

Biblical Eating
By Doug Hamilton

Lesson Seven: Understanding Your Rewards

We are now entering the last two weeks of the series on Biblical Eating; therefore it is necessary to increase our focus so as to continue personal long-term success. One of the ways to accomplish this is through centering our mind on the many hidden benefits that reward those who are obedient to God's natural design of eating as spelled out in the Bible. For most people, the idea of losing weight has been a great incentive to follow the biblical principles concerning food, eating when truly hungry and stopping when satisfied. A more detailed perspective will reveal some hidden rewards, that when figured into the equation, will make obedience more appealing for lasting practice.

In sporting events, the athletes who succeed are the ones who were able to keep an image of the prize that was set before them. It is the prize that keeps the athlete practicing hard and competing strong, for they want the prize. Someone might propose that one competes to simply win, but it always boils down to the same thing, win what??? Athletes love to win because winning offers a better prize than losing. It is the pursuit of the prize that the race is run and the battles are fought. *Phil 3:13-14 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of {it} yet; but one thing {I do} forgetting what {lies} behind and reaching forward to what {lies} ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* Paul is saying that His pressing forward in life is directly tied to the prize at the end of the race. Are we any different than Paul in being prize driven? This concept is prevalent in the New Testament writings as the following scriptures point out.

- 1 Cor 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but {only} one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.
- 2 Tim 2:5 And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.
- Rev 2:7 “To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life...”
- Rev 2:10 “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”
- Rev 2:17 “To him who overcomes, to him I will give...the hidden manna...a white stone...a new name written on the stone...”
- Rev 2:26-28 “And he who overcomes...I will give authority over the nations... and he shall rule them with a rod of iron...and I will give him the morning star.
- Rev 3:5 “...He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.”
- Rev 3:12 “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God...and I will write upon him the name of My God...”
- Rev 3:21 “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne...”



In all the above examples, there were rewards for those who followed the path of God. In any of the areas in our lives that we are given a choice, including eating, and we obey God in that choice, there is a prize for that individual. When we make the bad decision to abuse that which God has blessed us with, then these blessings will disappear. That is the

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law of the reaper, for we must reap what we sow. *Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.*

Often the success of any plan is being able to envision all the benefits that come in pursuing a goal. Let us look at some of the hidden treasures that you have for being obedient to the natural design of God concerning our eating habits.

Weigh up the benefits for obedience.



God wants us all to be blessed in this life and the life to come. *John 10:10 "...I came that they might have life, and might have {it} abundantly."* We simply have to seek His ways and the blessings will come. *Matt 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."* Though life does not offer guarantees, those who pursue the pattern of biblical eating are much more likely to possess the following blessings in their lives.

1) **Better Health**

Research confirms that fasting will lead to better health.

- **Lower accident rate:** This may not seem like a big deal, but those who are gravitationally challenged have more falls, bumps and bruises.
- **Lower cancer rates:** It has been estimated that people overweight by more than 20% of the body mass have 3 to 5 times the rate of cancer.
- **Lower diabetes rates:** This is because one of the primary causes of diabetes is stress. Carrying all that extra fat leads to the type of physiological stress that brings on this condition.
- **Lower infertility rate:** Many times this is because of the additional strain on the endocrine system, for overweight woman have higher rates of estrogen.
- **Lower incidents of gallstones:** The number one surgery in America is the removal of diseased gall bladders. When a person is eating right, the gall bladder can better do the job God designed it for.
- **Lower gout rate:** Higher weight often results in decreased circulation which often accompanies a lower rate.
- **Lower heart disease and stroke risks:** What happens when the body is unable to process the additional food intake? It sends it to the arteries, where it does not disappear.
- **Lower high-blood pressure:** The person that is eating in moderation will not be forcing their heart to work as hard to pump the blood.
- **Lower surgery rates:** The odds of having a surgery, anything from hammertoe to heart bypass drops dramatically for those who choose to biblical discipline in eating.
- **Lower intestinal disorders:** With all the medications that people are taking because of the overeating, it would certainly be nice to know there is an option called discipline.
- **Lower arthritis rates:** With all the stress of lugging an extra half body of weight, your odds of developing arthritis reduces by many fold.

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- **Lower asthma and allergies:** This is one of the reasons that some doctors are explaining the huge rise in asthma. Moderation in eating will reduce the incidents of these types of attacks.
- **Better taste:** Hopefully you have noticed that your food tasted better through this program. This is because God designed the taste buds to be the first stage of the digestion process.
- **Improved awareness:** When one is not constantly being filled with food, the overall awareness of that individual is increased. They naturally lose the stuffed, lethargic feeling when discipline is being administered in this area.
- **Stronger sexual vitality:** When one is closer to their natural weight, their endocrine system functions at a normal rate, resulting in an increased sexual desire.
- **Increased mobility:** Being at your natural weight allows you to ride bikes, go on hikes with the family and to sit where you want, not where you fit.
- **Stabilized emotions:** The same discipline it takes to deal with the pressures of life combined with the absence of the additional overeating stresses on the truly lead to a more stabilized emotional environment of the individual.

There are many other benefits at the physiological level that could be mentioned, but time does not permit it. One can definitely see that following the principles of God concerning our eating leads to the overall better health of the individual. As the soul tends to prosper concerning God in this area, the body also tends to prosper concerning health. *3 Jn 1:2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.*

2) Longer Life

Naturally with the better health, we tend to live longer. There are many reasons that people want to live a long life. Below are some of the benefits to a longer life that you can expect when eating biblically.

- **More life to spend with the earthly family:** Think about all your family members for a moment. Obviously they are special to you and vice-versa, for the Lord has blessed you with them. *Ps 128:3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine, within your house, your children like olive plants around your table.* The Lord wants you to be around for them. He wants your decedents to have you in their lives. By you following the simple plan and design of God for eating, you increase your odds of having the joy of seeing your grandchildren and great grandchildren. *Ps 128:6 Indeed, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!*
- **More life to spend serving the Lord:** The Lord has great plans for your life! He wants you to be filled with joy and serving Him in sincerity and truth. If we are living longer, we will have more time to serve the Lord. *Ps 91:16 "With a long life I will satisfy him, and let him behold My salvation."* Paul emphasizes the lengthening of his life on the backdrop of serving the Lord in *Phil 1:22-25 "But if {I am} to live {on} in the flesh, this {will mean} fruitful labor for me...24 yet to*



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remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. 25 And convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith...” Eating right only increases the odds of this opportunity.

- **More life to spend enjoying the many blessings of the Father:** Look at all the things that you wanted to do in your life. Many people want to live to retirement and then travel the world. That is difficult if you cannot fit in a plane seat or walk for any long distances.

3) Save Money

Think about the monetary price that our gluttony has cost us. If you added it up, the funds would add up to thousands of dollars a year.

- **Lower insurance and medical bills:** Look at all the additional money that is spent bumping people into higher risk categories concerning the weight of individuals. Look at all the extra money that has been spent on antacids and intestinal relief because of the excess of food that has been crammed down our throat. By choosing to be obedient to biblical eating principles, you will save a lot of money in this category.
- **Lower clothing bill:** The clothing industry in this country has made a fortune on the expanding of the nation’s beltline. “Big and Tall Clothing” used to refer to linebackers and basketball players, for they were specialty stores, but now are part of our everyday culture. When a person is eating the way that God designed, then clothing is retired for reasons of style and wear, rather than fit.
- **Lower food bill:** Many people who go through the class make mention that they are amazed at how much they have saved on their eating out bill. Couples have a tendency to order one meal for the two. “All You Can Eats” are replaced by what we used to call snacks. Leftovers truly become a second meal to enjoy. You will be saving a lot of money when consuming the way the Lord designed for us to eat.
- **Lower job discrimination:** Though the religious world has been lax in dealing with gluttony, the business world has not. Individuals who are morbidly overweight are less likely to land the big job or get that promotion over the non-glutton with the same qualifications. Salespeople who are fit and trim statistically sell more than those who appear undisciplined and unfit. By being at the weight that God has chosen for you can only lead to better employment situations.



We are to be wise stewards of the blessings that God provides for us and this includes our money. *Luke 16:2 “...What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship...”* When we are eating responsibly as the Bible teaches, we are naturally going to be blessed in this area as well.

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4) Higher Self-esteem

One of the greatest emotional problems in our society today is the lack of self-esteem. When we are following the principles of the Bible concerning our eating, our self-esteem has a greater opportunity to be healthy and whole.

- **Knowing that God approves of your eating habits:** The greatest boost to a person's self-esteem is knowing that our Creator is pleased with our behavior. *Ps 81:13 "Oh that My people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in My ways!"* The Lord deeply desires us to be pleasing to Him; and when living the life that He desires, we have a right to be happy, for we know the Lord has great things in store for us. *Prov 8:32 "Now therefore, {O} sons, listen to me, for blessed are they who keep my ways."*
- **Knowing that others see self-control:** The people we come into contact with everyday are a great influence on us. Being overweight due to gluttony communicates the message of incompetence and disorganization. That in turn can lead to feelings of poor self-worth and weak confidence. When we eat well, we will feel good.
- **Knowing that you are free from the pull of food:** This is what it all boils down to, being freed from the bondage of food. It is not that we don't need food for we do, but the idea of knowing that we are not a slave to it. *Rom 6:16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone {as} slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?* If you continue in your mastery over the food rather than the food mastering you, then you will always have that boost of self-esteem to rejoice with.

This week's pointers:

- Make a list of all the benefits from this lesson that stood out to you as additional blessings and record them down on a paper. If there are any other benefits that were not listed and are meaningful to you, then put them on the list as well. Hang the list on the mirror in the bathroom and in the kitchen to remind you of the prize that awaits all who are obedient in eating.
- Share this list with others who are going through the same struggles and ask them what their greatest benefits might be. You must be willing to share your struggles and in doing so, share your joys. *Phil 2:18 "And you too, {I urge you,} rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me."*
- If you have not had the success that you have desired thus far and know that you have not been disciplined in this area, don't give up! Your battle is not determined by the success or failure of those around you, but in your personal struggle in obeying the known design of God concerning our digestive system (See attachment #9). You only fail when you give up, not when you are struggling. Struggles lead to strength and strength to victory. It is the unchallenged sin of gluttony that is being fought and the practice of righteousness ("rightness" in eating) that is at stake. *I Jn 3:7 "Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous..."*

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Questions for Lesson Seven

1) Read Matthew 4:1-11 and Hebrews 5:7-10. Write down the rewards that Jesus received in His obedience.

2) Which of all the benefits listed proved to be the greatest encouragement to you? Write out the top five.

3) Explain how knowing more of the benefits enable us for success.

4) Which of these benefits have you already begun to notice taking place in your life thus far as a result of this class?

5) Have you been happy with your progress in the class thus far? If not, why?

6) Describe in detail the guilt that you feel when violating biblical principles of eating.

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7) Describe in detail the joy that you had in following the biblical principles of eating.

8) Describe in detail the feelings you had prior to weighing in before the class?

9) Have you found yourself sharing items from the class with others? If so, what have you been telling them?

10) Would you recommend this class to others to take at a future time? Are you?

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Daily Records:

Sunday

Yes ___ No ___ Did you feel true hunger today?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you stop eating when you were satisfied?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you eat what you wanted to eat?

Monday

Yes ___ No ___ Did you feel true hunger today?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you stop eating when you were satisfied?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you eat what you wanted to eat?

Tuesday

Yes ___ No ___ Did you feel true hunger today?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you stop eating when you were satisfied?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you eat what you wanted to eat?

Wednesday

Yes ___ No ___ Did you feel true hunger today?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you stop eating when you were satisfied?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you eat what you wanted to eat?

Thursday

Yes ___ No ___ Did you feel true hunger today?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you stop eating when you were satisfied?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you eat what you wanted to eat?

Friday

Yes ___ No ___ Did you feel true hunger today?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you stop eating when you were satisfied?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you eat what you wanted to eat?

Saturday

Yes ___ No ___ Did you feel true hunger today?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you stop eating when you were satisfied?
Yes ___ No ___ Did you eat what you wanted to eat?