

SNL

By David E. Thiele

We Americans know very little about sacrifice. This may also be true in other countries where the majority of the people are fairly well off. Oh yes, we talk about sacrificing for our children. Or we talk about sacrificing for our aged parents. Yes, and to a degree I think we do that, but, I recall making the statement during a Bible study, “I can’t remember the last time I went hungry so that someone else might have something to eat.” We know there are people starving in the world. As Christians many of us do show some compassion and concern for people in need, but like many we tend to give out of our abundance rather than according to our abundance.

Here is an idea that may help many of us take that step and actually sacrifice to help someone else in need. It isn’t too difficult to do and yet requires a conscious effort on our part. Determine to skip a meal one day each week. This could actually have some health benefits for the millions of Americans that are overweight. Now, obviously I’m not talking about people with health problems that would put them at risk by skipping a meal, but, I think those people are few and far between. Most of us could stand to lose a few pounds and this might be a step in the right direction.

I call it SNL – catchy isn’t it? I originally thought of it as referring to Saturday No Lunch. That would be the day I would choose to skip a meal. It could stand for Sabbath No Lunch, or even just Sacrifice No Lunch. You choose the day and time – make up your own acronym like Don’t Dinner Tuesday or DDT. Here’s how it works. You make a one month commitment. No contracts to sign – no oaths to take. Let your yes be yes and your no be no. You pick a day of the week to skip a meal – just the food part – at least have some water to drink – you do not want to dehydrate. I’ve been hospitalized for dehydration and believe me it is *not* fun. Even my hair hurt! Then you figure out how much you would have spent on the food you didn’t eat. You then save up that amount for one month and donate it to an organization like Feed the Children. If you have a burden for people in your immediate vicinity, then donate it to the local soup kitchen or the food pantry ministry at your local church.

This is to be voluntary, so if you have a growing teenager that just can’t seem to survive if they skip a meal, don’t force them to participate. Just model it for them. If you have younger children and want to use this as an object lesson, you could actually take them to the grocery store and have them help you purchase items for the local food bank. Then take them along as you deliver it. For most organizations it will be better to just give them the money. The reason being that, while you may provide them with something they can eventually use, it may not be what they really need. Also many non-profit organizations have special arrangements with their suppliers. They may be

able to purchase twice as much food for the money as you are able to buy at the local market.

Could you really make a difference? If you are at the lower end of the earning scale, you may find that you only spend about a dollar per person in your household. For a family of five, that would be five dollars a week or twenty dollars for the month. If you are a family made up of two young professionals with no children that are in the habit of going out for lunch, you might save thirty dollars per week or One-hundred and twenty dollars for the month. Try it for one month. You will experience what it means to sacrifice. You will gain a greater understanding of what it means to be in want. Hopefully that will result in your becoming more compassionate for others. Sacrifice and help someone in need. Who knows, maybe the Good Lord will lay it on your heart to make it a regular practice.

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