

GOD'S GIFT OF MEALS

In our lesson text, Paul has countered the attack upon Marriage and Meals by apostate teachers in the Christian church. The greatest enemy of Christianity has always come from inside rather than from outside the Church (Matt.16:21-23; Acts 15:1-11).

This is Paul's warning to Timothy in our lesson text regarding "some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirit and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim.4:1).

In a previous lesson, we studied four aspects of spiritual conflict against **God's Gift of Marriage**.

In this lesson, we will study three aspects of spiritual conflict against God's Gift of Meals.

(1 Tim.4:3) "Men who **forbid marriage** and **advocate abstaining from food** which God created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth."

1. Before Adam's sin, work and meals were on the basis of grace without adversity attached to them. Day 3 (Gen.1:11) to Day 6 (Gen.1:29-31 to Gen.2:15) [The Garden of Eden].

After Adam's sin, work and meals were on the basis of grace with adversity:

(Gen.2:17; 3:17-19) "cursed is the ground; thorns and thistles; sweat of face; until you return to the ground". (Eccl.2:22-24; Matt.6:25, 28, 33).

- **In the Antediluvian world**, man was a vegetarian. (Gen.2:9, 16-17).
- **In the postdiluvian world**, man has both vegetables and meat meals (Gen.9:3-4, 6).

(Gen.9:3-4) "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; **I give all to you, as I gave you green plant. Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.**"

Animals of Day 5-6 were used for Shadow Christology blood because of nephesh chayyim (living creatures). This was brought out in the story of Abel and Cain (Gen.4; 1 Pet.1:19).

The doctrinal principle of Gen.9:3-4 was placed in the final draft of the Jerusalem Church Conference (Acts 15:19-21, 28).

(Acts 15:28) "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials." (Acts 15:29) [1 of 4 essentials listed] (1 Cor.8-10)

(1 Tim.4:4) "For everything created by God is good, and nothing to be rejected **being received with gratitude (grace orientation).**" (Rom.14:2-3)

(Col.2:16-17) "Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festive or a new moon or a Sabbath day – **things that are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.**"

2. In 1 Tim.4:4, Paul issued three doctrinal principles of grace regarding meals in the church age.

- **Everything** created by God is good
- **Nothing** to be rejected
- **Being received with gratitude**

God was trying to teach these three doctrinal principles about His grace to the Israelites wandering in the wilderness.

The Israelites complained about the Grace God was giving them because it wasn't what they wanted (Num.11:5-6) [Operating out of their Old Man Cosmos Belief system] (OMCD). Their complaining short-circuited their reflection on the Grace God had given them in Egypt, the Exodus, and their wandering (Num.11:6, 18-23; Ex.16:35).

(Deut.8:3) "He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, **that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.**" (Matt.4:4; John 6) [Operating out of their New Man Divine Viewpoint belief system] (NMDV)

(Rom.11:17) "For the kingdom is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

3. A prayer of thanks before the meal acknowledges that the food is gift of God's grace. It is thankful heart for the daily bread (Matt.6:12).

Personal note: Sam Brisbin, missionary to Indians of Mexico, impressed this doctrinal principle upon my life several years ago while visiting Birmingham on furlough.

Doctrinal Principle: "For it (1 Tim.4:4) is sanctified (hagiazō/ p.p.ind.3ps) [to set aside as holy] by means of the word of God and prayer." (1 Tim.4:5)

Note how the meal is sanctified _____ and _____.

At the feeding of the 5000, Jesus applied it.

(Matt.14:19) "Ordering the people to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds."

What was the lesson the disciples didn't get from the feeding of the 5000? (Matt.16:6-15)

NOTE: It wasn't about the bread or the meal

It was about having a thankful heart that sanctified it (having set it aside as holy) by the Word of God and prayer.