

04-09-2011

Diet and Exposure

Stefan,

You asked a whole array of questions which have been engendered from the recent series of studies that we have now finished. In that three-part study just completed, the MSA directed its concern to issues which the Sunday keepers to whom we are related have and will ask. I have a divine duty to answer all doctrinal questions that are put to me, and I am thankful that I have been blessed to do so in a way which assists and brings joy to the disciples today.

Your questions allude to yesterday's Adventist themes as they compare and apply today. For example, you cite manufactured, food-product concerns as they relate to a clean and healthy diet. I believe that there is a benefit to us all as we remind ourselves about the perplexities of earlier-Adventist scholarship and spiritual culture. After all, as we climb Jacob's ladder of truth, our feet must become securely planted upon the truth which, in times past, we stretched ourselves to reach. Such doctrinal accommodations will always grip the righteous who advance higher and higher. Formerly inspired teachers, practicing under a different age and administration, have issued instruction in accordance to their inspiration. I have no calling to revisit and revise their work since I know that we grew out of their toil and their tutelage. Instead, I must proclaim *Christ our Righteousness*. We as Adventists have grown beyond the question of forbidden flesh meats, have next advanced to vegetarianism, and have now grown in righteousness to differentiate between the clean and the unclean so as to embrace the Lord's dietary recommendations as described in *Lev 11*. If changes in standards have not been announced pertaining to the consumption of byproducts of unclean animals, then we should continue to abide by those standards that were enforced yesterday. To resonate the point further, why would my work which points a person to *Lev 11* cause any to feel liberated to brush their teeth with larded toothpaste? Yesterday's careful and cautious demeanor to cleanliness should be ratified—not discarded—today, a day when cleanliness is the very point of emphasis.

Much of my answer to you was forged before our conversation by phone today. Then you called and we advanced the conversation. At first I decided not to write my counsel given over the phone, but now I'm impressed to change my mind. You expressed concern about ordering a "clean" sandwich at a fast-food, sandwich-making restaurant that is handled by a server who has just prepared an unclean meal for the person ahead of you in the lunch line. First off, know that this topic will be perceived by Davidians as degradingly offensive to their piety. A Davidian in a common lunch line—"how sacrilegiously profane", they no doubt would muse. In their spiritual immaturity, they are used to concealing their zeal to consume fast foods and their pretentious, pharisaical elitism generates for them a predictable air of spiritual aloofness and false piety. For this reason, among others, I love your question and want to carefully answer it for all. It give us an opportunity to do as did ancient David and to shock and awe our brethren, the proverbial Michals of the church, as we exhibit the closely guarded and often camouflaged secrets that we only begin to uncover as we dance in joy over the return of the Lord's law, His Ark. When you visit your favorite, sandwich-making, fast-food restaurant the following counsel is in order if it is your commonplace for lunch. Mind you, if you are traveling, then of course much of this counsel will not pertain: First take note of the server's name. If He/she is not wearing a name tag, then introduce yourself and ask them for their name. I know that, at such a time, you are hungry, but managers of the Lord's Kingdom must all take care to forge pleasant business relationships. They must please the Father as did Jesus by growing in favor with God and man. You have a duty to always represent the truth about yourself to your business partners, and future relations will be more

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cordial for both parties if you are remembered as a careful diner who sought to gain the trust of the establishment in which you choose to eat. After the introduction, convey, in politeness to the server, the following: “I noticed that you prepared the sandwich before me, and my special diet requires me to make a special request as a precaution. Before you assemble my sandwich, can you please change your gloves and use a clean knife to cut my sandwich?” The server may comply politely, or she may use subliminal body language to express annoyance. This you must overcome especially since she handles your food. Thus, unless his/her reaction is completely adverse and hostile, after her compliance, thank her and write a letter to her manager expressing your appreciation of her service and your willingness to recommend their business to your friends of like faith. If on the other hand, they deny your request, then you must stand by the Lord, overcome your hunger, and seek an institution which will honor your duty to preserve in purity the Lord’s temple.

But I think that you will be surprised —especially with the sub-sandwich chain that you mentioned and others like it. I say especially them because they are trained to precisely customize your sandwich to your specifications. Thus, such requests are oftentimes very professionally received. My experience, some ten years back, proves this point. When I used to visit lunch lines at the deli of the grocer which I frequented, I followed this procedure. In fact, I would ask them to clean, not merely the knife, but the meat slicing machine before cutting my lunch meat. I usually ordered several cuts of high-quality chicken or turkey. It was embarrassing to speak up and speak out in the crowd; thus, being the Lord’s manager in training, I willfully overcame my shyness and relished the opportunity to practice the boldness of leadership. I noticed that, after a short while, of the five slicers in use, they always had a clean one available, and all of the food preparers changed their gloves as they approached me to take my order. We forged a business friendship that few of the other patrons enjoyed. Of course, proper digestion demands that ordering lunch is not an everyday experience fraught with such drama; thus, to make matters easier, I ignored other establishments and patronized the people who knew my “quirks” in dining. I became impressed that wise business establishments already account for, and even train their workers to expect, discriminatingly particular —indeed fussy— customers. They enjoy and remember people with personality. Thus, when we seek to sheepishly (as opposed to being ram like) blend into the crowd by failing to fully represent our needs in a transaction, we not only cheat ourselves from a duty to properly receive service, and not only underwrite poor business results, but we also train the servers to resent individuals who have special-care needs. Even laws, whether by government or company policy, which require proper procedure invariably become slighted and ignored unless practical experience is given to food handlers that will reinforce the job demands to respect the customer. We are the Lord’s managers; we cannot be too embarrassed to stand up for cleanliness out of a fear of the reproach of our fellow, lunch-line patrons. We cannot do as Adam and trade duty for popularity. Is this not the lesson of David’s self-exposing dance? When it comes to Christ, we must learn to, without hesitation, openly display our joy in His law even if this means that we lay bare to our friends, neighbors, and strangers the embarrassing intimacies of our religious walk. Bear in mind, you should not get theological in the lunch line with the server; you can briefly explain, for points of clarification, your reasons of faith when you write the thank-you letter. This is important, not for the sake of conversion, but to enlighten the manager to the full scope of his customer base. It will give him greater perspective causing him to institute more sensitive policy for his customers.

If more needs to be said, revisit the Atonement study and intensify your understanding about the Lord’s plans to cleanse us from known and unknown sins. As you do so, and as you ponder the question of medicine, particularly concoctions that are alcohol based, understand that the MSA has never drawn any parallel of comparison or righteous uniformity of reaction to unclean meats and to alcohol. A dog bite must be handled differently than a viper’s wound or a bee’s sting. Alcohol is condemned for the disciples because it intoxicates, swine because it pollutes. Each offense resultantly requires separate analysis. Thus, food and medicine prepared by alcohol is not the same as food containing swine. Vinnette and I read all ingredients. We reject products with

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monodiglycerides (For some listings such as ice cream we have called the manufacture to discern if they are vegetable or animal based) —a little research honors the Lord!

Past studies have exemplified the need to differentiate and now we have an opportunity to put to good use that wisdom. For example, the wise now know that, just because you would not permit a stranger within your gates to work on the Sabbath does not necessarily mean that you should, in his house, enforce or impose your diet upon him. The two laws come with their own legal requirements of fervent application. The same applies to wine and swine or alcohol and lard. The *Testimony of Jesus* forbids us from being intoxicated. Such is not the same as a command to never touch it? Also, a little more help with thoughtfulness and differentiation: If a Nazarite was forbidden, by oath, to drink wine and cut his hair —which means that such a man would sometimes be mocked— such a standard was not extrapolated to be a standard for all of Israel. Let me give you even more incite: Disciples are called to the highest form of dedication; they are to become sanctified so as to bear the vessels of the Lord. This calling is much akin to the dedication and sanctification of a Nazarite. For this did Christ petition to Father to sanctify His disciples with the truth: Theirs was a higher calling.

Please review your questions in light of this short reply and send to me any of your concerns that are still pressing.

Sincerely,

Derek