

Counterfeit Gods—Defeating the Idols that Battle for Our Hearts

“The god of Food”

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John 6:26-27, 35

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- A. Very few of us would put up with a life that is devoid of _____.
- B. In our modern culture and society, we have more _____ time and _____ to spend on pleasure.
- C. Idleman groups the counterfeit gods under three headings: the temple of _____, the temple of _____, and the temple of _____.
- D. It is hard to argue the god of food is less than a _____ in our country.
- E. It is not just those who are _____ that struggle with the god of food, so can those who are consumed with _____ and _____.
- F. In the Bible, food is mostly treated as a _____ from _____.
- G. Some people look to the god of food to...
 - 1. To give themselves a feeling of _____.
 - 2. To give themselves an _____ or distraction from _____.
 - 3. To give them _____ or _____ from harm.
- H. Let's turn to the Gospel of John and consider a moment in Jesus' ministry when we see how food became His _____. (John 6:26-27, 35)
- I. Do I believe that my real hunger and thirst can only be satisfied by Jesus? (Mt. 5:6; Ps. 34:8; Mt. 4:4; Jn. 4:32, 34)
- J. Questions for introspection:
 - 1. Do I eat more for pleasure than for _____?
 - 2. When and why do I _____?
 - 3. Am I able to exercise Holy Spirit given _____?

The god of food promised us a feast, but we came up empty. He invited us to consume until it consumed our lives. We tasted everything until nothing had taste anymore. And so finally we came to Jesus. We discovered that he offers the one true feast. He fills our every need. Every hunger ultimately leads back to him.

David wrote, 'Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure.'

Jesus frees us from an abusive, dysfunctional relationship with food because he is our portion and in him we discover what we were searching for all along. If we seek our joy and meaning in food, then the source of our joy always disappears and always must be found again – a consumable god. It is different with Jesus.

Nothing tastes better than the joy and satisfaction of knowing Christ. Nothing nourishes the soul as he does. Nothing feeds and strengthens and renews us like the time we spend with him each day.

He bids us to take and eat. He bids us to come to the well where he offers living water, so that we never thirst again.

Think of a time when you've come in from the hot sun, drenched with sweat and with a parched throat, and downed a cool glass of ice water. Did anything ever taste better?

Such a moment is more than a vague hint of what it feels like to be spiritual starving and to be given the bread of life, to have a thirsty soul and to drink deep from his living water.

Ironically, it is only when we find our meaning in Christ, when he takes the throne of our lives, that earthly food recovers its taste, its delight. In its right place food is a great gift from God. (Kyle Idleman, "Jesus My Portion")

Answer Key: A. pleasure. B. leisure, money. C. pleasure, power, love. D. central, power. E. overweight, diet, exercise. F. gift, God. G.1. control. G.2. escape, reality. G.3. insulation, protection. H. competition. J.1. nourishment. J.2. overindulge. J.3. self-control.