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BUILD YOUR APPETITE

What are delights of the eyes that have filled but not nourished you?

What are some specific differences in you when you are spiritually nourished and not?

How would your life be different every day if you were properly nourished before engaging with the world?

Psalm 73:1-3 – ¹Truly God is good to the upright, to those who are pure in heart. ²But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped. ³For I was envious of the arrogant; I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

1) **Hunger From the Heart...**

We are drowning in abundance. Our struggle is knowing when to say enough. It's true in most facets of life. Storage overflows, food spoils, calendars spill over. It's become natural for this material abundance to be a proxy for our love. Jesus is not tempted by these things. He wants our presence. Our complete attention on His being, His teaching, His ministry of grace to us. The more we submerge ourselves in His presence, the stronger our desire to be with Him, like Him. We begin to hunger from the heart, which leads us past the sink holes into which most of life disappears and into the enriching presence of God.

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♦**Trust our chef**: Our reflections on joy often recall healthy interactions with others, experiences of loveliness, and the fulfillment of human potential. Truth, goodness, beauty, these are the ingredients God uses to give us life. We should trust our chef. “Truly God is good to the upright (Psalm 73:1),” nourishing those eager to live well. He does not stir our heart’s desire and leave it frustrated without the means to pursue it. He builds your appetite for His goodness to drive us forward past the buffet of cheap alternatives that fill without satisfying.

♦**Desire nutrition for vitality**: God blessed us to enjoy food as a sensory experience and be fueled by it. With a little skill and care, healthy foods are delightful to see, hear, smell, touch, and taste. Anything good can be appropriated by the devil to tempt us to destruction. These sensory delights can be used to make deadly things desirable. “Those who are pure in heart (v1),” are those who spend time with God and desire nutrition for vitality above all. Being the chef He is, God makes life spectacular using the simple ingredients that promote our wellbeing.

II) To Remain Steady...

Those who push themselves physically learn the lesson about nutrition. We don’t notice the difference between healthy food and the fake stuff in the ordinary course of life. When we demand a lot from ourselves, we quickly feel the difference. Plenty of people have suffered tremendously by trying to refuel with candy and snacks instead of the nutrients to remain steady on one’s feet. Those seeking maximum performance build their diet around their goals. Those without the discipline fall short.

♦**Unmet hunger weakens**: The primary signal of hunger for most of us is our stomach. It aches when it’s empty. It will stop aching when it is filled, regardless of what filled it. The hunger for life can be the same way. Our fleshly mind wants to be filled by anything that is not unpleasant. It does not discriminate between that which is healthy and not. “But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled (v2),” when I filled life with pleasant but empty pastimes. The flesh was filled but the spirit remained empty. Unmet hunger weakens our spirits, leaving them as likely to falter as a hungry athlete’s body.

♦**Weak legs fail**: The strain of hunger weakens the body until it falters. We stumble, mumble, hallucinate. Eventually, weak legs fail completely, and we fall over. Our spirits react similarly. “My steps had nearly slipped (v2),” because my spirit was too deprived to remain steady. Deprived of the nourishing presence of Jesus, minor inconveniences are seen as abuse. We lash out or give into bad behavior, justified by our state of weakness. We neglect to admit to ourselves that our deprivation is the result of our choice to skip time with God.

III) Not the Eyes...

It’s easy to overlook our choice to ignore God. Our eyes don’t see Him. There is constant struggle within whether to try to feed the hunger of our heart or our eyes. Everything we perceive by our senses seems so real. It’s an illusion. The earth isn’t flat, stars do not go away in the daytime, your crazy neighbor isn’t the incarnation of evil. Living well comes from satisfying the hunger of the heart, not the eyes. We build this appetite by spending time with Jesus.

♦**Beware attractive packaging**: Junk food vendors understand us better than we understand ourselves. They put more effort into the appearance of their product than the product itself. Most of our hunger begins in our eyes. Beware attractive packaging designed to stimulate hunger for destruction. When I let my eyes linger until my mouth watered, “I was envious of the arrogant (v3).” We start to crave the things we know will destroy us. Learn to love the sight of undecorated goodness. Jesus will not use promotional packaging.

♦**Junk food kills**: Spend time with those who eat junk food regularly and we learn all the ways it weakens and destroys the body. It’s simple, junk food kills. So does the way of life that chases spiritual junk food. The delights of the eyes destroy the soul. Slowly, imperceptibly. We think we are in control but somehow can’t stop. “I saw the prosperity of the wicked (v3),” which over time convinces me to compromise myself in the pursuit of the same. We become so full of spiritual junk we have no time for Jesus. We ask Him to fill us but run off before He can. Build your appetite and make time to eat the bread of life.

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