

Dear Family,

“I have tried to make every pleasure into a channel of adoration.” C.S. Lewis  
Sometimes I avoid things just because I know they are good for me. By that I mean valuable, appropriate, right, wise. I think this is as good an evidence for the Fall as any. This morning I ate an apple for breakfast (That’s right, I am fifteen pounds overweight by all those official height and weight “charts” and the holiday season has just begun. Does anyone know who determined those statistics and is there a chart somewhere on the internet that is a little more generous? . . . I didn’t think so). The really surprising thing was that I genuinely *enjoyed* the apple. It was cool, crisp, delicious, a good sized portion, and it came wrapped like a Christmas present, all cherry red, and even the wrapping was edible, adding another dimension of texture to the whole experience. Obviously, this fruit idea is a Great idea. Then why do I embrace it so reluctantly?

Thomas Brooks has an answer. He was a puritan preacher (*of course* he has the answer!). He wrote that one of Satan’s devices to keep us from praise and joy is to exaggerate the *losses and crosses* of the Christian life. The Devil, cooperating with our fallen flesh, gets us to focus on whatever we think we are missing out on at any given point, rather than soaking in all the considerable pleasures of the moment. Ridiculous, but effective. You see, before biting into the apple, I was already missing out on the leftover cinnamon crumbcake I made for breakfast yesterday (yes, ladies, it was from a box, but don’t get me started down that rabbit trail, I remind you, men get credit for making *any* cake, *any* time, *any* how, OK?) The real point is that I *liked* the apple and it not only brought pleasure for a moment, but also the additional joy of some semblance of good stewardship of my physical health. Did I mention I *liked* the apple? It was not like swallowing medicine.

Feeding the body wisely does not require the privation of pleasure; it requires the selection of right pleasure. And so it is with our souls.

Whatever you do today, it will not be as satisfying as time spent with God. He has made us for Himself and He rewards us as we draw near with true and lasting joy. Our built in joy-meter resonates loudest when we are adoring Him. Whatever else you may desire and do today, remember: Time with God is pleasurable, delightful, joyful, and also an incomprehensible privilege. This is true today and especially true on the Lord’s Day. Don’t let the Devil tell you differently; he is a liar and the father of lies!

*O taste and see that the LORD is good!*

I hope you are all drinking in the sweetness of Thanksgiving and looking forward to Sunday, the Lord’s Day. Please keep Bill and Peggy Schade in your

prayers as they visited RCRC recently. Also be in prayer for our Candlelight Christmas at St. Thomas; we earnestly desire that that God's praise would be glorious!

I hope you caught the StarNews article on RCRC last Saturday. I was very pleased and saw it as an answer to prayer. It is online also at:

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20081120/ARTICLES/811200307>

There is an additional one minute "broadcast" interview with me on the subject of "How hard is it to find a church?" worth listening to at:

<http://divine.starnewsonline.com/uploads/2256905-Findingchurch.mp3>

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Thank you for your prayers for God's glory at RCRC, and for your prayers for me. PLEASE pray that our good God would use each of us *mightily* to His glory.

Soon, and very soon, we are going to see the King,

iBob