THE WORD OF GOD – OUR BASELINE FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Part 4: The word of God is food – we grow thereby

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"*Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*" 1 Peter 2:1-3

Just like food is fuel to the body; so is the word of God to the spirit. Human beings are spirits who has souls and live in physical bodies. When you look at me you see my body. This does not suggest that because you see my body, I must be a body. I am a spirit. You are a spirit too.

The body feeds on physical food but the spirit feeds on spiritual food. Bread, meat, vegetables etc. are physical food. In the same way; the word of God is spiritual food. When we study the word we are feeding our spirits. When we are sitting under the sound teaching of the word of God we are feeding our spirits. It is like we are in a big restaurant when we are in a church service. A banquet table has been prepared and we are feeding our spirits.

The bible compares newly born again believers with newly born children. When a child is born it feeds on no other type of food but milk. Its digestive system hasn't developed to handle solid food yet. You will remember that during pregnancy the child fed through the umbilical cord. The mother would eat solids and process them for the child to feed. A new born child feeds on liquids only – milk being the primary source. This is what its system can handle at that time.

Let us talk about food a little. The Hebrew people had three important food components which were regarded as staple food; namely milk, bread and meat. Milk was originally food for nomads who moved from place to place looking for pastures for their herds. They derived their milk from cows, goats, sheep and camels.

Milk is rich in calcium which helps the body to grow. Calcium helps to grow strong bones which are the frame of the body. For the body to grow well, bones must grow and become strong. The rest of the body hangs on the body, without which the body would be a mass of shapeless meat.

Bread was food for the tillers of the soul i.e. farmers. It is made out of corn or cereal flour. Bread is rich in carbohydrates. When carbohydrates are in the stomach, they are converted into sugar. Sugar gives the body energy. We need energy to be functional.

The third component is meat. Meat was food for both tillers of the soil and nomads. It provides the body with proteins which help the body to grow.

The first diet for newly born babies is milk. They need to grow strong bones to provide a firm structure for the body to grow around. The babe is not born to remain a babe; we expect it to grow and finally do basic things of life for itself. That's why I think its growth has to start with the bones; milk providing those basic ingredients.

Like new born babies newly born again believers need milk to grow. We need to grow our spiritual structure before anything else. The word is called the milk of the word. We might as well say the word stands for milk in our spiritual growth. For a successful Christian living every believer need to feed on the word. Many times we mess things up in our growth process because; instead of sticking to the milk of the word we want to jump to hard food. Those who would grow and become strong in the Lord must of necessity start their feeding on the milk of the word menu.

Our spiritual bones need spiritual calcium to grow and become strong. A strong bone structure will always provide a strong Christian life. We may see all these other meaty stuff like spiritual gifts in manifested in other people but we may not be there yet. My humble advice based on the word of God is that we should not be ahead of ourselves and our time. Many tried this and made shipwrecks in their Christian lives. "*For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*" Romans 12:3

Don't feed on hard stuff when it is time to feed on liquids. You will only hurt yourself and retard your progress. Don't attempt to walk before you are strong enough to do so. Do not try to help others when you are not helped yet. Be patient with yourself; desire the sincere milk of the word and feed as much as you can. Your time is coming and you will not miss it if you do first things first.

One of the first skills a new born babe develops is to feed. We will do ourselves a great favour if we could take lessons from a new born babe and develop a sucking skill. Just feed on the word of God and you will grow. "*Therefore, laying*

aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious."