Bible Study 3
Topic: Satisfying Hunger

Transitioning from the Sermon

A. The Main Points of the Sermon
   1. We must satisfy hunger to ensure physical vitality.
   2. We must satisfy hunger to restore human dignity.
   3. We must satisfy hunger to reaffirm social equity and community.

B. Conclusions of the Sermon

We have been called to mimic the care and compassion of the God who has given us the ministry to care for others. Our “bowels of compassions” must be so attuned to the needs around us that we ceaselessly advocate and agitate for better food supply. Therefore, let us focus our attention today on satisfying hunger. Let us look for ways to satisfy hunger so that we retain the vitality and desire for healthy life. Let us satisfy the hunger that is around us to ensure that we affirm and retain a high value of human dignity. Finally, let us satisfy hunger and in so doing ensure equity for all.

Scripture Reading: Exodus 16: 1-21, Psalm 107:8-9

Psalm 107:8-9
8 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love
and his wonderful deeds for mankind,
9 for he satisfies the thirsty
and fills the hungry with good things.

Learning Objectives
The congregation will be able to:
1. Explain the importance of nutritious foods for healthy living.
2. Identify healthy dietary patterns.
3. Calculate the number of calories in a package of a food item.

Material Needed
1. PowerPoint Presentation
2. Laptop,
3. Projector and Screen
4. Bible
5. Zoom account or other online platform such as Microsoft Teams if studies are conducted online
Introduction

There are persons whose first priority for eating is the volume of food they consume and not so much the nutrients. ‘Belly full’ the colloquial term used in some cultures in the Caribbean is often the point of focus rather than the value of the food for nourishing the human body.

Definition of nutrition with a brief explanation of how each component connects with diet):

Our diet is a part of our culture. Our collective historical and social experiences have developed the cuisine and the appetite for the foods we consume. As such, a lot of our food and the way we prepare them as Caribbean people reflect our African, European, Asian (Indian and Chinese) and Amerindian heritage. In addition, the historical experience of slavery also has had a significant impact on our diet. Finally, our cultural interactions with international neighbours, whose culinary tastes have found favour with us, have also influenced our food. In quantitative terms therefore, we have a wide range of food from a wide range of backgrounds.

In more recent decades our region has focused on the relationship between our food and public health. We have developed a reservoir of knowledge regarding healthy food. Studies have been done which provide irrefutable evidence that some of our old ways of eating need to change. For example, it has been established that “an unhealthy diet can cause a reduction in physiological function and increasing the risk of disease development, that there is a significant association between diet and alterations in immune and cognitive functions and consequently that an improvement in diet is an important factor in the improvement of physiological function.”

Our heavy consumption of starches and sugars, salty and oily foods has been proven to affect the quality of life we live as a people. The prevalence of diabetes and hypertension has been directly linked to some of our traditions regarding food. The science now tells us that we need to make a dramatic shift towards healthier dietary patterns and eat more of the healthy foods that are, in fact, often abundantly available to us. It is important to note that diet concerns what we eat and the amounts consumed over a specific period of time while nutrition is about relationships which accompany eating habits. In this sense diet relates to the quality and quantity of food and drink and nutrition describes the interaction between person, food, nature and other relationship which work together to enhance healthy living. In the Bible this relationship is illustrated by the interactions between God, Israel and the food the latter consumes, especially as they journeyed through the wilderness towards the Promised Land.

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Understanding the text

Israel had just left Egypt, the land of their oppression for four hundred years, and were now in the wilderness on their way to God’s land of promise. They were two months into their journey and the unfamiliar conditions in which they found themselves began to take its toll. They grumbled, first about water, and now about food. Here is a part of their complaint:

“If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.” (Ex. 16:3)

This prompted God to introduce a new regime for food provision, consumption, and a plan to satisfy the hunger of the people of God. It was radically different from what they were used to and they complained about missing it in the wilderness away from Egypt. It was a simple but effective way to eat. This shift from the food of their oppressors to God’s provision is an instructive lesson for us today.

The Main Point

God used the occasion of the complaint of the people of Israel to introduce to them a new diet and nutrition or way of eating. It was a new diet in that it lacked the familiar ingredients of the food in Egypt and a new way of timing the consumption of their meals.

Application

“Old habits die hard” is a cliché we hear often. It is true of our attitudes and practices regarding food or diet and our eating habits or nutrition. The quality of food we eat is a matter for deliberate and intentional focus and action. “Fast Foods”, for example, are typically tasty and easy to obtain, but they do not offer the ideal nutritional values which our bodies require. Shifting to consuming more nutritious food will take great effort and discipline. We may have to walk or drive farther and work harder to get it, but it would be well worth the effort. The health which God intends for us to have is attainable. It begins with the food God provides in nature, those produced without trans fat and a high volume of salt and refined sugar and our choice to eat (diet) and the lifestyle we adopt with it (nutrition). In this study we will explain the importance of nutritious foods for the purpose of practicing healthy living among congregants.

Video

Foods that protect the heart. Dietary patterns that have been linked to health, longevity. DASH Diet, Mediterranean Diet, Daniel Diet, Vegetarian Lifestyle (mention SDA).

FaN is an opportunity to refocus attention on food and nutrition and the linkages which already exit with healthy living. This link is useful as it sets the base for understanding the relationship between physical food and the nurturing which God provides. Just as God provided for people in the past God can and is doing the same in the present.
Traditionally, it has been considered that it is important to ensure that certain nutrients are made available to our bodies, and therefore that we consume specific foods. The recent studies show however that the key appears to be to focus on a “dietary pattern” which ensures the right combinations of foods and their nutrients. In this respect, it has been suggested that a healthy dietary pattern would include a combination of high intake of fruits, vegetables, legumes, seafood, whole grains, and low intake of refined grains, processed meat and sweetened foods.\(^2\)

Activities (10 minutes)

Activity 1

1. Watch the YouTube video at this link [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkj7w-aVQwo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkj7w-aVQwo) and suggest which foods in the passage from Exodus which was read earlier fit into the 5 food groups described in the video.

2. Review the following video to learn how to read food labels: [https://www.nutrition.org.uk/putting-it-into-practice/food-labelling/looking-at-labels/](https://www.nutrition.org.uk/putting-it-into-practice/food-labelling/looking-at-labels/)

Activity 2: Discussion

1. What can we learn from the passage in Exodus 16:1-21 and Daniel 1 about healthy and unhealthy eating?

2. Based on the dietary patterns discussed, state one dietary change you are willing and feel confident you can make over the next week.

Conclusion

The link between non-Communicable diseases (NCDs) and diet has been established and in the common Jamaican vernacular; “it nuh pretty!” NCDs are among the leading causes of sickness and death among the people of the Caribbean. We are literally killing ourselves with the food which we eat. This must change. The Caribbean Institute of Health Research’s Food and Nutrition (FaN) project is helping to bring awareness to the damaging effects of poor dietary and nutrition patterns while affirming the benefits of the wonderful foods which exist or is produced in a healthy way and in abundance in our region.

Closing Ritual

Prayer

*Creator God, we give you thanks for the provisions which you have made for our health and the knowledge of the various benefits and uses of the components of your creation. Help us to heed the warnings against unhealthy dietary habits and the call to wholesome and healthy lives through wise choices and prudent actions. We make this petition in Jesus’ name,*

*Amen.*