

How to Postpone Your Funeral

Your questions answered concerning the Bible's health principles...

Question #1 – 1 Timothy 4:4 says, “Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused.” How can you say then that we should follow those Old Testament health laws?

Answer: The context of this passage is very helpful:

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving” (1 Tim. 4:1-4)

The warning against a latter-day apostasy in these verses involves a number of heresies--following devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from certain foods. Perhaps the greatest misunderstanding has arisen over verse 4, which states that “every creature of God is good.” This means that every created thing has been made for a need and a purpose. But some suppose that every animal is therefore good to be eaten if it is properly prayed over and blessed by the prayer of thanksgiving. Not so! Praying over a buzzard, or mole or bat will not make it fit for food. Paul hastened to add verse 5 in case anyone should come to wrong conclusions from verse 4. He says:

“For it [the animal or the food] is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” (1 Tim. 4:5)

Ah, now we know what sanctifies it as proper for the diet. The Word of God must approve it (First factor), and then the prayer of thanksgiving will sanctify it to be eaten (Second factor). Are there certain foods that the Word of God does not “sanctify”? Certainly. (See Lev. 3:17; 11:2-20; Deut. 14:3-21) Will our prayer sanctify that which God's Word has condemned and forbidden? We cannot “sanctify” that which God has explicitly forbidden. Please note that those who “sanctify themselves” while eating unclean meats will be destroyed at Christ's second coming (Isa. 66:15-17).

Question #2 – Doesn't the Bible state in Acts 10 that God has “cleansed” the unclean animals?

Answer: To use Acts 10 as an excuse for eating unclean foods is to ignore the message of the passage. The tenth chapter of Acts is not dealing with the subject of diet, but rather with an important issue that had arisen in the early church.

The Jews considered the Gentiles as being unclean. God had instructed Cornelius, a Gentile, to send men to visit Peter (Acts 10:1-8). Ordinarily, Peter would have refused to meet the servants of Cornelius because Jewish law forbade entertaining Gentiles. But God gave Peter a vision, as a simple illustration, preparing him for this visit from the Gentiles. God specifically told Peter what the vision was about, and Peter understood. What God was attempting to teach the disciples had to do with people, not pigs!

“And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” (Acts 10:28)

How did God show Peter that? With the illustration of the sheet with unclean animals/beasts. In prophetic vision, God likens beasts/animals to kingdoms (Dan.7:17). Thus these unclean animals were a symbol of the kingdoms (Gentiles) that the Jewish mind considered “unclean”. Please note that the verse does not say, “God hath showed me that I should not call any *pig* unclean.” It isn’t talking about pigs at all. God is referring to people.

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.”
(Acts 10:34)

Peter understood that God was talking about persons. In the next chapter (Acts 11), the church members criticized Peter for speaking with these Gentiles. So Peter told them the whole story of his vision and its meaning. And the Bible says:

“When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” (Acts 11:18)

To the superficial scholars who attempt to justify eating unclean flesh from this passage, I would ask a simple question. If God cleansed the pig, why is it still a pig?

When God gave Moses the dietary laws of the book of Leviticus, scientific evidence did not exist to show that God knew what He was talking about. People obeyed just because God said so. Today we have the evidence of science as an *added* reason. We don’t have to eat what is unclean unless we close our eyes to scientific evidence and disobey God at the same time. An article entitled, “Must our Pork Remain Unsafe?” was published in the *Reader’s Digest* some years ago. It states:

“A single serving of infective pork - even a single mouthful can kill or cripple or condemn the victim to a lifetime of aches and pains. For this unique disease, trichinosis, there is no cure. With no drug to stop them, the worms may spread through the muscular tissues of the entire human system. Physicians have confused trichinosis with some fifty ailments, ranging from typhoid fever to acute alcoholism... That pain in your arm or leg may be arthritis or rheumatism, but it may be trichinosis; That pain in your back may mean a gall-bladder involvement, but it may mean trichinosis.” (Readers Digest, March, 1950)

It does not appear as if God has cleansed the pig as yet! New Testament Christians can still get trichinosis from eating that which God has expressly forbidden.

Question #3 – Didn’t Jesus state that what goes in the mouth does not defile us? Please explain Matthew 15:11 (also Mark 7:18,19).

Answer: Again the oft overlooked context explains the intent of Christ’s words. Verse 2 of Matthew 15 gives the context. The Pharisees asked Jesus:

“Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.” (Matt. 15:2)

Clearly the issue is NOT eating, but washing. To say that nothing you put into your mouth could possibly harm you would be to take a fanatical, extreme position which was not intended by the Lord’s statement at all.

The Pharisees were accusing Christ’s disciples for not following “the tradition of the elders”. Had the disciples been eating unclean meats the Pharisees would certainly have accused them of disobeying the Scriptures. With this background, let’s examine Christ’s statement in Matthew 15:11, and then His own explanation of what He meant.

"Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." (Matt. 15:11)

What did Jesus mean? Peter asked him,

"Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said ... Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man." (Matt. 15:15-20)

Mark 7:1, 2 indicate there was a contention between the Pharisees and certain of Jesus' disciples because the disciples did not go through the ceremonial washing of hands before they ate. The Jews in the time of Christ had added significantly to the commandments of God by instituting all kinds of ritualistic washings and ceremonies that had to be performed before a person ate. Jesus' disciples did not perform these ceremonies. According to Jewish law, what they ate was therefore unclean.

Please note that this discussion has nothing to do with clean and unclean animals as described in Leviticus 11, but instead is talking about the ceremonial washing of hands that made foods clean ceremonially. God never commanded His people to do this; it was a Jewish tradition. Mark 7:3-5 continues with an explanation of the charge of the Jewish leaders against the disciples of Jesus. Mark 7:6-13, contains Jesus' tremendous denunciation upon the Pharisees because they had rejected the commandment of God and yet were so meticulous about their own traditions. Verse 8 in particular notes that the tradition Jesus is speaking about is ceremonial washings. Jesus categorically states that if people worship by these traditions instead of the commandments of God, they are worshiping God in vain.

Finally, in Verses 15-20 Jesus specifically addresses the issue of the food that they eat being unclean because it did not go through the ceremonial washings. In Mark 7:19 Jesus declares He has purged all meats. The word translated "meat" is the Greek word *bromate*, which means "food." It does not refer to flesh food; it simply refers to any kind of food. Again, remember the context. The charge was that the disciples had eaten without going through the ceremonial washing of hands that the Jews required. Therefore, to the Jewish Pharisaical mind the food that they ate was thereby unclean. Jesus now categorically declares that whether they have gone through these elaborate washings or not does not affect the food. It does not make the food unclean, because food simply goes into the system and is excreted. As Jesus says in Verse 15, it cannot defile people or make them unclean simply because they did not go through these ritualistic washings.

Jesus was here declaring that ceremonial washings have nothing to do with food being either clean or unclean. This text has absolutely nothing to do with the clean and unclean animals of Leviticus 11. The issue is clearly whether or not Jesus requires His followers to practice the ritualistic washings of the Jews before they eat. He is answering the charge that the disciples are ceremonially unclean because they did not follow these ritualistic washings. Therefore Jesus declares that the ritualistic washings do not affect whether a person is clean or unclean, or whether his food is clean or unclean. The context, then, deals not with biological uncleanness, but with uncleanness supposedly incurred from the omission of ritual washings. See Verse 15. The kind of food the disciples ate (Verses 2 and 5) is not even referred to, but the way in which they ate it! Throughout, Christ is dealing with the commandments of God versus the traditions of men. To make this verse refer to the clean and unclean animals of Leviticus 11 is to ignore completely the meaning of the Greek and the context of the passage.

Question #4 – Romans 14 states that “nothing is unclean”, and “all things are pure.” Explain.

Answer: It is well to consider the entire chapter in its context. Paul was writing about a problem of judging among the apostolic believers. Verses 4, 10, 13 exhort against the sin of judging one another. And it was true that a serious division existed in that early church. The Gentile Christians were judging the Jewish Christians, and the Jewish Christians were judging the Gentile Christians.

What was the basis of the problem? What were they judging each other over? The Gentiles who had come into the church from paganism were offended because the Jewish Christians ate food that had been offered in sacrifice to idols. And the Jewish Christians judged the Gentile church members because they had no regard for the ceremonial days that they still observed from Judaism.

Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians was written less than a year before that to the Romans. 1 Corinthians 8 and Romans 14 deal with the same issues - “Now as touching things offered unto idols...” (1 Cor. 8:1) According to ancient practice, pagan priests carried on an extensive merchandise of the animal sacrifices offered to idols. Paul told the Corinthian believers, converts both from Judaism and from paganism, that inasmuch as an idol was nothing, there was nothing wrong in eating foods dedicated to it (food offered to idols). However, he clarifies not all had this “knowledge” and could not, with a free conscience, eat such foods.

Some of the Gentile converts were so fearful of eating meat offered to idols that they ate only vegetables. Paul spoke of them in verses 1 and 2. Paul elaborated on the “weak brother” further in 1 Corinthians 8:8-12, and how he esteemed the food unfit to be eaten. He counseled against becoming a stumbling block to the weak brother.

“And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.” (1 Cor. 8:11,12)

Compare this language with Romans 14:13-15:

“... That no man put a stumbling block ... to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat ... destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.” (Rom. 14:13-15)

The food offered to idols was not unclean food (See Acts 14:13) but was only esteemed so by the Gentile converts because it had been offered in sacrifice to idols. The issue was not over God’s prohibitions concerning unclean meats. Paul is not speaking of foods hygienically harmful. He is not suggesting that the Christian of strong faith may eat anything, regardless of its effect upon his physical well-being. This would have contradicted his teachings on the importance of taking care of the body temple (see 1 Cor. 3:16,17; 1 Cor. 6:19,20; 1 Cor. 10:31). The subject has nothing to do with unclean meats or the great weekly Sabbath.

5. How can you say that alcoholic beverages are harmful, since Jesus miraculously made wine at the wedding in Cana?

Answer: The miracle of Jesus changing water to wine (John 2) has often been cited as a reason for the use of alcoholic drinks. There is no evidence that the wine that Jesus made was intoxicating. What He made was fresh wine. Newly made wine isn’t intoxicating until some time after the process of fermentation or decay has set in. There is not a hint that Jesus produced alcohol, which is a poison, a product of death and decay. There is nothing wrong with drinking newly made wine, the fresh juice of the grape. It is a wholesome drink. Dr. William Patton in his book *Bible Wines*, states:

"The Greek word [for wine in John 2] is oinos... Oinos is a generic word, and, as such, includes all kinds of wine and all stages of the juice of the grape, and sometimes the clusters and even the vine... As the narrative is silent on the point, the character of the wine can only be determined by the ... moral influence of the miracle....

"The moral influence of the miracle will be determined by the character of the wine. It is pertinent to ask, Is it not derogatory to the character of Christ and the teaching of the Bible to suppose that he exerted his miraculous power to produce, according Alvord, 126 gallons [about 477 liters], and according to Smith, at least 60 gallons [227 liters] of intoxicating wine? – wine which inspiration had denounced as "a mocker," [Prov. 20:1] as "biting like a serpent," and "stinging like an adder," [Prov. 23:32] as "the poison of dragons," "the cruel venom of asps," [Deut. 32:33] and which the Holy Ghost had selected as the emblem of the wrath of God Almighty [Rev. 14:10]? Is it probable that He gave that to the guests ...?" (Bible Wines, p. 89,90 - emphasis his.)

Of course not! The wine that Jesus miraculously made was unfermented wine – what we refer to today as grape juice.

Question #6 – Are there medical studies that confirm these Biblical health principles?

Shellfish...

"In the first stage of nerve action, there is a massive flow of ions through channels in the walls of a nerve cell into the body of the cell itself. It was found that saxitoxin (ingredient found in shellfish) somehow clogs these channels and prevents the ion transfer from happening. Without the transfer, the cells fail to fire and paralysis occurs." Newsweek, "The Poison in Shellfish," January 10, 1972, p.39.

Caffeine...

"While it (caffeine) stimulates, it leaves the brain more fatigued after its action is over. It can do nothing but cause general nerve and brain fatigue unless adequate sleep is obtained." Olive T. Osborne, Principles of Therapeutics, p. 214.

"With the link between cigarettes and lung cancer already firmly established, it seemed only a matter of time before the epidemiologists would get around to showing that another breakfast tradition, the morning cup of coffee, may pose some dire hazards of its own. Coffee, in fact, has for some time been suspected as a promoter of heart disease; and now in the British journal Lancet, a Harvard researcher reports that it may also be linked to cancer of the bladder-particularly in women.

"The results showed that for women who drank one or more cups of coffee a day, the risk of developing bladder cancer was two and a half times greater than for those who drank less than this or none at all." Newsweek, July 12, 1971.

"A grim question was raised in mid-March about a habit enjoyed by half the American population: Does coffee cause cancer? "The New England Journal of Medicine reported that researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health had discovered an 'unexpected' statistical link between coffee and cancer of the pancreas, a gland behind the stomach that secretes digestive juices and insulin. Pancreatic cancer strikes some 24,000 Americans a year, nearly 99 percent of them fatally.

"The statistics indicated that a person who drank two cups of coffee a day ran twice as great a risk of pancreatic cancer as nondrinkers." U.S. News & World Report, March 23, 1981, p. 8.

"International incidence and mortality data have shown correlations of renal cancer with per capita intake of coffee, milk, meat, total fat, and animal protein" (Armstrong and Doll, 1975; Shennan, 1973). Diet, Nutrition and Cancer, ch. 17, p. 16.

In a study of the demographic characteristics of people who use caffeine, it was found that "high consumers were also less active in religion." "Somatic Manifestations of Caffeinism," Bruce S. Victor, Martin Lubetsky, and John F. Greden, M.D., Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, May 1981, p. 186.

"We found that caffeine impaired recall ability by about 20 percent." Self, Dec. 1984, p. 32.

Alcohol...

"Investigations into the effects of alcohol on the brain now indicate that drinking at moderate levels can impair cognitive powers even on the next day, when the drinker is sober." L. Gross, How Much Is Too Much? The Effects of Social Drinking, New York, NY: Random House, 1983, p. 161

"During the baseline memory task, moderate drinkers had significantly lower memory ratios than did light drinkers, suggesting that the heavier drinking may differentially impair the ability to retain information or possibly result in a faster decay of memory traces." "The Relationship of Age and Drinking Habits to the Effects of Alcohol on Memory in Women," Marilyn K Jones and Ben Morgan Jones, Journal of Studies on Alcohol, Vol. 41, No.1, 1980.

Pork...

The pig, we have come to realize, is an efficient producer of flesh. In fact, it is due to its unique digestive system that the pig can gain massive weight so rapidly. Unlike the cow (whose digestive system allows it to turn grass and grain into flesh over a period of 24 hours) the pig takes only about 3 hours to do the same job -- not with grain and grass -- but in its consumption of muck, garbage and poison. If you know anything about cattle and sheep you will realize that for all practical purposes they have three stomachs. Pigs, which have a single stomach, are ready to be butchered in 3 to 6 months while calves take upwards of 18 months to become ready for market.

Scientific authorities who have tested meat have found that lamb is more digestible than beef. Fried pork chops, ham and bacon are the slowest of all meats to digest. These facts are determined by the rate at which meat passes from the stomach (see Food and Principles of Dietetics, 364). Pig meat also contains excessive quantities of amounts of histamine and imidazole compounds which result in skin inflammation and itching, sulphur containing mesenchymal mucous which leads to rheumatism and arthritis with swelling in both tendon and cartilage. Gallstones and obesity can result from the pig's high cholesterol and saturated fat content.

The circulation of blood in the pig is sluggish. The pig also carries a large layer of pure fat. In some pigs it has been examined and found to be at least 6 inches thick! This layer of fat is laced with toxins. Yet, we deem it a delicacy. This layer of fat can even protect the scavenger pig from snake bites. The pig is not immune from the poison injected by even a red-bellied black snake, as one farmer we know on the local scene has verified. But the poison takes so long to penetrate the bloodstream, because of the fat layer, that it is actually rendered harmless by the time it is finally absorbed. "It is more difficult to bleed a hog than any other domestic animal" (Meat and Meat Products, 69).

The pig was designed and created to be a scavenger. It was made to clean the farmyard of rotting filth, slops and refuse. The pig literally feeds on garbage! It has come to us with a very special sewerage system through which it is able to properly eliminate excess toxic waste. The pig is a veritable walking garbage disposal unit. Through two small openings or abrasions on each foreleg the pig pours forth a pus-like syrup of waste matter and toxins. These openings are located just above the hoof. Again, this area happens to be the centre of the most delicate of tastes for those who do not know any better. It's been called "the original pork gravy"!

This animal carries a concentrated volume of disease and untreated infection around with it and we help ourselves -- each time we sit down to a meal of pig, or to suck and slurp out this polluted,

offensive, dirty swill from its pickled feet -- to a steady, delicious and delectable diet of its accumulated filth. And we don't stop there, do we? We turn the pig's head into head cheese, use its blood for black pudding, its intestines for sausage covers, its heart, kidneys, liver and lungs find their way into pork pies, we pickle its feet, turn its fat into lard for cooking and baking biscuits, its stomach into tripe, and turn the rest of its body into a variety of succulent tastes for every occasion from pork, to baked spare ribs, to ham, to bacon. Then we use its bristles for toothbrushes, tooth picks and wax ends, and inject ourselves with insulin for diabetes! And we wonder WHY we get sick!

Butchers talk about "curing" pigs before they give select cuts the pride of place in their shop windows. And, of course, the old argument surfaces at this juncture: "What about Australian pig farming conditions? Are we not more advanced in the 'science' of pig-culture? We take care of the pig's diet for it! They get fed with a special diet of hormones and rich grains, not just slops and recycled garbage! Surely this makes a huge difference?"

No, actually, it doesn't! Feeding a pig a steady diet of clean, mixed grain does not change its basic physiological or internal chemical laboratory. Feeding a pig a certain amount of grain, or keeping it in ultra clean conditions, cannot change the fact -- and the pig farmers know it -- that the pig is a natural flesh eater, that the pig is a natural scavenger, and more importantly, that the pig is a natural reservoir of accumulated fat-poison -- and that the pig is not only enormously difficult to digest but its very FLESH is toxic and must be "cured."

The pig has a digestive system very different from other animals! And, as has been recently discovered, pigs contain viruses built into their genes. One report stated: "Genes from an animal virus could mingle with those of a human virus in an organ recipient, creating a hybrid virus with unpredictable behavior. Keeping animals isolated from infection may not be enough. Some viruses scientists are concerned about aren't caught: they're inherited. They're just part of being a pig... that's because, eons ago, these viruses infected the ancestors of modern pigs and planted their DNA in sperm and egg cells. As a result, the virus genes mingled with the pig genes and are now passed on through the generations" (Los Angeles Times, 15/6/97).

It must be admitted that cooking or "curing" pork thoroughly can, of course, destroy bacteria. What health authorities fail to mention, however, is the fact that in pig products other forms of bacteria actually thrive on excessive temperatures! A current U.S. Department of Agriculture booklet stated that "In a series of 24 cases of trichinosis reported recently, 22...resulted from 'cooked pork.'" It was also reported in another case that 40% of a swine's flesh had been tested for trichinae and was subsequently found to be infested but after the removal of cysts (eggs) the remainder was approved and sold to the public, even though the inside of the carcass was not inspected.

Another horror story doing the rounds in a medical volume tells of a mortician who was questioned about a particular autopsy. He had discovered her head was full of worms. When asked if he had written that fact down on the death certificate he laughed. "Would you want to be told that your dearly departed had her head full of worms?" he retorted. Instead he stayed within the rules of an autopsy and noted cause of death as a "heart infarction" as the trichinae had infested the heart muscle of the deceased.

Not only so, but Yahweh gave instructions for mankind not to even touch the carcass of a swine (Lev 11.8). All abattoirs agree with this assessment for standard instruction for slaughter procedures insist that operators are not allowed to kill other animals after pigs have been slaughtered. The abattoir must first be scrubbed and all floors and freezers used for pig carcasses disinfected! The abattoir must stand idle for 48 hours. (Always remember, you are what you eat)