



Food for Thought

By Vincent M. Newfield

Sweet, Sour, Bitter, Salty—all different types of tastes that “paint the palate” of our mouths when we eat. Taste is a unique sensation that also involves the senses of touch and smell. The “taste organ” (a.k.a the tongue) comes in contact with a substance in the mouth. Our taste buds identify and notify the brain of the food’s flavor. During the whole process, the tongue moves food around, forcing aroma-laden air up the back of the throat to the sinuses. All these activities combined produce the sensation we’ve come to know as taste.

I think most would agree that **taste sells**. Remember those commercials from years ago? “Take the challenge!” the announcer declared, claiming that in taste test after taste test, *their* cola was picked time and time again for having the best *taste*. It was sold as a sweet sensation that was sweeping the nation. Marketers capitalized on the clever strategy and made a mint off the seemingly *convincing* results.

However, the truth is, we shouldn’t swallow everything we see or hear—especially about food. We need to do our homework and know what foods are good and which ones we need to stay away from.¹ Selling something on taste alone can be very misleading and very overrated. Take a couple of minutes to chew on these remarkable morsels about taste . . .

Taste is TEMPORARY. This is probably the greatest truth about taste that is often overlooked. The amount of time food is in our mouth, tantalizing our taste buds, is actually very short. Think about it: How long does it take you to eat a bowl of cereal . . . a sandwich . . . a hamburger and fries? I think it’s safe to say most of our meals are eaten within fifteen to twenty minutes. It’s true that larger meals take longer to eat. But it’s still like the blink of an eye in comparison to the lasting effects food has on our physical bodies.

Its EFFECTS are long-lasting. What takes mere minutes to chew and swallow will become a building block for our body for months, and in some cases, years to come. I am still amazed whenever I hear Dr. Don Colbert cite that about 97 percent of our physical body is made up of the food we ate within the last year. What a sobering statistic! Quite literally, we are what we eat. The best health will result from consistently making the best food choices.

Good taste DOESN’T ALWAYS EQUAL good health. If we only eat what tastes good, we will more than likely end up with nutrient-depleted, sickly bodies. Chocolate cake, potato chips and ice cream may make merriment in our mouth, but if our diets mainly consist of choices like these, our health is eventually going to suffer. The good news is, not all foods that are good for us taste bad. And those that aren’t tasty at first, we can grow to like. Healthy eating is a habit that *can* be developed by receiving God’s grace and exercising our will to make right choices.

Your Final Answer: Don’t base everything on taste. It is too fleeting and matters very little in the whole scheme of things. Use wisdom. As Joyce often says, “**Wisdom** is doing *now* what you are going to be happy with later on.” I’m not saying we shouldn’t enjoy the things we eat or that an occasional order of fries or slice of pizza is going to kill us. What I am saying is that taste should not be the *only* factor or the main measurement used to determine *what* we eat. At the end of the day, the nutritional value of the food must be the commander and chief of our food choices.

So savor the flavor, but don’t let it be the driving force. Ask God for grace (ability and strength) to get beyond the superficial sensation of taste.² He will help you buy the right foods and then eat the right foods. It may seem impossible right now, but you **can** develop the discipline of making wise food choices.³

(1) Consider Joyce’s new book *Look Great Feel Great*, as well as *Living in Divine Health* and *What Would Jesus Eat?* by Don Colbert, M.D. (2) See James 4:6; Hebrews 4:16. (3) See Mark 10:27.

Don't let TASTE master you!

“Everything is permissible for me”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me”—but I will not be **mastered** by anything (NIV). For instance, take the matter of eating. God has given us an appetite for food and stomachs to digest it. But that doesn't mean we should eat more than we need....some day God will do away with both stomachs and food (TLB).

I CORINTHIANS 6:12,13

This article originally appeared in Joyce Meyer's Enjoying Everyday Life magazine, copyright 2007.