

Our Genetically Altered Foods (Part One)

The Overall Solution

John W. Ritenbaugh

Given 03-Nov-12; Sermon #1128c

It is evident from the number of comments and questions that arose following Martin's commentary last Sabbath ["Women and Fetuses at Risk!"] that some things regarding food need to be addressed. Food issues are not new. Spinoffs regarding food are addressed in at least four places in the New Testament.

Genetically-altered foods are the latest wrinkle. This wrinkle was preceded by hybridization and the uses of chemicals to color, to preserve, and enhance the flavors, all of which were done for marketing reasons, not to make the food more nutritious. Instead, they are dangerous to health.

We in the Church of God must understand that we are dealing with a problem, and that its solution is more spiritual than it is physical. The physical problem of defiled food was directly caused by Satan's influence over men. Satan is real. He is a deceiving, murdering destroyer. He is the high priest of death. He is a being.

Revelation 12:9 says that he has deceived the entire world. He has not just deceived regarding religion and God, but he has deceived people in the food-producing industry, like Monsanto or similar corporations. Thus, this problem is, in reality, a spiritual problem, and its only solution is spiritual.

Part of the reason why the solution is spiritual is because the food contamination problem is so huge. It's very much like air. Food contamination is universal. It is worldwide in scope. But food is necessary for life. Eating is absolutely necessary, and food contamination is so extensive that physically the problem cannot be totally avoided. If we try to accomplish that, we use so much time and effort doing so that we produce an idol between us and God in our efforts to preserve physical life.

God has clearly permitted Satan to do this, but He also assures us in I Corinthians 10:13,

I Corinthians 10:13 No temptation [that is, no trial] has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Thus, the solution—the spiritual solution—lies in our relationship with God. Now, there is a sure answer if we believe God, understand it in the right context for us (as the called of God), and will willingly and faithfully obey using our faith.

I need to refer you to the sermons that I have been giving lately. I began this past Feast with my annual "The Handwriting is on the Wall" sermon. The subject was lying. Satan is a liar, and he murders through lies. Some degree of lying is at the foundation of most sins.

My weekly Sabbath sermon during the Feast was on the sovereignty of God ["Fully Accepting God's Sovereignty (Part One)"]. It stressed God's power and control over every aspect of our lives and the

importance of our being convicted that He has a close personal relationship with us. I finished this sermon this past Sabbath, showing that our need is to faithfully seek Him as part of our relationship with Him ["Fully Accepting God's Sovereignty (Part Two)"].

Much in those two sermons involved Israel's failure in the wilderness while on their pilgrimage, following making the covenant with God. They failed because they did not faithfully trust Him, and even though God did marvelous works before them, they failed to use their faith in obedience to Him.

Where and how does the New Testament Church fit into this scenario? Are we not on our pilgrimage to the Kingdom of God? However, we are not on a *physical* pilgrimage in a wilderness. What is the church's position in relation to the Lord at this time? I'm going to give you the key here now: We have been bought and paid for by Christ's blood. We are a purchased possession, but our relationship with Him is much closer than that. Our relationship to Him is *not* physical, it is spiritual, and the church is a spiritual organism.

Ephesians 1:22-23 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Spiritually, brethren, our pilgrimage is being taken as a part of Christ spiritual body. That's how close the relationship is. Furthermore, Paul tells us in I Corinthians 12:18—and this too is very important:

I Corinthians 12:18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.

That's the important part: "as it pleased *Him*." The spiritual body is united with Jesus Christ, not by a common physical father and blood, but by a common *spiritual* Father and a common spirit.

Ephesians 5:28-29 show a governing principle in the relationship:

Ephesians 5:28-29 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

It is Christ who nourishes. He feeds His church for its spiritual and physical well-being. And Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Do you believe that? Did He provide for Israel in the wilderness? Of course He did, and He did it every day for 40 years, and that includes food.

Paul adds in Philippians 4:19,

Philippians 4:19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Jesus adds in John 15:7,

John 15:7 If you abide in Me [and we abide in Him], and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

I do not see Him supplying any manna each and every morning. Our spiritual and physical situation is different from Israel's, but the solution is every bit as easy for Him. He will make the food that we

have available to us acceptable to our bodies. Did you hear what I said? He will make the food we have available acceptable to our bodies. But our responsibility is clear: We *must* be thankful always for what He has made available, and we must use our faith, asking Him to make the food acceptable to our life and health, and He will faithfully do it according to our faith.

There are a couple of other things important to this subject. Romans 14:17 gives us a general principle, and this was put in there because food, brethren, has always been a point of contention with God's people:

Romans 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

That entire chapter addresses the subject of judging one another within the context of what people are eating or failing to eat. We all need to study that chapter, allowing ourselves to be instructed that in the big picture, food is of lesser importance than exercising faith, faithfully keeping the commandments, and that we must be very restrained in judging one another regarding what we may, or fail to, eat. And so, we must be very careful and disciplined about what we choose to eat, not deliberately flaunting our liberty. But we must carefully search out the best food we can in our circumstance.

I intend to address this again one more time at least, perhaps next week, and we will go on to another important part of this subject. But what I gave you today is ultimately the solution to this food problem. We have to keep the commandments. We have to do it by faith, and we have to faithfully ask Him to make the food acceptable to us.