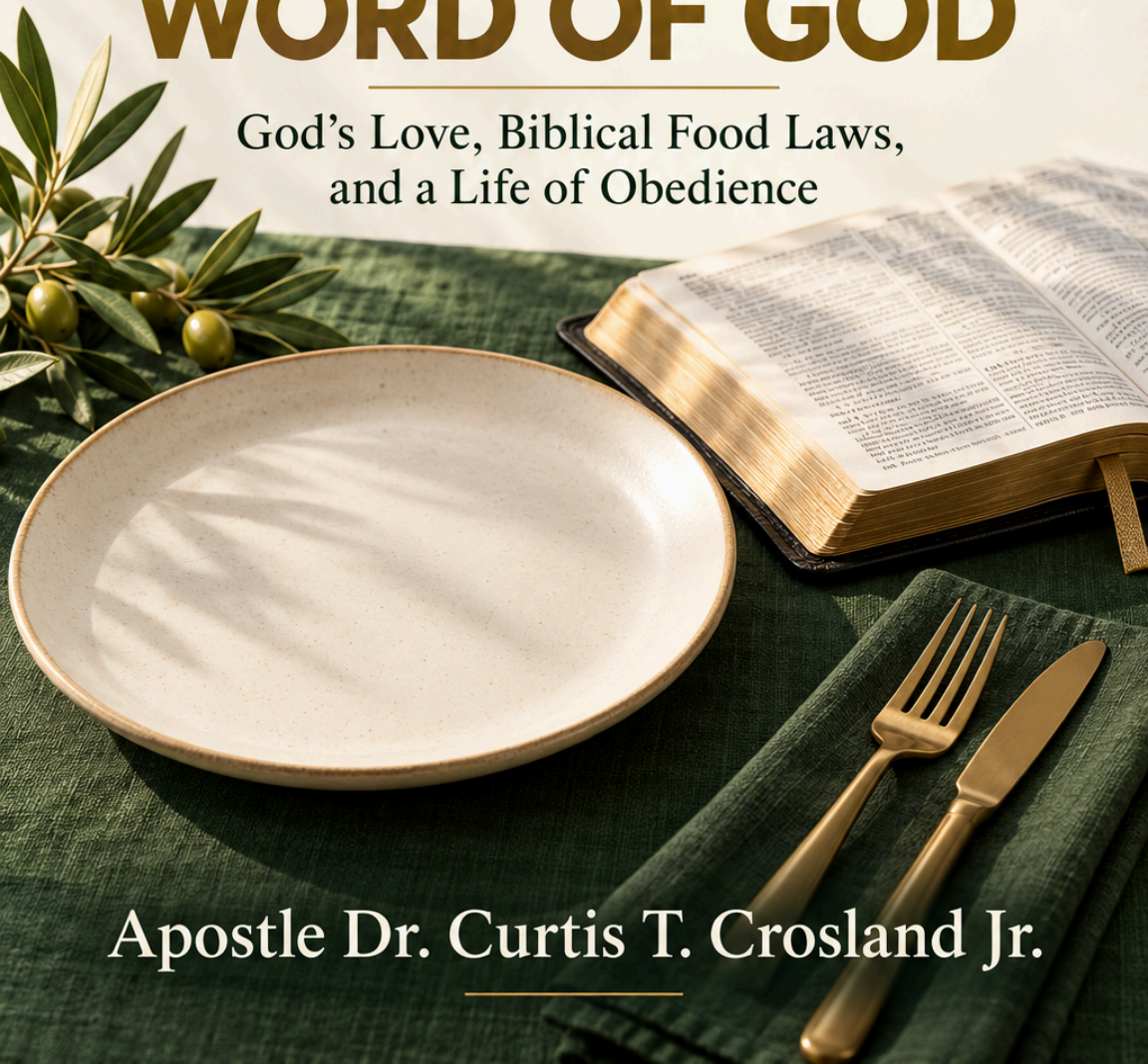
NEW LIFE PERFECTING PRAISE MINISTRIES

EATING CLEAN

ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

God's Love, Biblical Food Laws, and a Life of Obedience



Apostle Dr. Curtis T. Crosland Jr.

Eating Clean According to the Word of God

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Take the Word in.
Bring it up again.
Walk it out all the way through.

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The Prayer Had Ended. The Question Had Not.

Picture a familiar table. The food is hot. The family has gathered. Somebody bows a head and asks the Lord to bless what has been prepared. The prayer ends, the plates begin moving, and the conversation carries on.

But one question has not been answered: **did we ask God to bless His provision, or did we ask Him to approve a decision we had already made?**

That question can disturb a comfortable meal. It can disturb an even more comfortable habit of reading the Bible. We know how to ask for a blessing. Have we taken the same care to learn what the Word says about the thing we are asking Him to bless?

Somebody answers, "We have always eaten this." Somebody else says, "Just pray over it." Another remembers a sheet coming down from heaven. Before long, everyone has brought a verse to the table, but very few have brought the verses around it.

This book begins there: between a familiar answer and an honest examination.

I am going to ask you to follow the evidence. We will go to Noah before we go to Moses. We will read the two signs before turning them into a spiritual picture. We will let Jesus finish His sentence and let Peter explain his own vision. Then we will open the passages people usually quote to close the discussion.

You may laugh at an excuse because you recognize it. A moment later, the same sentence may reach a habit you have protected for years. Let it reach you. The purpose is to understand what obedience requires of the person holding the book.

The plate matters. The heart matters. And the Word deserves more than being remembered only when we need a quick answer.

So leave the Bible open. The prayer has ended. The question is still waiting.

A Word Before We Open the Book

I want you to read this book with your Bible open and your mind willing. We are going to build a case. We will begin where the distinction first appears, examine the standard God gave, follow the words of Jesus and the apostles, and answer the passages that seem to challenge the teaching. By the time we reach the conclusion, you should understand why we teach what we teach.

At New Life Perfecting Praise Ministries, we believe the biblical distinction between clean and unclean creatures still guides what believers receive as food. I am writing from that conviction. I am also writing as a pastor who knows that people bring family traditions, sincere questions, and years of teaching to the table. A person does not stop loving Grandmother because they begin asking what Grandmother put in the greens.

Some Christians understand the New Testament passages differently. We will read those passages openly. A strong case can stand with the difficult verses in the room. If I have to hide a verse to protect my conclusion, I have more studying to do.

We will also distinguish the instruction from the illustration. Leviticus actually describes animals. When we connect cud chewing with meditation, or the divided hoof with a separated walk, we are drawing spiritual lessons from those features. Those lessons can search the heart without pretending that Moses wrote every comparison we make.

This is a reading, not a schedule of weekly assignments. Read slowly enough to follow the thought. When a question reaches your own habits, let it stay there for a moment. We are not studying somebody else's dinner while giving our own heart the afternoon off.

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version. When this book calls a creature clean, it means clean according to the biblical dietary distinction we defend. That does not settle allergies, medical needs, sanitation, or cooking. Those responsibilities still belong in the kitchen.

Here is the line I want you to carry through the book: **Take the Word in, bring it up again, and walk it out all the way through.**

1. A Table Before a Prohibition

"These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth." — Leviticus 11:2

Before God tells Israel what to refuse, He begins identifying what they may receive. Pay attention to that order. We sometimes read the chapter as though God entered the kitchen looking for a reason to take dinner away. His instruction begins by setting a table.

That matters because our picture of God affects how we hear His commands. If we imagine that His greatest pleasure is disappointing us, every boundary will sound like hostility. If we know Him as the Father who provides, we can ask what His instruction protects and teaches.

Deuteronomy 10:12–13 joins fearing God, walking in His ways, loving Him, serving Him, and keeping His commandments. Moses describes that instruction as being "for thy good." Love and authority belong in the same passage. A loving God can say yes to our needs and no to a particular desire.

We understand that principle when we are responsible for someone else. A parent does not become cruel by refusing to let a child make dinner out of whatever was found under the sofa. The child may disagree passionately. Passion is not an ingredient list.

Yet when God addresses our appetite, we suddenly want a committee meeting. We can accept His authority over heaven, earth, life, and death, but the lunch plate apparently requires further negotiation.

The first issue, then, is trust. Am I willing to hear what God says before deciding how much of it I want? Can I open a passage without making my favorite dish the chairman of the discussion?

Provision does not require every creature to be food

Genesis presents a world made by God and called good. That goodness gives every creature value. It does not give every creature the same assignment. Some pollinate. Some graze. Some prey on other animals. Some consume dead material and return nutrients to the environment. Creation is larger than the human menu.

Some animals our church does not receive as clean food contribute to that work. Snow crabs, for example, have a varied diet that includes scavenging dead organisms. In preaching, we may call such creatures a cleanup crew. You may even hear the expression "nature's toilets." Receive that as an illustration of ecological work, not as a Bible name or a claim that every unclean animal eats waste. Some clean animals occasionally consume animal matter too. The food distinction is established by the biblical description, not by a homemade rule about scavenging.

The point remains: **something can have a place in God's creation without having a place on our plate.** We can respect the creature without eating it. We can recognize its purpose without assigning it a purpose God did not give it in the dietary passages.

Grace puts obedience in its proper place

Let us settle another matter before proceeding. No grocery receipt can purchase redemption. Ephesians 2:8–10 places salvation in God's grace and then describes the good works for which believers are created in Christ. We receive the Savior, and we learn to follow Him.

An obedient meal does not replace repentance, faith, mercy, or a truthful life. Neither does grace give us a reason to refuse instruction before we have heard it. Titus 2:11–12 describes grace as teaching us how to live. Grace has a voice. It does more than excuse the habits we would rather leave untouched.

This is the foundation beneath the argument: God provides; God instructs; His people learn to respond. Now we must ask when Scripture first makes the distinction. If it began only with Moses, that is one conversation. If it was already present before Moses, we must begin earlier.

2. Before Moses Ever Stood on Sinai

> *"Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female." — Genesis 7:2*

So many of us grew up hearing that Noah took two of every kind of animal onto the ark. We knew the picture: two lions, two elephants, two of everything, all standing politely in line. It was a memorable lesson. It was not the complete instruction.

Genesis 7:2 distinguishes clean beasts taken by sevens from beasts that are not clean taken by two. Verse 3 also speaks of birds by sevens. Later verses describe creatures entering two by two. Their paired entry and the total number taken are different matters. Read both statements before making one erase the other.

The KJV says "by sevens." Many translations understand that as seven pairs. We can retain the KJV's wording without allowing the discussion of counting to hide the point: God did not give an identical numerical instruction for clean and unclean beasts.

Noah had to recognize the difference. Moses had not yet been born. Aaron had not been appointed. Israel was not standing at Sinai. Whatever conclusions we eventually reach about Christian practice, we cannot honestly say that the categories first appeared in Leviticus.

That is the first historical witness in our case. The distinction is older than the Levitical priesthood.

God was providing for life beyond the flood

Genesis 8:20 tells us that Noah offered clean beasts and clean fowls to the Lord. The narrative directly connects their classification with acceptable sacrifice. Having more than one pair allowed an offering without ending that kind's future.

We also understand the greater provision as fitting the needs of life and food after the flood. God was looking beyond the storm to the world in which Noah's family would live. Genesis does not explicitly say that an adequate food supply was the reason for the

larger number. Sacrifice is stated; food provision is part of our interpretation of the larger account.

Read Genesis 9:3 before raising an objection

Someone will point out that Genesis 9:3 says, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." That is a serious sentence. It belongs in the discussion, especially because its language is broad.

Some readers understand it as permission to eat every animal, with a narrower restriction later imposed on Israel. We read it alongside the categories already present in the flood account and the fuller instructions that follow. On our reading, God's provision should be understood within His ordering of creatures, rather than as a command to forget a distinction the narrative has just emphasized.

The phrase "clean animals only" is not written in Genesis 9:3, and we will not pretend that it is. But notice the comparison God makes: "even as the green herb have I given you all things." Every plant was given, yet no one has ever understood that to mean Noah should eat hemlock or poison ivy. The word "every" worked within an understood boundary for plants. Read the same way, it works within the boundary the flood account has just drawn for animals. Our conclusion comes from reading the passages together. That is why Noah is the beginning of the case, not the entire case.

Verse 4 immediately restricts flesh with its life, identified with its blood. Even the broad language of provision does not remove God's authority over how His gift is received. Noah leaves the ark with instructions, not with an announcement that appetite now governs everything.

The lesson also reaches our habits. Being delivered from a flood did not make Noah too spiritual to listen. Sometimes we want a testimony powerful enough to excuse us from the next instruction. The Lord brings us through, and we act as though being brought through means we no longer need to be taught.

We now have our first point in place: clean and unclean did not begin with Moses. To learn the actual dietary standard, however, we must read the passages where God explains it plainly. That takes us to the two signs.

3. Both Signs, Not Half a Description

"Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat." — Leviticus 11:3

God gives a description with conditions joined together. The land animal must have the required divided hoof and chew the cud. One feature does not substitute for the other. This is where we must learn to read all the way to the end of a sentence.

A divided hoof is fully split, as in cattle, sheep, and goats. A horse has a single solid hoof. A camel has two toes with broad padded feet, rather than the fully cloven hoof of cattle. The biblical list expressly excludes the camel.

Chewing the cud means bringing previously swallowed food back to the mouth and chewing it again. Cows, sheep, and goats are familiar ruminants. Leviticus also uses its own observable descriptions for the coney and hare. We should follow its stated classifications without calling those two creatures ruminants in the modern zoological sense.

Leviticus 11:3 uses expressions for parting the hoof and cleaving its cleft. The description concerns a fully divided hoof. An appearance of division is not permission to ignore the rest of the condition. God gives a complete description, and then the examples prevent us from pretending that half was sufficient.

The exceptions make the rule unmistakable

The camel, coney, and hare are described as bringing up cud while lacking the required hoof. The swine has the divided hoof but does not chew the cud. Each is excluded. Three examples fail one part of the description; the pig fails the other.

Leviticus 11:7 names the swine directly. This is not a case in which we must guess what animal the writer had in mind. Verse 8 prohibits eating the flesh of the animals just discussed. Deuteronomy 14 repeats the distinction.

For our church's practice, that means pork remains pork when it is sliced, smoked, ground, or hidden under an impressive name on a

restaurant menu. A little garnish does not change the species. The animal did not change. Only the menu got creative.

We laugh, but the habit underneath the joke is serious. We sometimes search for a preparation that will make a clear instruction feel less clear. The question becomes whether we are studying the passage to understand it or shopping for a way around it.

Waters, birds, and the limits of our own rules

For water creatures, Leviticus 11:9–12 identifies fins and scales. Salmon, trout, and cod are familiar examples that fit the practice explained here. Shrimp, crab, lobster, oysters, clams, mussels, squid, and octopus do not meet that description. Catfish lacks the required scales.

The word seafood is a grocery category. It is not a verse. Putting everything from the water under one pleasant heading does not give every creature fins and scales.

For birds, read the prohibited list in Leviticus 11:13–19 and Deuteronomy 14. Chicken, turkey, quail, dove, and pigeon are commonly received as clean fowl in our practice. The text gives a list of exclusions; it does not simply say that every bird that scavenges is unclean. We should not replace God's description with a rule that sounds easier to remember.

Leviticus 11:21–22 also contains a limited permission concerning named leaping winged creatures. That is a reason to read carefully, not an invitation to taste every insect in the yard. Knowing your Bible does not remove the need to identify what you are looking at.

A clean classification still requires a responsible cook

An animal meeting the description does not make every preparation wise, sanitary, or suitable for every person. Allergies, medical needs, cooking, storage, and ingredients still matter. A permitted chicken left out all afternoon has not received a special exemption from food handling.

Nor does a careful menu make the whole person mature. We will come to the heart shortly. For now, the second point is established: the dietary passages give an identifiable standard, and the land-animal standard requires both signs. The next question is what those two signs can teach the person reading them.

4. Take the Word In and Walk It Out

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." — James 1:22

The animal descriptions concern actual creatures. Now let us receive the spiritual illustration without confusing it with the literal instruction. Cud chewing offers a picture of returning to the Word. The divided hoof offers a picture of a walk set apart for God. Together they ask whether what enters the mind becomes visible in the life.

We have people who can remember the preacher's title, the main Scripture, and every place the congregation shouted. By Monday afternoon, the Word itself has somehow gone missing. We took notes. Did we take instruction?

Psalm 1:2 describes delight in the law of the Lord and meditation day and night. Joshua 1:8 joins meditation with doing what is written. Biblical meditation does not end with admiring a sentence. It allows that sentence to examine a choice.

Bring the Word up when anger rises. Bring it up when pride wants the last word. Bring it up when a private opportunity contradicts a public confession. The point is not how many verses we can swallow in a sitting. The point is whether the Word is becoming nourishment.

The God who brings us up

The phrase ma'alat gerah in Leviticus 11:3 describes bringing up the cud. Its verb comes from the Hebrew root 'alah, to go up. At the end of the chapter, God describes Himself as the One who brings Israel up from Egypt (11:45). The word family also includes ma'alot, ascents, familiar from the Songs of Ascents.

The repeated root gives us a thought-provoking connection: the God who brings His people up calls them to holiness. The wording is worth noticing. It does not prove that every animal action is a coded description of God, and bringing Israel up also appears elsewhere, including Exodus 3:8, 17. We receive the echo as an invitation to reflect on deliverance and the life that should follow it.

If God has brought me up, why am I so determined to keep living down where He found me? A testimony should have some evidence after the microphone is put away.

Gerah also names a small weight, twenty of which make a shekel in Exodus 30:13. Hebrew lexicons distinguish the cud sense from the weight sense despite the matching spelling. A preacher may use that resemblance as wordplay: take even a small portion of Scripture seriously. One verse received honestly can weigh more in a life than a chapter recited for display. That is an illustration, not a hidden sanctuary definition of cud chewing.

Separated all the way through

The divided hoof brings the illustration down to where we walk. Second Corinthians 6:17 calls believers away from uncleanness in a passage addressing idolatry. Hebrews 5:14 describes practiced discernment of good and evil. Second Timothy 2:15 calls for rightly handling the word of truth. The Greek expression there is not a translation of the Hebrew word for hoof; the connection is devotional.

The question is still searching. Is my separation visible only where people can see it? Have I changed the public language while preserving the private arrangement? Partial surrender can become very skilled at dressing for church.

In the illustration, the camel, coney, and hare warn us about intake without the required walk. The pig warns from the opposite direction: an outward sign without inward attention. Leviticus Rabbah 13:5 pictures a pig displaying its hooves as though proving its purity. The original comparison criticizes the hypocrisy of Edom/Rome. Applied to ourselves, it asks whether we keep showing God the part we have obeyed while concealing the part we refuse to address.

Some of us can hold one clean-looking foot up so long that the other parts of the life never get discussed. “Look at my attendance. Look at my title. Look at my gift.” Very well. What is happening inside?

What are you feeding on?

Familiar clean land animals normally graze or browse. Their usual diet offers another picture of nourishment. We should not claim that no such animal ever eats animal matter; research has documented deer consuming nestlings. The lesson concerns the normal pattern, not a rule without exceptions.

For the soul, the question is plain: what feeds me? Am I nourished by truth, mercy, and peace, or do I need somebody else's downfall to enjoy a conversation? A mouth that refuses pork can still develop an appetite for another person's reputation.

The cattle, sheep, and goats used for herd and flock sacrifices met both signs. Those animals did not literally meditate on Scripture. They furnish the picture. Jesus supplies the willing obedience to which our picture points. He spoke what His Father taught Him (John 8:28), and Hebrews 7:26 describes Him as holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. John 1:29 identifies Him as the Lamb of God.

We follow Him by bringing understanding and conduct together. Take the Word in. Bring it up again. Walk it out all the way through. Now we must face the question every reader is waiting to ask: did Jesus change the dietary instruction itself?

5. Let Jesus Finish His Sentence

> *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." — Matthew 5:17*

If we say that Jesus ended a biblical distinction, we must hear His words in the conversation where He spoke them. A reply changes meaning when its original question disappears.

Matthew 5:17 begins with a warning against misunderstanding His mission. Verse 18 continues with heaven and earth, the smallest marks of the law, and the fulfillment of all. Those are substantial words. They do not invite careless contempt for the Scriptures He came to fulfil.

The New Testament also teaches the completion of sacrifices in Christ and His superior priesthood. We must examine the particular passages.

Our conviction is that the food distinction remains. To examine Mark 7, we must enter at the beginning rather than arrive at verse 19 carrying a conclusion.

What was actually on trial?

Mark 7:2–5 describes disciples eating with hands called defiled or unwashen. The Pharisees and scribes ask why they do not follow the tradition of the elders. The dispute is about a washing tradition. The disciples are not described as eating pork.

Jesus challenges religious people who preserve a human tradition while setting aside a commandment of God. His example concerns honoring father and mother. A practice can look devout and still become a way of avoiding an actual duty. That should make every teacher uncomfortable enough to examine himself.

Then He addresses what defiles a person. Evil thoughts and destructive conduct proceed from the heart. The parallel account in Matthew 15:20 closes by identifying the issue of eating with unwashed hands.

That setting matters to our reading. Jesus exposes a claim about defilement and the tradition attached to it. We do not understand the conversation as a replacement animal list.

Notice what that means for verse 19. In this same conversation Jesus rebukes the Pharisees: "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:9). It would undo His own argument if, a few verses later, He set aside the commandment of Leviticus 11. He was defending God's commandments against human tradition, not trading one for the other.

The words that carry the argument

The KJV reads in Mark 7:19, "Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?" We understand that phrase within the explanation of digestion, alongside Matthew's conclusion about unwashed hands.

Many modern translations instead make explicit the reading that Jesus thereby declared all foods clean. That is an interpretive rendering of the Greek construction, with grammatical reasons behind it. The digestive reading also involves interpretation. We defend it because we believe it best fits the immediate controversy and the wider scriptural witness.

Here is the discipline: explain why a reading is persuasive. Calling another translation dishonest is easier than studying the passage, but easier is not the same as better.

Some of us read the Bible the way we read a restaurant menu. We stop as soon as we find something we like. Unfortunately, the verse before it and the verse after it are still there, and they do not charge extra for context.

Let the correction reach your heart

Even if you agree with our dietary conclusion, you cannot leave Mark 7 untouched. Jesus has exposed the heart. Removing one ingredient from the kitchen while preserving deceit, pride, and cruelty is no victory over defilement.

A person can reject a pork chop and still enjoy lying about a neighbor. That person needs more than a revised dinner plan. The One who addresses the table also searches the heart.

Honor God's instruction, examine your traditions, and receive the correction of the heart. A correct food choice cannot hide an unchanged life.

6. Let Peter Explain His Own Vision

"But God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." — Acts 10:28

Before the sheet appears, Cornelius is praying. Before Peter sees animals, God is preparing a household to hear the gospel. If we enter Acts 10 only looking for permission to change a menu, we can pass the purpose of the entire account on the way in.

Read it in order. Cornelius receives direction to send for Peter. Peter sees a vessel descending with creatures in it. A voice commands him to rise, kill, and eat. Peter refuses because he has never eaten anything common or unclean. The answer comes: what God has cleansed must not be called common.

Do not leave out either side. Peter's refusal is in the text. God's reply is in the text. The arrival of the messengers is in the text. The Spirit's direction to go with them is in the text. An argument becomes unreliable when it keeps only the sentence that sounds useful.

What Peter was still doing

Acts 10:14 records Peter's statement after the resurrection of Jesus. His continuing practice is significant. He had walked with the Lord and still approached the vision with a refusal to eat common or unclean things. That deserves a place in any serious account of the subject.

Verse 17 says Peter wondered what the vision meant. He did not immediately announce that every creature was now dinner. The meaning unfolded as messengers arrived and he went to the house of Cornelius.

There, Peter gave his explanation: God had shown him not to call any person common or unclean. He entered a home he might otherwise have refused to enter. He preached Christ. The Holy Ghost fell upon the hearers. The controversy in Acts 11 concerned going to uncircumcised men and eating with them. The conclusion celebrated God's gift of repentance unto life to the Gentiles.

We were looking for a pork chop while God was opening a door.

Follow the conclusion Luke gives

Our church gives that stated narrative conclusion central weight. The animal imagery serves God's purpose of overcoming a barrier to people. Cornelius is received through the gospel. The account does not report his eating a prohibited creature as proof of acceptance.

Peter interprets the vision a second time. At the Jerusalem council, describing what happened at the house of Cornelius, he said God "put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). What God had cleansed was hearts, not hogs. Notice the timing as well. The vision came three times (Acts 10:16), and while Peter was still thinking on it, the Spirit said, "Behold, three men seek thee" (10:19). Three times the sheet; three men at the gate. Peter explains his vision in two chapters, and neither time does he mention food.

Do not defend the sheet and block the door

Now let the passage correct the person who teaches it. You cannot use Peter to defend a dietary conviction while refusing the lesson about receiving people. A stranger does not have to know your food list before being worthy of hearing the gospel.

What happens when someone walks into church carrying a history you do not understand? Do you see a person to receive or a problem to move away from? It is possible to know precisely what came down in the sheet and still miss whom God was sending through the door.

We can teach our practice clearly and welcome a learner patiently. We can hold a conviction without confusing a person's background with their worth before God.

Peter has now spoken. His testimony does not give us a reason to ignore the dietary distinction. It gives us a reason to read symbols through their stated purpose and to receive people with whom God is dealing. Next comes the familiar answer heard over many a plate: "Just pray over it."

7. The Word Identifies; Prayer Gives Thanks

"For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." — 1 Timothy 4:5

"Just pray over it." We have heard the advice so often that it can sound like a complete explanation. But what do we believe prayer is doing? Is it receiving God's gift, or asking Him to change the instruction we would rather not follow?

Prayer is serious. It is communion with God, gratitude for His care, and dependence upon Him. It should never be reduced to a short religious procedure that allows us to stop asking what He has said.

First Timothy 4 warns against deceptive teaching, including forbidding marriage and commanding abstinence from foods God created to be received with thanksgiving. The KJV word meats can refer to food generally. Paul defends God's good provision against false religious prohibition.

Verses 4–5 speak broadly: every creature of God is good, nothing is to be refused when received with thanksgiving, and it is sanctified by God's Word and prayer. A defense of clean eating must hear that breadth rather than quietly lower its volume.

Which foods did God create to be received?

Our reading takes the qualification in verse 3 seriously and connects the Word's role in verse 5 with the biblical instructions identifying food. Leviticus 11 gives the distinction. Prayer receives what God provides with thanksgiving.

Paul does not insert a citation to Leviticus into his sentence. The connection is the interpretation we defend from the passages together. Other Christians understand his broad language as releasing believers from the earlier distinction. We believe the qualifying description of foods God created to be received, together with sanctification by the Word, preserves the distinction rather than cancelling it.

Consider the order of the thought. God speaks. We listen. God provides. We give thanks. We do not become wiser than His

instruction because we have learned to pronounce a blessing over our preference.

Some of us pray over a plate as though a long enough blessing will persuade the animal to change its family history. The amen can be loud. The source is still the source.

What about the market and the dinner invitation?

First Corinthians 8–10 addresses food associated with idols, conscience, and participation in idolatry. Paul can describe freedom concerning food sold in the market while also commanding believers to flee idolatry. He distinguishes an ordinary purchase from sharing in an idol's table.

Our church does not read his market instruction as a new species list. We read it in the controversy Paul is addressing. His point concerns the food's association and what a person's participation communicates. Another Christian may understand the permission more broadly, but the original question must remain visible.

This distinction matters in a real home. The source of an animal, the history of a dish, an allergy, and a person's conscience are different questions. Answer the one actually being asked. Do not offer a confident speech about liberty when the guest simply needs to know whether the soup contains shellfish.

Thanksgiving should survive the amen

If we receive food gratefully, gratitude should still be visible after the prayer ends. Appreciate the cook. Avoid needless waste. Share with the person who needs a meal. A precise food classification does not excuse a demanding spirit.

There is something wrong when the blessing over dinner is gracious and the first sentence after it is cruel. The prayer should have some influence on the mouth that just prayed it.

Prayer receives God's provision under His Word. But someone may answer, "The covenant changed." That objection deserves a direct answer.

8. But Did the Covenant Change?

"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." — Hebrews 7:12

Yes, the New Testament announces a new covenant. A serious defense of continuing dietary practice should say that plainly. If our answer depends on pretending that the priesthood, sacrifice, and covenant arrangements remained identical, we have not answered Hebrews.

The strongest form of the objection is simple. God's character does not change, but He can change the covenant under which His people live. Animal sacrifices are fulfilled in Christ. The Levitical priesthood gives way to His superior priesthood. Therefore, saying "God does not change" cannot by itself establish that every earlier instruction continues in exactly the same form. So the real question is this: does the change of covenant require the clean-and-unclean distinction to be abandoned?

Read the priesthood argument where it is made

Hebrews 7 concerns the priesthood of Christ, the inadequacy of the former arrangement to bring perfection, and the better hope through which believers draw near to God. Hebrews 8 speaks of the better covenant and calls the first old. Chapters 9–10 discuss sanctuary worship, ordinances, food and drink regulations within that system, and the once-for-all work of Christ.

We receive that teaching. Jesus does not need to repeat an unfinished sacrifice. The church does not need to restore Aaron's office to improve His priesthood. Our salvation rests in Him.

The question is whether the book's treatment of those arrangements also reclassifies the creatures named in the dietary passages. Our answer is no. We distinguish the provision of redemption and the sanctuary system from the dietary classification we have traced before Sinai and through the later Scriptures.

Noah's witness belongs here, with proper weight

Clean and unclean were recognized before Aaron's priesthood. That makes it inadequate to explain the distinction only as a creation of that priesthood. Noah's testimony deserves to remain in the case.

However, age alone does not settle the question. Circumcision also predates Moses, and the apostles did not require Gentiles to receive it as a condition of salvation. But notice how they handled it. When the apostles set circumcision aside, they said so plainly and repeatedly (Acts 15; Galatians 5:2–6). Paul could write, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Corinthians 7:19). When the apostles released believers from something, they named it. Circumcision was named. No apostolic council or letter ever names the clean-and-unclean distinction and sets it aside in the same way.

Holiness reaches beyond a ceremony

Leviticus 11:44–45 gives the call to holiness. First Peter 1:15–16 repeats the command to be holy because God is holy. The New Covenant does not make holiness an embarrassing subject that the preacher must apologize for mentioning.

Leviticus 20:25–26 shows why the food distinction sits inside that call: "Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean… And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine." God does not explain the distinction by the altar or the priest. He explains it by belonging: *that ye should be mine*. A change of priesthood does not change whose we are. First Peter does not repeat the food list, but it repeats the reason the list was given.

Hebrews 8:10 also describes God's laws placed in the mind and written in the heart. The new covenant creates a deeper relationship with His instruction. It cannot be explained as though God finally found a way to have a people who never need to listen.

Grace that teaches a changed life

We must keep the order clear. We do not clean the menu to qualify for a Savior. We come to Christ and allow Him to teach the whole life. Ephesians 2:8–10 and Titus 2:11–14 give that order its shape: grace, salvation, and a life directed toward what pleases God.

Some of us want grace to be a teacher who never assigns anything inconvenient. We love the welcome and would prefer to be absent for the instruction. Yet a grace that reaches our guilt can also reach our habits.

9. The Verses We Must Not Skip

"For meat destroy not the work of God." — Romans 14:20

If the case is sound, an open Bible is its friend. We do not strengthen it by preaching loudly over the passages someone else is trying to read. Let Romans 14, Acts 15, and Colossians 2 have their place. We will hear the language, identify the question, and explain the conclusion we draw.

There is a difference between answering an objection and becoming irritated that somebody raised it. A sincere question is not an attack on the pastor's anointing. Sometimes it is evidence that the person is finally reading.

Romans 14: receive the person and read the whole statement

Romans 14 contrasts someone who eats all things with someone who eats herbs. It commands the eater not to despise the abstainer and the abstainer not to judge the eater. Both stand before the Lord. Paul is protecting fellowship and conscience against contempt.

Verse 14 says there is nothing unclean of itself. Verse 20 says all things indeed are pure. Those are strong statements. Many Christians understand them as ending the earlier dietary restrictions.

Our reading places those statements within the chapter's dispute over eating, abstaining, and treating one another. We do not understand Paul to be announcing that the prohibited creatures in Leviticus have changed classification. The chapter's stated contrast is meat and herbs. It does not name swine or shellfish.

There is also a detail in the original language that English hides. In Acts 10:14, Peter refuses anything "common or unclean," two different Greek words: *koinos* (common) and *akathartos* (unclean). *Akathartos* is the word the Greek Old Testament uses for the unclean creatures of Leviticus 11. When Paul writes in Romans 14:14 that "there is nothing unclean of itself," the word he uses is *koinos*. Paul had the Levitical word available and did not use it. He spoke of food regarded as common, defiled by association, not of the creatures Leviticus calls unclean. The question in Rome was whether clean

food could be made common, not whether unclean food had become clean.

What the chapter does say unmistakably is that love must govern the way we hold our conviction. If I pressure a person to eat against conscience, I have not helped them walk in faith. If I ridicule a person while explaining why I abstain, I have not practiced the passage I claim to understand.

Some of us can detect a hidden ingredient faster than we can detect contempt in our own voice. Paul has a word for that voice too.

Our church can therefore teach continuing dietary distinction and receive a fellow believer graciously. We can continue studying without converting dinner into a judgment seat. The kingdom's righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost should be recognizable at our table.

Acts 15: what did the council decide?

Acts 15 begins with a claim that Gentiles must be circumcised after the manner of Moses to be saved. Verse 5 also records the demand to command them to keep the law of Moses. The council addresses a substantial question about Gentile inclusion and the burden being placed on believers.

Peter points to God's work among the Gentiles and salvation through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The letter tells believers to abstain from idol-related food, blood, things strangled, and fornication. It does not reproduce the clean-animal list of Leviticus 11, and some take that omission as the end of the matter. Look more closely at the list the council did give.

Those four requirements were not chosen at random. They match the laws Leviticus 17 and 18 had already placed on "the strangers that sojourn among you": sacrifices offered to idols apart from God's altar (17:7–9), eating blood (17:10–12), meat not drained of its blood (17:13–15), and sexual immorality (18:26). Two of the four are food laws from Moses, applied to Gentile believers after the cross. The council did not tell Gentiles that the food laws of Moses had ended. It took the laws Leviticus already applied to the stranger dwelling among Israel and placed them on Gentiles who had come to the God of Israel.

Then James explained why the letter could stop there: "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day" (Acts 15:21). Gentile believers would keep hearing Moses. The council set the starting point for new believers, not the finish line.

The chapter establishes salvation by grace and refuses circumcision as a condition of salvation. It does not need a longer list to support our case. The list it gives already shows the apostles treating food laws from Moses as instruction for Gentile believers.

Colossians 2: Christ must remain the center

Colossians 2:16 tells believers not to let anyone judge them in food, drink, festivals, new moons, or Sabbath days. Verse 17 describes these as a shadow of things to come and directs attention to Christ. Earlier verses speak of forgiveness and the handwriting of ordinances taken out of the way. Later verses address human regulations and a show of religious severity.

Many Christians read this as releasing believers from the observances listed. Our church reads the passage as a warning against judgments and religious pressures that displace life rooted in Christ, rather than as a reclassification of unclean creatures.

The shadow language must also remain in the explanation. A connection with Christ is central to the practices discussed. We defend it by holding his warning against human regulation together with the scriptural case for continuing obedience.

What these chapters require of the reader

These are the difficult passages. They require interpretation on both sides. Giving them an honest hearing is part of taking Scripture seriously. We have explained why our church does not read them as erasing the clean distinction, and the reader should examine those reasons with an open Bible.

What we cannot do is use our conclusion to excuse pride, salvation by works, idolatry, pressure against conscience, or contempt for another believer. These chapters forbid the very habits that can make a religious argument sound impressive while leaving its speaker spiritually careless.

Now let us hear the prophets and their warnings about judgment.

10. The Prophets Still Have Something to Say

> *"They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD." — Isaiah 66:17*

Isaiah's warning is not a casual remark about taste. In verses 15–17, the Lord comes with fire, and the passage names practices among the people facing judgment. Eating swine's flesh appears in that description. We cannot build a complete account of the subject while behaving as though Isaiah never spoke.

The setting includes unlawful purification and worship in gardens. We must preserve that setting. The warning concerns a cluster of condemned practices; it is not a license for me to look at one person's sandwich and announce the final judgment of their soul.

Still, the warning has force in our case. We read the prophet's future-facing judgment as a reason to reject the idea that the dietary language has simply become meaningless. The conduct appears in a serious description of rebellion and worship gone wrong. That deserves more than a quick dismissal from someone hoping to reach a different verse.

The prophets expect the distinction to be taught

Isaiah does not speak only once. A chapter earlier he describes a rebellious people "which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels" (Isaiah 65:4).

Ezekiel goes further. He condemned the priests of his day because they "put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean" (Ezekiel 22:26). Then, in his vision of God's restored house, he described what faithful priests would do: "They shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean" (Ezekiel 44:23).

The prophets did not treat the distinction as a passing detail. They condemned those who blurred it and looked ahead to a day when

God's people would be taught it again.

Outward purification can hide disobedience

Notice the unsettling combination. The people sanctify and purify themselves while participating in practices the Lord condemns. They have religious activity. They have a process by which they consider themselves prepared. Their confidence does not make their conduct acceptable.

That should search us before it arms us against anybody else. Can I be busy proving my devotion while refusing to hear an instruction? Can a religious procedure become my way of feeling clean without dealing with what God has said?

We sometimes want a blessing to do the work of obedience. Isaiah's warning confronts that habit. Sincerity, ceremony, and a confident explanation do not make God's voice unnecessary.

There are people who will defend a family recipe with more research than they have ever given the Scripture they use to permit it. They can tell you exactly who cooked it in 1978. Ask what the passage means, and suddenly we are not supposed to be so deep.

The Word deserves the seriousness we already give the things we love.

The language reaches the end of the Book

Revelation 18:2 describes fallen Babylon with the image of unclean and hateful birds. That is symbolic judgment language, not a direct menu command to a congregation. We should not claim more from it than it supplies.

It does show that clean-and-unclean imagery remains intelligible in Scripture's final book. The classification still carries meaning for its readers. In our cumulative case, that imagery accompanies the more direct warning in Isaiah; it does not replace the dietary passages or settle the whole question by itself.

Revelation 14:12 also joins the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus in its description of the saints. Faith and obedience are not presented as enemies. The particular dietary application still comes from the case we have traced, but the larger direction is clear: devotion to Jesus does not require hostility toward God's instruction.

Warning is meant to awaken obedience

An honest learner may remember years of meals prepared differently. The useful response is to seek understanding and begin practicing what is now understood. God knows the difference between an inherited habit, an unnoticed ingredient, and a deliberate refusal to listen. I do not know every person's heart, and neither does the person sitting next to me in church.

The warning should remove carelessness, not remove hope. Grace should strengthen the next obedient choice, not silence the question. We have now followed the distinction from Noah through the dietary instructions, the words of Jesus, the apostolic passages, and the prophetic witness. It is time to place the evidence side by side.

11. Set the Evidence Side by Side

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." — 1 Thessalonians 5:21

We began with a question at the table. Can prayer be used to set aside the distinction God's Word gives? We did not answer by repeating a church custom more loudly. We opened the passages, followed their setting, and allowed the objections to speak.

Now separate the direct biblical statements from the conclusion we draw from them. This is where the argument becomes clear enough to examine, teach, and carry into a life.

What the text directly establishes

Genesis 7:2 distinguishes clean from unclean beasts before Sinai and gives different numerical instructions. Genesis 8:20 identifies clean creatures in Noah's offerings. The classification did not originate with Aaron's priesthood. That is a fact of the narrative.

Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 identify creatures that may be eaten and creatures that may not. For the land animals in view, both signs are required. Swine is expressly excluded. The passage connects its instruction with the holiness of God and His people. Those statements are in the text.

Jesus challenges traditions that set aside God's commandment. The washing dispute begins with unwashed hands, and Matthew's parallel closes with that issue. Mark 7:19 is disputed in translation and interpretation; the existence of that dispute does not remove the setting we have read.

Peter states that he has never eaten common or unclean things. He explains the vision in terms of receiving people, and Acts 11 celebrates Gentile repentance. Those are the narrative's own statements.

First Timothy 4 joins God's good provision, thanksgiving, the Word, and prayer. Hebrews announces a changed priesthood and a new covenant. Romans 14 commands love and restraint in judgment. Acts 15 rejects the burden proposed for Gentiles, affirms salvation through grace, and still applies food laws from Leviticus 17 to Gentile believers. These texts must remain together in the account.

Isaiah's judgment warning includes eating swine's flesh within unlawful worship. Ezekiel condemns priests who blurred the clean and the unclean and foresees priests who teach the difference. Revelation retains clean-and-unclean imagery. The prophetic witness has a place in the discussion rather than being excused from it.

The conclusion this book defends

From that combined witness, our church concludes that the clean-and-unclean distinction continues to guide a believer's food choices. We understand the passages commonly offered against it in their immediate controversies and in relation to the rest of Scripture. We do not see them as requiring us to declare the dietary classification cancelled.

That is a reasoned theological conclusion, not a family custom. The distinction was known before Moses, grounded in holiness and belonging, defended by Jesus against human tradition, kept by Peter after the resurrection, applied in part to Gentiles by the Jerusalem council, never named and set aside by any apostle, and taught by the prophets for the days to come. That is not a menu preference. That is a witness.

The spiritual illustrations have served a different purpose. Cud chewing has helped us examine meditation. The divided hoof has helped us examine our walk. The Lamb has directed our attention to Christ. Those pictures should deepen the response; the biblical argument should bear the weight of the dietary conclusion.

The point proven must become the life practiced

This is the case I find established: God's food distinction deserves continuing obedience, and prayer receives His provision rather than replacing His instruction. The call is to study honestly, choose faithfully, and walk humbly before Him.

Take the verses about patience and pride as seriously as the food passages. The same Bible examines the plate and the person holding it.

If the case has persuaded you, ask what you will do with what you understand. The Word calls for a life, not merely an explanation.

12. Bring the Lesson Home

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." — Romans 14:19

An argument can become very impressive while the refrigerator remains completely unprepared. The first evening after a teaching still requires somebody to answer an ordinary question: what are we going to eat?

Begin with foods you understand. Familiar permitted meats and fish, vegetables, fruit, beans, grains, and known ingredients can provide a practical starting point. You do not need to empty the bank account in an effort to prove that you heard the sermon.

Choose meals your household can prepare, afford, and enjoy. Read the ingredients on mixed products. Sausage does not identify its animal source by itself. Gelatin, broth, stock, and fillings may require a question. An unfamiliar word on a label is not automatically an unclean creature in disguise. Sometimes it is simply a word you have not learned yet.

Where the source matters and the label does not answer, ask the manufacturer or choose a simpler option. Formulations can change. Information about one package should not become an eternal declaration about every brand.

Ask the question that can be answered

At a restaurant, ask whether a dish contains pork or shellfish, what fish is being served, or whether the soup uses a meat stock. A server may understand those questions better than the word clean, which may mean sanitation to them.

If the kitchen cannot answer, choose another dish without accusing the staff. They may not know. Your conviction does not require you to cross-examine a young server as though the whole book of Leviticus is hidden behind the cash register.

Plan ahead for travel, work, and gatherings. Keep a familiar option available where practical. Many arguments at the serving table could have been prevented by one courteous conversation before everyone became hungry.

Teach your family before you correct their plates

Open the passages at home. Explain the two signs and the water-creature description. Allow questions. A child who asks why is giving you an opportunity to teach. Do not mistake the beginning of understanding for the beginning of rebellion.

Give children words that preserve kindness: "Our family does not eat that." That is enough. They do not need to announce that a classmate's household has failed an inspection.

When adults in a home disagree, discuss shared meals, separate options, expenses, and preparation honestly. Do not secretly change someone's food, shame a spouse, or turn a dietary disagreement into permission to control another person. You may have studied the subject for hours. They may have first heard your conclusion ten minutes ago. Give the Word time to be examined.

If Grandmother offers you something you no longer eat, appreciate her love while explaining your choice. You can honor the person without accepting every ingredient. A calm answer often teaches more than a speech delivered while everyone waits for the potatoes.

Let the church kitchen practice the sermon

At New Life Perfecting Praise Ministries, our meals should reflect the teaching we give. Cooks and volunteers need clear information before an event. Know the ingredients. Resolve uncertainty before calling a donated dish suitable for the ministry's meal. Keep food handling, allergies, storage, and cooking responsibilities visible.

That organization is practical care. We should not turn every kitchen procedure into a divine command, but we should do the work required to make our conviction dependable.

The hungry neighbor must remain in view. Matthew 25:35 and James 2:14–17 bring feeding and practical help into the life of faith. We cannot explain a menu beautifully and leave the person in front of us without a meal.

There is something unfinished about a church that has enough time to argue over the pot but no plan to fill a plate. Teach the instruction. Prepare the food. Serve the person.

Keep the heart as carefully as the kitchen

Honest mistakes require honest correction. Learn what happened and make the next choice thoughtfully. Panic does not improve the ingredients. Neither does pretending that you knew what you did not know.

Likewise, years of following this practice do not give anyone permission to humiliate a learner. Understanding is a responsibility to help someone else grow. It is a poor trophy if the only thing we can do with it is wave it over another person's head.

Let your table still have laughter, welcome, and thanksgiving. Let the person who declines a dish be able to do so peacefully. Let the guest who has a question find someone willing to answer. Let the cook feel appreciated for the labor of feeding people.

The lesson has now reached ordinary life. We have read, examined, answered, chosen, and served. That is where a studied conviction begins becoming a practiced one.

The Point Proven

We started with a prayer over a meal and a question that prayer had not answered. We have now taken the question through the Scriptures.

The distinction was present before Moses. The dietary standard was stated plainly. Both signs were required. Holiness was placed at the heart of the instruction. We examined Jesus' teaching, Peter's vision, Paul's words, the covenant objection, and the prophetic warning. We gave the difficult passages their place rather than hiding them behind a conclusion.

This is why I teach clean eating as an act of obedience to God's Word. The case rests on more than an inherited preference. It rests on the reading we have followed, passage by passage. Where the text speaks directly, we should speak clearly. Where we connect passages, we should show the connection. Where we draw an illustration, we should let it search us without asking it to do the work of a command.

Now the question comes back to the reader. Are you willing to let what you have studied reach what you choose? Will the same care you give the food reach the words that leave your mouth? Will learning make you more obedient, more thankful, and more willing to help somebody else understand?

We do not need another impressive argument that never survives the trip from church to home. We need a people who can open the Word, receive correction, and carry the instruction into an ordinary day.

Divide the hoof. Chew the cud. Take the Word in, bring it up again, and walk it out all the way through.

The God who brought His people up is holy. Let the life of the person He has brought up bear witness to Him.

A Closing Prayer

Father, You are the Lord who brings us up and who changes not. Teach me to take in Your Word and bring it up again until it lives in me. Let my walk be set apart all the way through, including the places other people never see.

Keep me from knowledge without obedience and from appearance without substance. Give me an honest heart when the Scripture challenges a habit I have protected. Help me receive instruction without making excuses and explain my conviction without becoming harsh.

Make me thankful for Your provision. Teach me to care for the person beside my plate and the neighbor who needs a meal. Let my study produce faithfulness, humility, and love.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the spotless Lamb, Amen.

A Food Reference for Daily Life

This guide summarizes the practice defended in the reading. Use it alongside Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Common names can vary; identify the actual creature when a name is uncertain. Biblical classification does not establish safe handling, freedom from allergens, or suitability for every medical need.

Land animals

The land-animal description joins a fully divided hoof with chewing the cud. Cattle, sheep, goats, and deer are familiar examples received as clean. Swine, camel, coney, and hare are expressly excluded in the biblical passage. Horse, dog, and cat do not meet the two-part description.

Water creatures

The description requires fins and scales. Salmon, trout, and cod are familiar examples received as clean. Catfish, shrimp, crab, lobster, oysters, clams, mussels, squid, and octopus do not meet the description. A label saying seafood does not answer the biblical question.

Birds and other creatures

Read the prohibited bird lists in Leviticus 11:13–19 and Deuteronomy 14:11–18. Chicken, turkey, quail, dove, and pigeon are commonly received as clean fowl in the practice represented here. Do not substitute a universal predator-or-scavenger rule for the text's list. Leviticus 11:21–22 contains a limited permission concerning named leaping winged creatures; this guide does not identify unfamiliar insects for consumption.

Ingredients that may need a question

Pork, lard, bacon, ham, and shellfish ingredients identify sources this book teaches believers to avoid. Gelatin, stocks, broths, sausages, and mixed fillings may need further information about their source. Do not assume that all gelatin comes from the same animal or that every unfamiliar ingredient is animal-derived.

Ask a clear question about the actual source, then make an informed choice.

Scripture and Study Notes

Follow the passages in order

Provision, love, and obedience: Genesis 1:29–31; Deuteronomy 10:12–19; John 14:15; Ephesians 2:8–10; Titus 2:11–14.

The earlier distinction: Genesis 7:1–3, 8–9, 14–16; 8:20–22; 9:1–4.

The dietary descriptions: Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14:3–21.

Meditation and the walk: Psalm 1:1–3; Joshua 1:8; 2 Corinthians 6:14–18; 2 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 5:14; James 1:22–25.

Christ and the offering: Leviticus 1:2–10; John 1:29; 8:28; Hebrews 7:26–27; 10:1–14.

Jesus and the washing dispute: Matthew 5:17–20; 15:1–20; Mark 7:1–23.

Peter and Cornelius: Acts 10–11; 15:7–11.

The Word, prayer, markets, and idols: 1 Timothy 4:1–5; 1 Corinthians 8–10.

The covenant question: Hebrews 7–10; Leviticus 17–18; 20:25–26; 1 Peter 1:15–16; Acts 15; Galatians 5:2–6; 1 Corinthians 7:19.

The difficult permissions and the duty of love: Romans 14; Acts 15; Colossians 2.

The prophetic witness: Isaiah 65:2–5; 66:15–18; Ezekiel 22:26; 44:23; Revelation 14:12; 18:2.

Practicing the teaching: Romans 12:10–13; 14:19; Matthew 25:31–40; James 2:14–17; 1 Peter 4:8–10.

Language, history, and natural history

The Hebrew observations were checked against the text of Leviticus 11:3, 45 and the Brown–Driver–Briggs lexical entries for ‘alah and gerah. The matching gerah spellings have distinct lexical senses for cud and the small weight. The meditation and sanctuary comparisons are devotional applications, not an asserted hidden definition of the food law.

The pig displaying its hooves appears in Leviticus Rabbah 13:5. Its original comparison concerns Edom/Rome and hypocrisy. This reading applies that image to self-examination rather than making it a description of every person who disagrees about diet.

For discussion of Mark 7:19, the Greek construction and the textual form used by the KJV help explain differing translations. See Logan Williams,

"The Stomach Purifies All Foods: Jesus' Anatomical Argument in Mark 7.18–19," *New Testament Studies* 70, no. 3 (2024): 371–391, available through Cambridge Core. The study challenges the usual editorial-comment reading; the existence of a scholarly alternative does not make the dispute disappear.

On Acts 10:14 and Romans 14:14: Peter's phrase "common or unclean" joins the Greek words *koinos* and *akathartos*; Romans 14:14 uses *koinos*. The Septuagint uses *akathartos* for the unclean creatures of Leviticus 11. The correspondence between the requirements of Acts 15:20, 29 and the laws for sojourners in Leviticus 17–18 is widely discussed in commentaries on Acts.

The observation about snow-crab scavenging follows NOAA Fisheries, "Alaska Snow Crab: Science," Biology section. The diet qualification concerning deer follows Pietz and Granfors (2000), "White-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus) predation on grassland songbird nestlings," *American Midland Naturalist* 144(2), 419–422, catalogued by the U.S. Geological Survey as publication 70022094.

Sources for checking the reading

The Holy Bible, King James Version, is the primary text for this book. Hebrew text and lexical tools are available at Mechon Mamre and Bible Hub. Leviticus Rabbah is available through Sefaria. These resources help readers check wording and context; their entire theological positions are not being adopted by reference.

Mechon Mamre: mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0311.htm

Bible Hub Hebrew text: biblehub.com/text/leviticus/11-3.htm and biblehub.com/text/leviticus/11-45.htm

Brown–Driver–Briggs entries: biblehub.com/hebrew/5927.htm ('alah); biblehub.com/hebrew/1625.htm and biblehub.com/hebrew/1626.htm (gerah)

Greek text: biblehub.com/text/acts/10-14.htm and biblehub.com/text/romans/14-14.htm

Leviticus Rabbah: sefaria.org/Vayikra_Rabbah.13.5

NOAA Fisheries: fisheries.noaa.gov/species/alaska-snow-crab/science

USGS study record: pubs.usgs.gov/publication/70022094

God's instruction reaches the table.

What does Scripture mean by clean and unclean? How do the teachings of Jesus and the apostles relate to the food distinctions? Can prayer change what God has identified?

Apostle Dr. Curtis T. Crosland Jr. brings together the biblical food instructions and the love of God in a connected explanation of faith, obedience, and everyday life. Moving through the major passages, this book addresses the questions directly and carries the teaching into family meals, hospitality, and service to the hungry.

Receive with gratitude. Read with care.
Walk in love.



FROM MY HEART TO YOURS

Dear Reader,

My prayer is that these pages draw you closer to God and awaken a deeper hunger for His Word. Open your Bible with a willing heart. Let His truth reach your table, your choices, and the way you love others. May you grow in understanding, walk in obedience, and always remember that you are loved.

With love and prayer,

Apostle Dr. Curtis T. Crosland Jr.