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How are we to meet the storms of life? And how are we to live in the last generation as overcomers?

The answer to both of these questions is "by faith." Do you remember how Jesus faced the storm that night on the Sea of Galilee? While the disciples fought to save the boat and themselves, the Lord slept peacefully. When at last they turned to Him, He delivered them from peril by calming the angry seas, and then asked them, "Where is your faith?" His peace and fearlessness were not because He met the peril as God. He met the storms of life with the same human liabilities shared by others in the boat. Although He faced the same terrors as they did, He slept in faith—faith in the sustaining power of His heavenly Father.

"As Jesus rested by faith in the Father's care, so we are to rest in the care of our Saviour. If the disciples had trusted in Him, they would have been kept in peace.... Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life and will deliver us from danger in the way that He knows to be best." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 336.

Jesus wants us also to develop this trust so that we may react to life's problems in the same way that He did. And the wonderful thing about this is that once we have the faith of Jesus, our lives will testify to the world that Jesus' strength is sufficient for all things. While uncommitted men and women cringe before the anguish of personal disasters, the people of God bear their difficulties with dignity, creatively, even cheerfully.

Revelation 14:12 identifies God's people in the last days thus: "Here is

the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

But what is faith? What is its nature? What is its opposite?

"In general, faith describes a principle of human nature by which we believe something on the basis of evidence or authority on which we have placed value and act accordingly." —Herbert Douglass, *Faith—Saying Yes to God*, Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee, 1978, p. 29.

That evidence may, or may not, be in itself trustworthy. Mankind has done many foolish and even horrible deeds, as well as a long list of commendable acts, in the name of faith. In itself neither good nor bad, it is simply that human process by which a person believes what seems to him believable and acts accordingly. And so, the value of a person's faith depends upon what he or she chooses to believe.

Sister Ellen G. White wrote: "Faith is the medium through which truth or error finds lodging place in the mind. It is by the same act of mind that truth or error is received, but it makes a decided difference whether we believe the word of God or the sayings of men." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 346.

Biblical faith describes a person who chooses to believe, trust, and obey God. The classic Bible definition of such faith is found in Hebrews 11:1, *New English Bible*: "Faith gives substance to our hopes, and makes us certain of realities we do not see." The vivid descriptions of the heroes of faith that the apostle Paul provided in that chapter make it obvious



that faith consists of something more than mere mental belief, or even zeal. Faith for them was the only right way to relate to God. "For all the Biblical heroes, faith was saying yes to God, to whatever He commanded. Faith was belief, trust, obedience, and deepest conviction all wrapped up in a cheerful companionship with their Lord and Master." *—Faith—Saying Yes to God*, p. 32.

The Bible definition of faith includes both a "heart" certainty and a mental conviction. Based on what the Scriptures say about God, He is worth trusting; and everything learned through the faith experience is firmly persuasive. Whatever God has promised, by faith we already possess in part, because we have already experienced it in part. Ephesians 1:13, 14.

Biblical faith involves the intellect, the will, and commitment. It is knowing by objective evidence and persuasive experience that God is worth believing, trusting, and obeying, having gained assurance by personally believing, trusting, and obeying.

"Thus, through faith they come to know God by an experimental knowledge. They have proved for themselves the reality of His word, the truth of His promises. They have tasted, and they know that the Lord is good. The beloved John had a knowledge gained through his own experience. He could testify:... 'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.' So everyone may be able, through his own experience, to 'set his seal to this, that God is true.' John 3:33, *American Revised Version*. He can bear witness to that which he himself has seen and heard and felt of the power of Christ. He can testify: 'I needed help, and I found it in Jesus. Every want was supplied; the hunger of my soul was satisfied; the Bible is to me the revelation of Christ. I believe in Jesus because He is to me a divine Saviour. I believe the Bible because I have found it to be the voice of God to my soul.'" *—The Ministry of Healing*, p. 461.

Humanity can choose to respond to God, or not, but it cannot ignore Him. "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.... So they are without excuse." Romans 1:19, *Revised Standard Version*. Everywhere,

whatever the culture, is apparent humanity's lost condition apart from God. Human arrogance and moral failure and guilt form the opposite of the faith experience. Adam and Eve's sin—their distrust of God—was the beginning of human pride and rebellion. We are still suffering the consequences of their "breaking faith" with God. "Distrust is rebellion—the opposite of faith. It fosters self-will, the antithesis of love. Rebellion, self-will, is sin. Sin destroys fellowship, smothers the conscience, and chokes hope. The only road back to all that has been lost through sin is the way of faith." *—Faith—Saying Yes to God*, p. 36.

Let us come to recognize our lostness, our desperate need, guilt, and powerlessness apart from our loving Lord, and hear His call whether it be through nature and revelation, His providence, or the influence of His Spirit.

The time just before Jesus' second coming is described as a time when "men's hearts [will be] failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Luke 21:26); but the experience of Christian faith is a rock on which men can build their futures without anxiety. And this rock of faith must be a personal rock. It is a new power, a new principle of action, a new life.

Let us be people of faith, responding to God's grace, by submitting the will and the heart to Him wholly. Let us reveal to the world the worthiness of God's way of life, giving credibility to the word of truth, and thus hasten the completion of the gospel commission.

"By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognize the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people on the earth." *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 12.

EVENTS

SOUTHEASTERN FIELD CONFERENCE

Friday, June 28,
to Sunday, June 30, 2024
Norman Park, Georgia

AMERICAN UNION YOUTH CONFERENCE

Monday, July 1,
to Sunday, July 7, 2024
Norman Park, Georgia

NORTHEASTERN FIELD CONFERENCE

Friday, August 30,
to Monday, September 2, 2024
Location to be determined

AMERICAN UNION WORKERS' SEMINAR

Tuesday, October 22,
to Sunday, October 27, 2024
Norman Park, Georgia

AMERICAN UNION CONFERENCE

Friday, December 20,
to Monday, December 23, 2024
Norman Park, Georgia

AMERICAN UNION DELEGATES' MEETINGS

Tuesday, December 24,
to Wednesday, December 25, 2024
Norman Park, Georgia

"Our characters are now forming for eternity. Here on earth we are training for heaven. We owe everything to grace, free grace, sovereign grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our adoption to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others." *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 268.



Reading Food Labels

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In an ideal world, we would all enjoy foods grown in our own gardens or on nearby organic farms; and we would prepare them fresh from scratch. There would be no need to worry about the contents and the sources of our food or to understand food labels. But in the industrialized societies of the modern world, in which both husband and wife often work to support the family, there may be little time left for adequate food preparation.

Meanwhile, food manufacturers have come on the scene to make it convenient and seemingly more affordable to buy processed, prepared, ready-to-eat foods. However, nutritional quality is lost in this process, while preservatives, additives, artificial flavors, excess salt, and sugar are often added. The availability of such pre-packaged foods enables one to consume "junk food" while technically being a vegetarian or a vegan. In this article, I would like to offer some guidelines on reading food labels to help you purchase more nutritious food.

Understanding Nutrition Facts labels

People read food labels for a variety of reasons. Many consumers would like to know how to use the information. The following label-reading tips are intended to make it easier to use the

Nutrition Facts labels to make quick, informed food decisions. Take time to read the labels on the packages that you purchase. Compare the nutrients and calories in one food with those in another. Make sure that you are not buying foods that are high in calories, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, and added sugars!

The information in the top section of a nutrition label can vary with each product (serving size, calories, and nutrients). The bottom section contains a footnote explaining the % Daily Value and gives the number of calories in nutritional categories.

Information on Nutrition Facts labels

- **Serving Size** tells you how much of the product is considered a "serving." A package may contain multiple servings. Servings per container will tell you the total number of servings in each package. If you eat more or less than the stated serving size, you can use the numbers to calculate the amount of nutrients and calories you are consuming. The serving size is the manufacturer's standard amount on which calculations are based. It is not a recommendation of how much should be eaten or drunk.

It is important to realize that all of the nutrient amounts shown on the label, including the number of calories, are given per serving size. Pay attention to this and how many servings there are in the package. For ex-

ample, you might ask yourself if you are consuming half a serving, one serving, or more. In the sample label below, one serving of lasagna equals 1 cup. If you eat two cups, you will be consuming two servings. (This is solely the product itself and nothing else.)

- **Calories** indicate how much energy is in the food. It is important to pay attention to calories if one is trying to manage his or her weight. To achieve or maintain a healthy body weight, balance the number of calories you eat and drink with the number of calories your body utilizes. Two thousand calories a day are generally advised. However, your calorie needs may be higher or lower and may vary, depending on your age, sex, height, weight, health condition, and physical activity. Seek to determine your estimated caloric needs.

Remember: The number of servings you consume determines the number of calories you actually eat. Eating too many calories per day is linked to overweight and obesity.

- **Total Fat** is the amount found in one serving of the food. This includes the amount of "bad fats" (saturated and trans) and "good fats" (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated). Fat has more calories per ounce than do protein or carbohydrates. So, cutting back on your fat intake will help you reduce the number of calories you eat.

- **Saturated Fat** is considered a "bad" fat. Eating too much can raise your

Nutrition Facts			
2 servings per container			
Serving size		1 cup (255g)	
Calories	Per serving	Per container	
	220	440	
	% DV*	% DV*	
Total Fat	5g 6%	10g	13%
Saturated Fat	2g 10%	4g	20%
Trans Fat	0g	0g	
Cholesterol	15mg 5%	30mg	10%
Sodium	240mg 10%	480mg	21%
Total Carb.	35g 13%	70g	25%
Dietary Fiber	6g 21%	12g	43%
Total Sugars	7g	14g	
Incl. Added Sugars	4g 8%	8g	16%
Protein	9g	18g	
Vitamin D	5mcg 25%	10mcg	50%
Calcium	200mg 15%	400mg	30%
Iron	1mg 6%	2mg	10%
Potassium	470mg 10%	940mg	20%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

LDL (bad) cholesterol level and your risk of heart disease and stroke. Adults who benefit from lowering LDL cholesterol should limit their saturated fat intake to less than 5-6 percent of their total caloric intake. For a person who needs 2,000 calories a day, this is 120 calories or less, or about 13 grams of saturated fat.

- **Trans Fat** is also considered a “bad fat,” because it can raise LDL cholesterol, decrease HDL cholesterol, and increase the risk of heart disease. Choose foods with “0” grams of trans fat. Read the ingredient list to avoid foods that contain “partially hydrogenated” oils.
- **Cholesterol** is found in foods that come from animals, such as meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, and full-fat dairy products. The Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends eating as little dietary cholesterol as possible within a healthful diet.
- **Sodium** is in food products as both naturally occurring and as added by the manufacturer. Salt is sodium chloride. Most adults should aim for less than 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day. That’s a little more than half a teaspoon of salt.
- **Total Carbohydrates** in food are digested and converted into glucose, or sugar, to provide the body’s cells with energy. Choose carbohydrate-based foods that are high in good nutrients. These include vegetables, fruit, and whole-grain foods.
- **Dietary Fiber** is that part of any plant that the body cannot digest. As part of a healthful diet, soluble fiber decreases the risk of heart disease and some types of cancer. Whole grains, fruit, and vegetables contain dietary fiber. Most refined (processed) foods contain little fiber.
- **Total Sugars** include both sugars that occur naturally in foods, such as fruit and milk, and those that are added to desserts, candy, soft drinks, and other packaged foods.
- **Added Sugars.** The FDA’s Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that less than 10 percent of one’s total daily calories come from added sugar. There are many different names for “added sugars,” including sucrose, fructose, honey, maltose, dextrose, high-fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, and sugar. Look at the ingredient list, and buy foods and

beverages that have little or no added sugars.

- **Protein** is one of the components in food that provides energy. Choose plant-based protein. Sources of protein include beans, nuts, seeds, tofu, and soy-based products.
- **Vitamins and minerals** are important parts of the human diet. Eating a variety of foods will help one to obtain all of the essential vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.
- **% Daily Value** gives the percentage of each nutrient in a single serving. Choose foods with 5% DV or less to consume less of a nutrient. To consume more, choose foods with 20% DV or more.

Things to reduce

Saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars that are listed on the label may be associated with adverse health effects; Americans generally consume too much of these. They are things that one needs to eat less of. Eating too much saturated fat and sodium, for example, is associated with an increased risk of developing some health problems, such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Consuming added sugars can make it hard to meet one’s nutrient needs while staying within caloric limits.

How do added sugars differ from total sugars?

Total Sugars on the Nutrition Facts label include those that are naturally present in many nutritious foods and beverages, such as in milk and fruit, as well as sugars that may have been added to the product. No Daily Reference Value has been established for total sugars, because no recommendation has ever been made for the total amount to eat in a day.

Added Sugars on the Nutrition Facts label include sugars that manufacturers add during processing (such as sucrose or dextrose, table sugar, syrup, honey, and concentrated fruit or vegetable juice). Products that have added sugars make it difficult to obtain adequate nutrients while staying within caloric limits.

Note: If the word “includes” appears before Added Sugars on the label, it means that Added Sugars are included

in the number of grams of Total Sugars in the product.

Furthermore, avoid chemicals or ingredients whose names you may not understand and which you would not have in your pantry. These may include preservatives, additives, artificial flavors, and dyes.

Nutrients to get more of

Dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium are nutrients that appear on labels that Americans generally do not get enough of. They are identified as nutrients to get more of. Eating a diet high in dietary fiber can benefit the body by increasing the frequency of bowel movements, lowering blood glucose and cholesterol levels, and reducing caloric intake. Consuming adequate amounts of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium can help to reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis, anemia, and high blood pressure.

Remember: You can use the label to support your personal dietary needs. Choose foods that contain more of the nutrients that you want to get more of and less of the nutrients that you may wish to cut down on.

If you have any questions, call the American Heart Association (800-242-8721) or visit heart.org. Also, consider consulting with your family physician for specific questions regarding your health.

References

American Heart Association (AHA)
Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

Disclaimer: This article is intended to provide helpful and informative material on the subject of reading and understanding food labels. It is provided with the understanding that the author and the publisher are not engaged in rendering medical, health, psychological, or any other kind of personal professional services. If the reader requires such services, a competent professional should be consulted. The author and publisher specifically disclaim all responsibility for any loss, or risk, personal or otherwise, that is incurred as a consequence, directly or indirectly, of the use and application of any of the information in this article.

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