

FAMILY LESSONS ON THE WEAPONS OF POWER

Based on 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

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LESSON #3 FOOD FOR THE MIND

**“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.
On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.
We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up
against the knowledge of God, and we take captive
every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”**

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 (NIV84)

There are three kinds of food for the mind: good, neutral and bad. First, there is the good stuff, the high-nutrition, idea-enriched, truth-packed mental food that challenges us and makes us grow. This is the kind of mental food we consume when we study hard or when we read a good book, or when we memorize and meditate upon God’s Word. It’s not the easiest kind of diet for the mind, and sometimes it’s downright hard to swallow, but ultimately it’s the best, because it changes us in powerful and positive ways. It’s the kind of mental food that improves and enriches our lives.

The second kind of food for the mind is probably the most common. It’s not necessarily good or bad, it’s just sort of there taking up our mental focus and energy. I call it mental junk food. Most of TV is this kind of food as well as most video games and magazines. In fact, most entertainment falls into this category depending upon how selective we are. Mental junk food is readily available everywhere we turn, easy, tasty, non-nutritious comfort food. It’s not always bad for us, especially when our brain needs to take a break. But understanding its limited quality should motivate us to manage its excessive quantity. Mental junk food will pretty much do the same thing to our mind that physical junk food does to our body. In limited amounts, it can be a refreshing treat. But as a main diet, it will leave us mentally weak and unfit.

There is a third kind of food for the mind, the bad stuff. It can be extremely dangerous, what I call poison for the mind (Warren 2012). It’s the kind of mental food that does deep, long-term damage. Its effects are so destructive, that a steady diet will limit a person’s ability to function normally. Over time it will change an individual’s sense of reality, right and wrong, good and bad, what’s valuable and what’s worthless. There’s a lot of poison in the world, on TV, in movies, on the internet and elsewhere. The problem is that this kind of poisonous mental food has a way of changing people’s ability to discern their own danger. This becomes a problem not only for themselves, but for those who live around them.

But how do you discern the good mental food from the bad? There is one basic test you can use. I call it “the truth test.” Truth is the most important ingredient in all forms of good mental food; just as the most damaging ingredient in all forms of bad mental food is the lie. The truth or the lie we feed upon has a lasting effect. It changes us. Our heart will always make room for whatever our mind dwells upon (Tripp 2006). Because whatever our mind dwells upon, gradually penetrates our innermost being, becomes part of our beliefs, and always finds its way out through our words and actions.

See what the Apostle Paul said about the importance of the things we think about (Philippians 4:8-9).

For additional study materials on the Bonus Verse and a copy of the “Ten Step Bible Memory Method for Life,” go to www.icsva.org/student-life/bonus-verse on the Immanuel Christian School website.