick, just plain old, ugly fear. We can do that spiritually also. We fear so much of letting go because we know deep down that we could fail at any minute, so we must keep it under control. Perfect love casts out fear because fear causes torment. The Lord has such a higher way for us!

Maybe some have been hanging on so tight that they are afraid to let go even a tiny bit, and let Christ be their life because they know that they’ll fall right off the wagon if they try that! But the beauty of it is, when you allow Christ to be revealed in you as your life, you won’t crave the temptation you’re wrestling with and battling everyday! For the flesh has been crucified with it’s lust and affections!

*Galatians 5:24 “And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”*

That’s some good news! We are bound up the worst when we have a slight handle on our flesh. It’s when we lose control and fail miserably that we see that we cannot overcome this mountain, and at that point Christ will come sweeping in and sustain us and show us that we truly are joined unto Him and have His life and nature running through us!

So let’s not be on a constant spiritual diet, where we become grumpy and irritable, never happy, always striving and instead ask God to reveal His nature, His appetite and His life in us! And walk everyday in the joy and fulfillment of being one with Him!