



November 2003

Well, a Big Hello

to everyone this month-

As I write this I'm on the final countdown toward going back to Mexico to have a denture made. Wow, it's been three months since I had the first work done, and what a difference it's made. Even with the ups and downs of healing it's been obvious something good has happened. I feel better, my mind is clearer, strength continues to increase, and I just feel things getting better. I'm also amazed how quickly this three months has gone with no teeth. Somehow eating salads out of the blender has been a workable option.

I guess the bottom line is that when you figure out what it takes to bring you back to health, do it! I did have to really think about something this extreme, and I'm still reeling from the financial aspect, but right now I have a future again, and that's priceless. I asked lots of questions, read lots of books, and prayed. And when the dust settled everything pointed the same direction.

We had an example of something else last week in my

church. A few months back we had a man come speak, a very dynamic man in his late fifties. As a church we were embarking on a new adventure and our brother was giving us a message on Joshua entering the land. At one point he dwelt on the place where God told Joshua to prepare victuals, for the manna was about to cease. This man made the claim that victuals meant meat and that God was going to put us on a spiritual 'Atkins Diet'. May God deliver us!

I did do a word study following his lead and found that the root of the word had to do with hunting and pursuit and does have connotations of venison, but felt the Atkins reference somewhat heavy handed. The main emphasis to me was that God was no longer spoon-feeding them, they had to make planning and preparation. In fact, very few of King James references to *meat* refer to flesh at all, including the fellowship and peace offerings of the Mosaic Law. Five centuries ago *meat* was a generic term for food. They just didn't gorge themselves on flesh back then unless they were royalty, and then they expected obesity, gout, diabetes and cancer.

Be that as it may, a week ago our brother was carried out of his church on a stretcher, and last Sunday many of his

congregation learned that their pastor had died. I forget the exact medical term, but I understand a blood vessel in his brain burst. As with so many diseases, your best friends are vegetables and fruit, your worst enemies are animal products. In these cases it's blood pressure, capillary strength, and blood chemistry being the 'usual suspects'.

It's really sad and yet comparing my brother's death with what he taught and modeled over the pulpit I have a sneaking hunch he died for what he believed. So many church leaders are going the way of the world and I do mean going. A pastor really doesn't hit his stride until he's about 50. From there he has his golden years until ill health starts to shut him down. Usually from fifty on it's kind of a toss up as his talents teeter-totter against his deteriorating body. And so here they play around living an Atkins-Starbucks-Krispy-Kreme-Burger King sort of life.

I wish every pastor would get set down hard in Bible college, given a copy of Dr Malkmus' book *Why Christians Get Sick* and told to read it through twice. There are some physical laws at work and we can't violate them and get away with it. And the tragedy is so much greater because it could have

been prevented with a little Bible aided common sense.

I was present at Hallelujah Acres in 2001 the day Reverend Malkmus had his stroke. He'd earned it—worked hard for it. Even though he ate good and exercised he'd been keeping a killer schedule and bragging about it to boot. The doctors were not encouraging when they saw what happened to him. Yet with no medical treatment other than rest, carrot juice and a limited amount of blood pressure medicine he made a full recovery in record time. He was 68.

The two medical conditions were very similar in terms of what happened, but the outcomes were very different. For one man had a power of healing at work in his body, the other was presuming on the grace of God. The prayer requests went out, Heaven was bombarded, but our brother died. Dr. Malkmus writes about that in his book. The Godly man dies in the midst of a sea of prayer, the unbeliever changes his diet and lives. Won't we ever learn? God speaks by the numbers too.

I really believe that there's something here we need to pay attention to. Health, strength, and the blessing of God is within our grasp. Will we grasp it? I'm going after my portion!

I don't know what all we'll do this month but it always seems to be fun. Lately we've been working with a grain grinder and a bread machine to see what we can come up with. I'm toying with the idea of a vegan pizza to help celebrate my brand new world of store bought teeth. In any case I'll get to show off my new window frames which are not really new but were only down for 8 years. I must be feeling better.

See you then...

Gary A. Hughes

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