



Appetite

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. (1Peter 2:1-3)

Appetite is defined as the “natural desire to satisfy a need, especially for food” and comes from the Latin, meaning, “to seek.” In a physical sense, we understand this quite well. Think of an infant when hungry—the infant will let you know right away their desire to satisfy a need. If that need is not met in a proper way—with milk—the search begins for any means to satisfy the need—fingers, pacifiers, or anything at hand. Of course, only the real thing brings final satisfaction.

An appetite needs to be educated. This is why we use labels to identify poisons and other things that are detrimental instead of useful for satisfying our need. Parents help their children to come to an understanding of “proper” foods to eat for beneficial satisfaction. This is developed as the infant grows. Progression is made from milk to softer or pureed foods, perhaps some types of vegetables or fruits. The child has a “taste” for milk, then a “taste” for more nutritious foods.

Peter writes to Christians and reminds them of their appetites. He tells these people that they had purified their souls in obeying the truth (**1Peter 1:22**). They had been born again by the word (**1Peter 1:23**). They had become God’s children (**1Peter 2:1**). In this new life, they had to have a new appetite (**1Peter 2:2**). They were expected to grow and had to have an appetite in order to grow. He wrote them later to remind them of this: “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen*” (**2Peter 3:18**). They were to lay aside the old foods that were harmful and not conducive to growth and life. Peter gives a “genealogy” of the sins that counterproductive to the love he has just mentioned.

Christians are to lay aside all malice. The word “malice” is a word that implies ill-will. This appetite is deadly and requires repentance as instructed to Simon: “*Therefore repent of this wickedness [ill-intent] of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you*” (**Acts 8:22**). Not only is it detrimental itself, but it also gives birth to deceit. This is precisely what is seen in those Jews who had ill-will toward Jesus: “*Now the Passover and Unleavened Bread were two days away; and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to seize Him by stealth [deceit] and kill Him*” (**Mark 14:1**).

Christians are to lay aside all deceit. “Deceit” has to do with “bait” or “snare” or “craftiness.” Such an appetite certainly is not like the Lord, “*WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH*” (**1Peter 2:22**). A desire to deceive is completely incompatible with being a Christian. “*THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT*” (**1Peter 3:10**). Deceit also gives rise to saying one thing but practicing another—hypocrisy.

Christians are to lay aside their hypocrisies. “Hypocrisy” came from the idea of play-acting—thus, only pretense. Christianity is to be real and genuine. There is no place for pretense. Hypocrisy is a most detestable thing—finding fault with others while not practicing righteousness (**Matthew 7:1-5**). The Jews who had ill-intent toward Jesus were masters of this undesirable thing (**Matthew 23:1-3**). Seeing someone practice righteousness, while you do not, created much envy. This was exactly the case with those enemies of Jesus—even Pilate recognized this: “*he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy*” (**Mark 15:10**).

Christians are to lay aside all envies. “Envy” is the feeling of displeasure over the success or prosperity of others. People of the world feast upon this. This is not in harmony with Christianity (**Philippians 2:3-4**). James reminds us that disorder and every evil thing follows (**James 3:14-16**). One of the very first evil things that is born of envy is slander.

Christians are to lay aside all slander. This is one of the very things of which the Christians in Corinth were warned (**2Corinthians 12:20**). Peter shows the contrast of this action with that of Christians: “*Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation*” (**1Peter 2:12**). This, along with malice and bitterness, grieves the Spirit and must be laid aside (**Ephesians 4:30-31**).

All of these things are summed up as “fleshly lusts” (**1Peter 2:11**). These war against the soul, and must be laid aside and not partaken of for the purposes of satisfying the needs for growth and life. However, Christians have had a taste of better things even in becoming Christians (**1Peter 2:3**). Having tasted, then they should continue.

Christians must develop a taste for the sincere, the pure milk of the word (**1Peter 2:2**). Jesus teaches this in the sermon on the mount. “*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied*” (**Matthew 5:6**). Satisfying the appetite in this manner will do Christians good in contrast to the damage the other will do.

Take a look at your diet. With what are you trying to satisfy your appetite? After what do you hunger and thirst?