

Overcome Bias With Truth

Written by Bill Perkins

I can't stand the taste of cow's liver.

Liver Night at the School

While a freshman at the University of Texas my anti-liver bias was tested. At the time I worked as a houseparent for 12-year old boys at the Texas School for the Deaf in Austin. Another student and I lived in a facility that housed a dozen boys. Our job was to parent these kids by overseeing their studies, sleep, clothing and recreation.

Fortunately, a woman prepared and served the meals. One evening she served liver. The dear woman tried to disguise the nasty taste by covering it with sautéed onions. Determined to set a good example I placed a forkful in my mouth. While a dozen boys watched—not one of them had taken a bite—I chewed once and then reflexively spat the food onto my plate. The boys erupted in laughter as they gleefully pointed at me.

Seemed they shared my bias. I looked at the hard-working woman who prepared the meal and told her, "I'm sorry, but I can't make them eat what I can't eat, and I can't eat cow's liver. The salad, vegetables and dessert we'll eat. Not the liver." She tried to convince me the onions transformed the taste. But it was not good. And nothing she added to the meat would ever change my mind. In fact, that's the last time I attempted to eat cow's liver.

An Unsavory Idea

A bias will prevent us from tasting a food we know we can't stand. It will also prevent us from considering an unsavory idea . . . one that conflicts with our beliefs. For years I believed the supernatural gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 were no longer active.

My seminary professors explained the gifts were given to substantiate the Gospel message and messengers. By the end of the book of Acts this had happened and so the gifts died out. So strong was my bias that I refused to read books that presented another point of view. Such thoughts were as unsavory to my mind as liver to my mouth.

The Messiah Would Not Die

In order to understand the disciples' bias against the death/resurrection of Jesus we must realize from childhood they had been taught and believed the Messiah would not die. Ezekiel 37:25 says as much: "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince forever."

As I noted in an earlier blog, Daniel's night vision declared, "his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14). Note the vision specifically says, "*his* dominion" is everlasting and "*his* kingdom" shall not be destroyed."

No wonder the Gospels record 31 instances where Jesus made direct or indirect reference to his death/resurrection and his disciples never got it. No wonder after his resurrection they didn't initially believe—despite the testimony of numerous trustworthy friends.

In a Word: Truth

So how do we overcome a bias? In a word: TRUTH. Reality erases a bias. If I could taste a delicious liver dish, my bias would vanish. IF I would give it a try.

A Death Bias

And what about a bias that favors a small loss cascading into a big loss? Or, a small disappointment morphing into a disaster? Or a personal slight degrading into anger? Such thinking reveals a death bias that views loss in every setback.

What would happen if I viewed every disappointment, pain and loss as a place for resurrection? Every hurt as a place for the Spirit to bring healing and health?

Such optimistic thinking is based on a resurrection reality that destroy every death bias.