

Living in the Tangle of Our Appetites

To be human is to have desires that are tied to the body. Food hunger and sexual appetite would be examples of this. These are God-given and in themselves good. They are however the cause of endless ruin and misery. This talk looks at how our organic desires should be trained and propagated and how Christ's death and resurrection are meant to impact them.

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INTRODUCTION:

The Bible gives significant attention to the subject of our human appetites. This is to be expected as they are fundamental to human experience. Part of being human is to be appetite driven.

1. What are the appetites?

Definition: *appetite is organic desire.*

The two levels of human desire:

- (i) At the level of the animal
- (ii) At the level of the personal

'man consists of two parts, his mind and his body: only the body has more fun' - Woody Allen

The appetites work according to the pleasure principle. When bodily deprivation occurs we naturally move towards hunger satiation.

Examples of appetites:

- Food hunger
- Sexual hunger

When our appetites bump into reality they are subjected to two possibilities:

- (i) Easy satiation
- (ii) Obstacle and resistance

Our Creator is not opposed to our appetites and the pleasures they bring. They are part of His design.

2. The Problem of the Appetites

The appetites are the cause of endless ruin and misery both for individual persons and for whole civilisations.

It is quite appropriate to live in our hungers, it is quite inappropriate to live by our hungers.

A brief reflection on Romans 8:5-8

A brief reflection on Ephesians 4:17-19

When humans live by their appetites a problem develops along four lines:

- A. The Eclipse of Personhood
- B. The Loss of Virtue

‘When it is good is replaced by I want all we have is the motivation of our own pleasure’ (C S Lewis in ‘The Abolition of Man’.

- C. The Loss of Freedom
- D. The Move to Banality

3. Overcoming the Appetite Problem.

The two false options:

- (i) Asceticism - totally deny them.
- (ii) Hedonism - totally embrace them.

- A. Train and propagate them.
- B. Realise that nothing short of the death of Christ will suffice.
- C. Stay committed to the ongoing conflict.