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Food and Faith: Making Food and Eating Choices Based on Evidence and Faith

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

FOOD AND FAITH: MAKING FOOD AND EATING CHOICES
BASED ON EVIDENCE AND FAITH

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF PORTLAND SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DMin Dissertation

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

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has been approved by
the Dissertation Committee on February 21, 2018
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual Formation.

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Unless otherwise noted, all biblical citations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

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Portland Seminary: Caring for the whole person is a hallmark of Portland Seminary where we are not “just” students but co-travelers on this journey of growth and discovery. A faith based journey not for the faint of heart but one that as Christian leaders we are called upon to do. To be real in our own skin, hearts and souls and witness through faith and actions is a high calling in which Portland Seminary cherishes, models and excels.

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ABSTRACT

Many leaders within the US-American Christian community are unaware of cultural influences driven by money that impact food sanctity, what we eat and the land from which our sustenance is derived. The question is asked, “What is food?” Intentional identity formation with the food we eat and its relationship to the land is important to create a physically and spiritually healthy environment for both men and women leaders, not only within the Christian community, but also throughout society at large. A large part of the problem is in thinking of food as a commodity rather than as a sacred part of the whole: community, faith, ritual, stewardship, and health. A growing group of Christian leaders, advocacy organizations, theologians, and seminaries are entering into conversations about food and faith and its connection to biblical sanctity. This dissertation is intended to draw from and enter into these conversations that are driving a renewed thought process and relationship with food, food production, and the common good of all humanity. Within the theological and historical foundations of both food and faith, this study draws from and develops a paradigm/rationale supporting sanctity of food and eating, based on biblical-based precedents of design and stewardship, to demonstrate the relational aspects of food and faith. Current research is then presented in two case studies to demonstrate an unarguable brokenness in humankind’s relationship to both food and land. The argument is then made that exploration of sustainability and hospitality as Christian practices will do much to help with addressing these issues, making food and eating choices based on evidence and faith.

GLOSSARY

For purpose of clarity, these terms are defined as reflected in this paper:

Citizen’s United and Supreme Court of the United States Roberts Court (SCOTUS)

Decision: Considered by most political scientists, activists, and progressives as one of the most deleterious decisions of the United States Supreme Court in terms of checks and balances and accountability, a 5/4 decision of the SCOTUS has opened a floodgate of special interest money and power to the political process, most often without oversight and checks and balances.

Concentrated Animal Feedlot Operations (CAFLO’s): concentrated, industrial scale agriculture models for producing animal protein. The most common ones are for: poultry (turkeys and chickens); beef and feedlot operations; hog operations, including farrowing and raising for market; and dairy operations that are contained wherein the cows are typically given rBGH, a synthetic hormone that stimulates increased milk production.

Creation Care: Portland Seminary of George Fox University offers a concentration in Christian Earthkeeping, one of the few in the United States at the time of this writing.

Earl Butz: Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture under the Eisenhower Administration. Secretary Butz was instrumental in changing agriculture policy from a local farmer/independent businessperson, to a corporate business model: “get bigger or get out.”

Ecotheology: A constructive theology that focuses on the interrelationships of religion, nature, and environmental concerns, including food. Ecotheology is gaining momentum in the United States, especially in some seminaries such as: Portland Seminary of George Fox University; the Green Seminary Initiative, a national collaborative project in which Professor Dan Brunner of Portland Seminary of George Fox University is involved; Princeton’s Farminary project; and focused, but smaller in scale, efforts in other institutions, such as Whitworth University, Dr. Jonathan Moo and Gonzaga University, and Dr. Patrick McCormick. These efforts to train current and future seminarians, as well as to offer courses and online opportunities for Christian leaders already in the field, are occurring.

Exile relationship with food: Norman Wirzba, professor of theology and ecology at Duke University Divinity School, is credited with authoring this term. An Exile relationship with food is discussed in Wirzba’s many publications including *Food & Faith: A Theology of Eating*: “Today’s global, industrial food culture is a culture in exile because it exhibits the marks of injustice, estrangement, and bewilderment...food’s production and consumption, rather than being wholesome means of connecting with the

world and each other, have in many instances become sites of contention, ill-health, and destruction.”¹

Farminary: A program designed and provided by Princeton Seminary to teach, advocate for, and distribute information about how and why food and faith are interconnected and what the roles for Christian leaders can be.

Food and Faith: The historic, biblical, and religious underpinning that food and faith are inextricably linked in family, community, church, sacraments, and metaphors. The case is made that in our post-modern consumer culture a significant disconnect has occurred. This is described by several contemporary theologians such as Patrick T. McCormick, Norman Wirzba, Craig L. Goodwin, Sallie McFague, Daniel L. Brunner, Jennifer L. Butler, A.J. Swoboda, Leonard Sweet, and Donna K. Wallace. Also, Ray D. Strand, M.D. and Monica Reed, M.D.

GMOs: Genetically modified organisms. GMOs have been researched and manufactured by multinational corporations such as Monsanto and Dow. Certain traits are enhanced while others are diminished or removed with the primary purpose of creating a seed and agricultural crops that can withstand chemical inputs to kill weeds and not the crop.

Globalization of Food: Multinational corporations have grown to be as large, if not larger than, many states, countries, and other governmental entities. Multinational corporations exert unparalleled influence on the political, judicial, environmental, and human aspects in their drive to extract, control, and make money for their corporate shareholders. The impacts have been significant and it appears that they will continue to expand. Many policy issues and questions, especially from an integrated model that all stakeholders need to be at the table as the issues of capacity and sustainability are at a critical juncture.

Glyphosate: A ubiquitous weed killer used in combination with GMO seeds. Farmers enter into contract for seeds that are genetically modified to withstand the chemical. Monsanto was the developer of Agent Orange, which was used as a defoliant (a chemical often used in warfare to remove the leaves from trees and plants) in the Vietnam war. The chemicals have entered a new phase or direction in agricultural enterprises.

Green Revolution: Associated with the work of Norman Borlaug, newly developed seeds, increased irrigation, and application of fertilizers and chemicals, replaced smaller farms growing a variety of foods using manual labor with large farms often growing one crop using heavy equipment. The results were the nearly doubling of corn, rice, and wheat yields between the 1950s and 1990s in the US.² There are deeper arguments about the lack of diversity and the impossibility of sustaining the pressures on the land, soils, and water.

¹ Norm Wirzba, *Food & Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 71–71.

² *Ibid.*, 72, 85.

Pope Francis and *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*: An Encyclical Letter published in 2015 urging humankind to address with prayer and action the destruction of earth, our common home. This widely disseminated and referenced encyclical was met with an outpouring of support and appreciation as well as denial and blame that the Pope should stick to “religion” and let the matters of the earth and business be left to the capitalists/business persons.

Precautionary Principle: In his Encyclical, *Laudtio Si'*, Pope Francis describes the Rio Declaration of 1992, which is a precautionary principle that:

Makes it possible to protect those who are most vulnerable and whose ability to defend their interests and to assemble incontrovertible evidence is limited. If objective information suggests that serious and irreversible damage may result, a project should be halted or modified, even in the absence of indisputable proof. Here the burden of proof is effectively reversed, since in such cases objective and conclusive demonstrations will have to be brought forward to demonstrate that the proposed activity will not cause serious harm to the environment or to those who inhabit it... This does not mean being opposed to any technological innovations which can bring about an improvement in the quality of life. But it does mean that profit cannot be the sole criterion to be taken into account...³

This principle was once applied in the United States to most everything consumable or in use by the public. This is no longer the case.

Redemptive Consumer Practices: A term used by the theologian and pastor Craig L. Goodwin along with Sustainable Food. The concept lends itself to doing more with less so that consumptive consumer driven behaviors are not a primary driving force in US-American culture.

Religious traditions and examples of living food and faith: The faith traditions of the Mennonites, Hutterites, Seventh Day Adventists, monastic traditions such as Benedict’s Rule, as well as indigenous peoples world-wide are contemporary examples of faith communities that are deeply committed to sustainability, eating for health and faith, and seeing the earth as an interconnected as opposed to separated into unconnected parts only.

Stewardship: The act of choosing and accepting responsibility for caring for the earth, its people, plants, animals, and resources. Stewardship recognizes that all things are interconnected. Creation care is associated with stewardship.

Sustainability: As the earth’s population grows; as extractive and exploitive profit-driven regional, national, and global corporations become ever more efficient; and as the

³ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* (Huntington, IN: On Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2015). Originating Document (Vatican City: Encyclical Letter *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*, 2015), 185–187, 121–123.

hyper-charged, consumer-driven culture fueled by a seeming unquenchable thirst for more and more, the issue at hand is how to slow growth and change hearts and minds (especially of consumers and stockholders for the purpose of this paper) so that the entire ecosystem can co-exist and we can live healthier, cleaner, and more sustainably.

The Green Seminary Initiative: An initiative that advocates and exemplifies how seminaries and university campuses might develop audit, remediation, and green strategies to lessen the environmental impact. The initiative also shares resources to assist Christian leaders, clergy, and seminaries in training future leaders to access credible resources, examples of what works (models), and suggestions for parishes and church communities to implement their own green audits.

Union of Concerned Scientists: In 1992 a proclamation titled “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity” was issued. Spearheaded by Dr. Henry Kendall (Nobel laureate in 1990 for physics and former Chairperson of the Union of Concerned Scientists) and “signed by 1,575 scientists (including 99 of the 196 living Nobel laureates) [the document] was sent to governmental leaders all over the world,” asking for “immediate action to stop the ever-increasing environmental degradation that threatens global life support systems on this planet. . . . Warning: We the undersigned, senior members of the world’s scientific community, hereby warn all humanity of what lies ahead...”⁴

Burden of Proof: Federal agencies such as United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration, Consumer Protection Agency, and several others were in large part designed and put in place by law to protect consumers, assuring that foods and additives and chemicals are tested and found to be safe; and with a burden of proof on the developers/corporations to assure that this is done. Since 1958, Congress has determined that “additives to food were no longer presumed safe but instead presumed to be harmful; and the industry had the burden of proving they were not. Absent such proof, a new additive was prohibited from entering the food supply... These provisions of the Food Safety Amendment have been widely regarded by both liberals and conservatives as necessary.”⁵

⁴ This proclamation was included in William J. Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Mauro Galetti, Thomas M. Newsome, Mohammed Alamgir, Eileen Crist, Mahmoud I. Mahmoud, William F. Laurance, “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice,” *BioScience* 20, no. 10 (2017) <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article-abstract/doi/10.1093/biosci/bix125/4605229>

⁵ Steven M. Drucker, *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth: How the Venture to Genetically Engineer Our Food Has Subverted Science, Corrupted Government, and Systematically Deceived the Public* (Salt Lake City, UT: Clear Water Press, 2015), 132–135.

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION TO FOOD AND FAITH

A True and Illustrative Story

Pastors Jim and Karen serve a medium sized church in the Pacific Northwest located in a socio-economically challenged community. The couple is passionate about feeding the homeless and caring for the disenfranchised in their city. Their church helps sponsor the local Food Bank and they volunteer there. In the years Jim and Karen have served their community, they have seen volumes of food distributed, yet, week after week their people come desperate for a miracle—wondering why God is not answering their pleas for provision and healing from life-threatening diseases such as heart disease, cancer, depression, diabetes, the list seems endless.

One day, Jim and Karen were sitting at the dinner table discussing the epidemic of obesity in children and adults alike, as well as the many health issues that result from the US-American diet directly effecting those they love. Jim looked up from where he rested in his head on the table, “We’re missing the mark, Karen. We’re pouring water into a bucket that has a hole in the bottom.”

“That’s called ministry, honey.”

“No. Well, yes, but illnesses that we only saw in the elderly are now crippling even our children. I mean diabetes and cancer in little kids! The impact of food advertising on childhood obesity is unparalleled. Listen to this wake-up call from the American Psychological Association:

The American Psychological Association, in an in-depth article drawing from several peer-reviewed and science-based work states, the childhood obesity epidemic is a serious public health problem...the rates of obesity in America’s

children and youth have almost tripled in the last quarter century. Approximately 20 percent of our youth are now overweight with obesity rates in preschool age children increasing at alarming speed... Today's children, ages 8 to 18 consume multiple types of media (often simultaneously) and spend more time (44.5 hours per week) in front of computer, television, and game screens than any other activity in their lives except sleeping.¹

Every day we pray with our families and neighbors, but I'm beginning to wonder what good praying does when huge corporations are advertising terrible food. We've got to get around this." Jim stood and took his plate to the sink. "Why is it that the cheapest and most abundant food has the least nutritional value?"

"Honey, I hear you, and maybe we can raise awareness about how much television time we spend and how that impacts our health, not only by being inactive, but being gullible to advertising; but this community can't afford wholesome breads or fresh vegetables, fruits, and lean meats like we had growing up." Both Jim and Karen knew that if it were not for the Food Bank, even they would not have access to fresh fruits and veggies—not since moving into the city. "I don't even want to think about where our meat comes from."

"Maybe people don't realize what the stuff they put in their mouth consists of, or how much healthier it is to eat fresh and organic without all the pesticides and GMOs," Karen said, clearing the table. "Why are processed foods being marketed as they are, and why is there so little information for consumers about food choices?"

"What is food? We're being educated by the media. We've come to think that industrialized is safer, more reliable. And we, the church, are standing by mute, letting it happen."

¹ American Psychological Association, "The Impact of Food Advertising on Childhood Obesity," 2017, accessed November 15, 2017, www.apa.org/topics/kids-media/food.aspx. Research has found strong associations between increases in advertising for non-nutritious foods and rates of childhood obesity.

Jim rinsed his dish and put it in the dishwasher. “I can’t accept that this is what God has in mind for us. I want to help our people learn how to find and consume higher quality foods, rather than ‘consuming advertising,’ and to help families know how to decipher information about food and food safety. It may seem like a long shot, but I want to help make it possible to purchase or even grow affordable, healthy food: fresh vegetables, fruit, lean meat, and wholesome grains.”

“But, Jim, the problem is huge. And what does God say about it? I know the Bible says a lot about food, but I grew up thinking it was just a lot of old rules for the Israelites while they wandered around in the wilderness. We need to study.”

“Yeah. And I guess we should start right here.” He patted his thick tummy. Jim knew he was a good thirty pounds overweight. “The pastors in the conference joke about food all the time. We pray that God will bless the meal to the needs of our bodies while bowing our heads over mounds of deep-fried fast food. We are a Christian nation, but our bodies say otherwise.”

“I say we start in Genesis,” Karen said. A friend had recommended a book titled *The CREATION Health Breakthrough*. “Its author, Dr. Monica Reed, claims that what God gave Adam and Eve to eat in the Garden of Eden provides the basis for what we need to be healthy too.”

As Jim and Karen continued their search, they began to understand how stewardship takes place on a personal level, as well as on community, national, and global scales. Furthermore, stewardship includes asking, “How do we as Christians relate to food? Do we know where our food comes from? What are our roles as Christians in stewardship for our people, the plants, the animals, the world, and food?” In their search,

Jim and Karen discovered a term that seemed to encompass the core of Jim's early concerns and growing convictions: "food sanctity." They began to understand the interrelatedness of food and faith and that food has become decoupled from ministry, community, celebrations, and stewardship.

The couple started having conversations with friends and health practitioners about the collective relationship with the food, how it is raised, and where it comes from. They began to see that the industrialization and commodification of food has distanced us from the intended relationship with food and with the stewardship our Master Creator intended. "It's time to make the kitchen and the table the center of worship again," Jim said.

Introduction

Many leaders within the US-American Christian community are seemingly ambivalent to the crises surrounding the food we consume and the far reaching impact on not only our own health and the health of the earth, but also our relationships with one another and with God. As illustrated in the vignette above, meals are not a private matter, but rather a concern for communities, the nation, and the world. We travel the continuum between being uninformed and unaware to being overwhelmed by global issues of epidemic proportion. Still, merely reading statistics about "unhealthy" does not go far enough; we must understand the deep, historical, cultural, and spiritual "why" of the food we eat to realize what is being lost—we are in need of being better consumers of information as much as we are food. This study is a clarion call to church leaders about how cultural influences driven by economics are impacting food sanctity, what we eat, and the land from which our sustenance is derived.

We start with a basic question: “What is food?” If one considers this question from the point of view of today’s industrial food system, the answer is simple: *food is a commodity*. Food is subject to the logistics of volume, efficiency, and profitability that govern commodity production. Methods that increase volume, efficiency, and profitability are, therefore, clearly to be considered and preferred as good.² But is food reducible to a commodity? A commodity narration of food reflects a broken relationship—what theologian Norman Wirzba calls an Exiled relationship—a core truth about God and creation.³

In response to this seriously misconstrued concept of food, a growing group of Christian leaders, advocacy organizations, theologians, and seminaries are entering into robust conversations about food and faith and its connection to biblical sanctity. This dissertation draws from and joins these conversations that are currently driving a renewed thought process and relationship with food, food production, and the common good of all humanity. A leading voice is that of Norman Wirzba from Duke University who redirects what might otherwise be a reaction to macro-level crises to a beautiful, communal theological treatise. In a recent article posted in Sage Publications, “Food for Theologians,” Wirzba presents eating as a vital theological concern and an integral part of the local church’s ministry and mission in the world. He argues that food is not

² Viewers of *Food, Inc.* may recall the scene in which a chicken processing plant manager praises a process that produces more chickens more cheaply in less time and at greater profit (for faux chicken companies rather than faux farmers). The life, integrity, and need of the chickens, and thus also their potential to be abused and degraded, is irrelevant because the chicken is not considered to be one of God’s creatures. It has been transformed into an “economic unit” playing an anonymous role in a business plan.

³ Norman Wirzba, *Food & Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

reducible to the status of a commodity, *but is instead God's love made delectable. The production and the sharing of good food is a witness to God's presence among us.*⁴

Within the theological and historical foundations of food and faith, then, this study draws from and develops a paradigm/rationale supporting the sanctity of food and eating. This is based on biblically based precedents of design and stewardship to demonstrate the relational aspects of food and earth care after exploring the profound and concerning contemporary problems presented in case studies that demonstrate an unarguable brokenness in humankind's relationship to both food and land, and the need to speak out and take action. The argument is then made that exploration of sustainability and hospitality as Christian practices will do much to help with addressing these issues, making food and eating choices based on evidence and faith. A call is given throughout for Christian leaders to awaken to the urgency of our presenting global food crisis and to make it central again to our faith. Ultimately, we are being called back to God's great love and celebration for God's creation. We begin by first taking a focused and objective look at the current four-fold problem with specific and measurable data.

A Four-Fold Problem

After a sweeping review of the literature, this researcher sees the presenting problem of food, land, and faith in the United States as four-fold:

1. Christian leaders often categorize social and health concerns separately from the spiritual needs of their congregations. Therefore, this study begins with the mounting evidence of *immediate health concerns related to food* from the volume of food consumed, quality of food, beliefs and greatest concerns about food, and

⁴ Ibid.

our resulting health epidemic directly related to lack of nutrition in the United States in spite of our obsessions with food and weight loss.

2. There is a rapidly growing need for Christian leader awareness, response, and action; here we ask who are the hungry.
3. The demand for a new understanding/narrative/identity (“people perish for lack of understanding”) about the role of food, land, and community in daily worship.
4. In bringing “shalom” here on earth, Church leaders realize the need for the renewed practice of hospitality within homes, families, and community.

Food and faith has been inextricably intertwined through out the Judeo-Christian experience. What has been lost in our relationship to food and faith requires attention.

Immediate Concerns Related to Food

We live in a fast-paced consumer-driven society where little time, thought, or energy is devoted to food, food production, diet, food and faith, food quality and the nutritional aspects of food. Living in a consumer-driven country like the United States, far too few of us are “connecting the dots” as to the casual relationships between our consumptive behaviors and the suffering created at least in large part to such local and global issues in the form of real people suffering and/or underrepresented at the policy-making tables. Factors such as malnutrition, food scarcity, and food insecurity are issues we must work to affect for the betterment. Refugees, globalization, and the extraction of global resources, exploitation of women and children, coupled with the seeming lack of sustainability and stewardship are systemic and all a part of the whole.

The United Nations has a long history of studying, detailing and developing action plans to deal with a myriad of human issues around the world. A landmark effort

was the 2015 adoption of the “‘2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Goals.’ In 2016, the Paris Agreement on climate change entered into force, addressing the need to limit the rise of global temperatures.”⁵ Goal two of this sustainable goals effort is to “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.”⁶ Goal two states: “It is time to rethink how we grow, share and consume our food. If done right, agriculture, forestry and fisheries can provide nutritious food for all and generate decent incomes, while supporting people-centered rural development and protecting the environment.”⁷ Following are some acts and figures from this United Nations initiative:

Hunger

- Globally, one in nine people in the world today (795 million) are undernourished.
- Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45 percent) of deaths in children under five—3.1 million children a year.
- One in four of the world’s children suffer stunted growth.
- 66 million primary-age school children attend classes hungry across the developing world.⁸

Food Security

- Agriculture is the single largest employer in the world, providing livelihoods for 40 percent to today’s global population. It is the largest source of income and jobs for poor rural households.
- 500 million small farms worldwide, most still rain-fed, provide up to 80 percent of food consumed in a large part of the developing world. Investing

⁵ United Nations, “Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform Our World,” accessed November 6, 2017, www.un.org.

⁶ Ibid. In the US, we are fortunate to have private “not for profits” attempting to gain traction on these issues as the US Government entities such as USDA, EPA, Food and Safety, Consumer Protection, and others have become politicized to the degree that the very business, industry, and specific company representatives are now embedded in these organizations.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

in smallholder women and men is an important way to increase food security and nutrition for the poorest, as well as food production for local and global markets. (Note: this is juxtaposed by the multinational agribusiness corporations pressing poor countries to turn land over to monoculture farming with genetically modified seeds and chemic inputs which is destructive and not sustainable).

- Since the 1900s, some 75 percent of crop diversity has been lost from farmer’s fields. Better use of agricultural biodiversity can contribute to more nutritious diets, enhanced livelihoods for farming communities and more resilient and sustainable farming systems.⁹

In the United States too, we have significant poverty, food deserts, nutrient-compromised cheap fast foods, and often a lack of intentionality about food, without knowing where it comes from, how it is grown, and what is the nutritional value. Food deserts often exist in poor communities both rural and urban, as well as Native American reservations. These areas often have an abundance of “C” stores (convenience stores), laden with candies, fast food offerings such as hot dogs, white bread, high fructose corn sweeteners, and artificial sweetened beverages. Consequently “food availability” does not necessarily mean nutritional food.¹⁰

Women and Girls—70 Percent of the Earth’s Poor

When speaking about hunger and food security, we cannot look past women and girls who represent approximately 70 percent of the earth’s poor.¹¹ Brunner, Butler, and Swoboda in *Introducing Ecotheology* cite a United Nations statistic that claims, “Women

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ According to the USDA, food deserts are defined as parts of the country vapid of fresh fruit, vegetables and other healthful whole foods and is usually found in impoverished areas of the country. American Nutrition Association, accessed November 23, 2017, [www://americannutritionassociation.org](http://www.americannutritionassociation.org).

¹¹ Daniel L. Brunner, Jennifer L. Butler, and A.J. Swoboda, *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology: Foundations in Scripture, Theology, History, and Praxis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 169–172. “Official reports now acknowledge an undeniable truth: empowering women and girls, representing 70 percent of the earth’s poor, is essential for the eradication of poverty...”

do 66 percent of the world's work and grow 50 percent of the world's food, yet only take home 10 percent of the world's income and own one percent of the land."¹²

These alarming statistics represent real human beings—suffering human beings. The Bible is clear about our roles as faithful followers in relation to the poor and disenfranchised: Deuteronomy 15:11 reminds us, “For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore, I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor in your land.’” Proverbs 31:8–9 instructs, “Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.” Matthew 25:35 speak the words of Christ, “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” The cries are all around us and the issues are great. Having knowledge and credible information is paramount in order to bring effective and lasting change. Brunner, Butler, and Swoboda state: “In an ecofeminist ethic, relationships of domination—whether between men and women or humans and other-than-human life—are replaced by a web of interdependent relationships. In this historical moment, our theology must recognize that the integration of feminist concerns with Eco justice is vital for the health of Earth and of women.”¹³

Disconnect with Food: Consumers of Information

Though bookstores have long been devoted to cookbooks with luscious photography and exotic recipes, the shelves have clearly lengthened and strained under the weight of books that profile everything from special diets and regional cuisine to eating as a way of simpler and healthier living. Besides cookbooks, however, there are numerous television shows on the *Food Network* alone

¹² Ibid. See also, “Trickle Up,” accessed October 15, 2017, <http://www.trickleup.org/poverty/women.cfm>.

¹³ Brunner, Butler, and Swoboda, *Evangelical Ecotheology*, 172.

profiling over 120 programs that now variously present cooking as a high-octane, competitive sport ('The Next Iron Chef'), as nostalgia for a disappearing and well-nigh lost way of American life ('The Pioneer Woman'), or as a celebration of the miracle of sugar ('Sweet Genius'). Billions of dollars are spent each year on publishing and programming *about* food. Billions more are spent by marketers and companies that want you to buy their particular food product (from among the tens of thousands of food products available). This is before a single dime has been spent on food itself.¹⁴

It would be a mistake, however, to think that the explosion of interest in food and proliferation of exotic, and often very expensive, food preferences equals appreciation or attentiveness to health. We might expect that a multibillion-dollar industry would find ever more creative and profitable ways to entice consumers to buy healthy food and food-related products, but the opposite is more often true.

Misinformation and Deception Concerning Food

The rich and earthy smell of freshly turned soil in preparing the garden for planting; the joy of seeing the first Nile green sprouts breaking through the surface; and the taste of freshly picked dill, carrots, peas, and new potatoes. Oh, what a banquet for the senses it is to enjoy the first harvest of our garden. My mother would make creamed fresh peas, carrots, baby spuds, and dill. The butter was fresh as was the flour and milk. The creation of this simple and nutritious meal was eagerly anticipated. We gathered as family around the table. The taste was divine and created lasting memories of planning, preparing, planting, tending, harvesting, and sharing the bounty. Regrettably, our relationship with food, food production, and the common good is shifting from

¹⁴ Norman Wirzba, "Food for Theologians," *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 67, no. 4 (September 2013): 374–382, accessed November 21, 2017. DOI: 10.1177/0020964313495518.

communal gatherings, wholesome and organic foods, and sharing experiences, to one of increased isolation and unawareness of where and how our foods are produced.

The ubiquitous “C” stores, or convenience stores, are a growing part of the part of the urban and rural landscape where one can fill the car with gasoline, go inside the C store and purchase primarily nutrient-compromised fast foods and sugary drinks and be on one’s way. But in fact, food is a system of communication revealing what we believe and value about people, things, bodies, traditions, time, money, and places.¹⁵ Fast food culture, for instance, misinforms and deceives customers into believing that people’s greatest concern is about food being cheap,¹⁶ convenient, “cool,” and available in copious amounts. This is fed to consumers by massive advertising efforts assailing us in all forms of media: telecommunications, print, smart phones, billboards, and even the placement of foods in the grocery stores. We have been lulled into believing that where food comes from or under what conditions it was made available is really not important. It is not only prepared out-of-sight and “fast,” but also eaten fast and out-of-sight, often alone while in transit before disposing the remains of wasteful packaging.

Consumption starts first with how we take in, value, and affirm information about food and nutrition and where our food comes from. The careful planning, preparation, praying over and sharing food is more than just “nice.” It is sharing the process of creating food as love, of sharing stories, creating memories, and establishing community—as in family and friends, as well as the larger world—of food and faith in an intimate manner. Compare this vision to that of hurrying through the drive through fast

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ In one sense, food is never cheap because every living thing that God has created eats, and by consuming we are taking life in one degree or another.

food outlet, eating some highly processed food alone as we hurl down the highways and byways, often on a cell phone, running late for another meeting and then later stopping to pick up “something quick” for the family. Home is too often another disconnect and isolation from family and mealtime. Real food and real communication and fellowship at home, at work, and at worship is too often void. Food and faith and the intersection of these two things that Jesus taught us about is often missing in our postmodern consumer culture. The concerns raised regarding food are too numerous to address, therefore a mere sampling of leading concerns are touched upon here, including:

- Advertising tends to focus on marketing the products that are low in nutrition, high in sugar, salt, oils and high in profit;
- Quality of food versus cost of food, especially in low economic areas;
- Health epidemic relating to food and advertising, especially concerning in children;
- Mixed messages about foods consumed as a result of advertising;¹⁷
- Not enough fresh, regular home cooking; and
- Food Guilt, the beliefs and greatest concerns about food. Our health epidemic directly related to lack of nutrition in America in spite of our obsessions with food and weight loss.

¹⁷ According to www.barna.com, the well-documented “grocery gap” in America’s cities may be partially at fault when it comes to the high levels of concern about unhealthy eating among black (62%) and Hispanic (58%) adults, compared to a lower percentage of whites (49%). And the high concentration of fast food restaurants in many urban neighborhoods likely affects the high number of Hispanic (60%) and black (46%) Americans who say they are worried about too much fast food (vs. 30% of whites).

Advertising. Every day, and in nearly every way, US-Americans are assailed with food advertising through mass marketing utilizing current technologies: billboards, flyers, children's television shows marketing directly to children, in grocery stores, radio, television, and internet. Data found on Statista.com reveals that

Food advertising comprises the actions used in communicating a food product's features and benefits in attempt to persuade the customer to purchase the product. In the United States advertising within the grocery stores industry alone generates over 190 billion U.S. dollars annually and in 2016, the advertising spending for the industry for canned, frozen, and preserved fruits, vegetables and specialty foods amounted to approximately 1.26 billion U.S. dollars.¹⁸

In other words, out of 190 billion spent, 1.26 billion was spent on advertising primarily *healthy foods*. The scope and amount of advertising expenditures for this category alone and then the relatively few dollars spent on healthy foods is overwhelming. These data are critical to helping us understand and consume accurate, reliable and current information. The impact here is to pay attention to the sources of the information and to then make intelligent and informed decisions.¹⁹

Quality of food versus cost.

According to some studies, eating healthy food costs more than eating unhealthy food: \$1.50 more per day per person, or more than \$2,000 per year for a family of four. It's no surprise, then, that the cost of healthier eating is a prohibitive factor for many population segments (52 percent among all adults). It is unexpected, however, that cost is less a factor for Elders (36 percent), given that more than 23 million Americans over age 60 qualify as economically insecure).²⁰

Mixed messages.

Beyond the amount of food we consume, what concerns US-Americans most about their eating habits? The past decade has seen an explosion of healthier

¹⁸ Statista, "Food Advertising-Statistics & Facts," accessed November 20, 2017, www.statista.com.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

alternatives (depending on what you order!) to traditional fast food, such as Chipotle, Corner Bakery and Panera Bread. National demand continues to grow for healthier dining-out options, as well as for easier access to more organic foods. Despite the availability of healthier choices, however, half of all Americans say they are concerned they eat too much unhealthy food (51 percent) and one-third say they eat too much fast food (37 percent).²¹

Not enough fresh, regular home cooking.

While increasing numbers of men are comfortable whipping something up in the kitchen, cooking duties still more commonly fall on women—and according to Barna’s Frames research, seven out of ten women say, ‘I have too much stress in my life.’ It’s a challenge for busy, stressed-out women and men to regularly cook at home on a predictable schedule, and dealing with this challenge impacts Americans’ views of their eating habits. In this respect, two out of five adults say they are concerned they do not eat enough homemade food (42 percent), and one-third say they worry about unpredictable mealtimes (37 percent). These concerns are most common among Millennials and non-white Americans.²²

Most recent statistics from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention show that 36.5 percent of adults consume less than a cup of fruit and less than one and a half cups of vegetables that correlate with obesity pre diabetes and rising levels of heart disease, which is the leading cause of death in the United States. There are an estimated 86 million people who have pre diabetes, characterized by high blood sugar.²³

Food guilt and barriers to good eating. The “obesity epidemic” gets a lot of press these days, and for good reason; one in three US-American children is overweight or obese. Whether initiatives to curb childhood obesity or recent criticisms lobbed by Congress at Dr. Oz for his promotion of “miracle cures” for obesity, there is no shortage of media coverage sounding the alarm about the United States’ nutritional emergency.²⁴

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

But what do US-Americans themselves say about what they eat? The short answer? Too much.²⁵ The collective latent result of so much social press about obesity is guilt.

The brokenness of our relationship to food and faith extends to include eating alone or often with various members of the household “grabbing” something quick from the refrigerator and continuing on their way. Perhaps this is one of the warning signs of our broken relationship with the collective food system and the land. Sallie McFague puts it this way: “We live in one world, all of us together, and there is one appropriate way of being, stretching from the simplest organism to us human beings.”²⁶ McFague further argues that the model of self care, well care applies to living as “enough is enough,” which is countercultural in that it flies of the face of market capitalism as being the higher good when in reality this model is environmentally degrading, unsustainable, and shortsighted.

We should not overlook the fact that a vital strand in today’s conversation about food attends to matters of fundamental, perennial, and profound concern. Writers like Michael Pollan, Barbara Kingsolver, Marion Nestle, and Raj Patel, and movies like *Food Inc.*, *Fresh*, and *Hungry for Change*²⁷ have shown us that today’s industrial and increasingly globalized food system undermines human health, mistreats food service and

²⁴ Barna Research, “Americans Are Concerned about Poor Eating Habits,” *Research Releases in Culture & Media*, July 15, 2014, accessed November 21, 2017, <https://www.barna.com/research/americans-are-concerned-about-poor-eating-habits/>.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Sallie McFague, *Blessed Are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 37.

²⁷ *Food, Inc.* (Directed by Robert Renner, Magnolia Pictures, 2009); *Fresh* (Produced/directed by Ana Sofia Joanes, 2009); *Hungry for Change* (Directed by James Colquhoun and Larentine ten Boseh, 2012).

other workers,²⁸ destroys agricultural communities, abuses animals, and degrades agricultural lands and the ecosystems they depend upon.²⁹

Much is written in peer-reviewed journals, news articles, and popular books (some well sourced) by advocacy groups and highly regarded researchers about what is viewed as a growing food crisis. It just does not seem to reach the church. Upon seeing the disparity between what God described as “good” food in the Creation Account, and the impoverished quality of food served to our children and elderly in institutional settings; when we look at the money spent in our country for highly processed and nutritionally empty offerings, we are called to reassess what we can do as Christians and as consumers.

Need for Christian Leader Awareness, Response, and Action

The Church has always concerned itself with essential matters of life, death, healing...and food.³⁰ From the feeding of the five thousand, to the Last Supper, and to Paul’s instructions on the just distribution of food in Corinth, questions about food have been central to Christian life... However, few Christian leaders and contemporaries seem to be aware of these complexities and or have interest in the significance for today’s ministries.³¹

²⁸ The term “service industry” indicates that we feel ourselves above the need to work directly for our own nurture. Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005).

²⁹ For an introduction to works available on today’s vast resources on the industrial food system, see Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin, 2006); *In Defense of Food: An Eaters Manifesto* (New York: Penguin, 2008); Barbara Kingsolver, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007); Marion Nestlé, *Safe Food: The Politics of Food Safety* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2007); and Raj Patel’s *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System* (Brooklyn, NY: Melville House, 2007).

³⁰ Of the many lessons learned throughout a lifetime of ministry, perhaps an overarching one is to be very careful in our work as Christian leaders and in spiritual formation of not “throwing the baby out with the bathwater.” We must be mindful about rethinking paradigms and engaging more collaboratively and with a deep respect, appreciation, and embracing the wisdom that has come before.

³¹ Princeton Theological Seminary Just Food Conference, September 22–24, 2016, accessed September 16, 2017, <http://coned.ptsem.edu/events/just-food/>.

Having lost sight of the historical and spiritual story of the Master Creator's design, Wirzba, claims that we are left with an "Exodus relationship with food, akin to out-of-sight and out-of-mind in terms of production, animal and plant husbandry and sustainability."³² This exodus carries far-reaching implications not only to physical health, but also spiritual and cultural health.

A review of food growth and production reveals dramatic increases in food adulterations of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), processed (fast foods), unprocessed foods or minimally processed foods (soy, corn, canola, and sugar beets), which have become "the standard" within the food industry. These dramatic food adulterations are fueling the rapidly growing agro-corporation movement away from manufacturing diversity and smaller more self-sustaining enterprises. Historically, these smaller more self-sustaining enterprises come from a nurturer/caregiver of the earth perspective; in other words, sustainability and diversity. The rapid transition to large scale monoculture farms producing mono-culture crops with heavy chemical and genetically modified seeds inputs designed to withstand the sprays, and concentrated animal feed lot operations (CAFOs), however, are a growing presence on the agricultural landscape.³³

³² Norman Wirzba, *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

³³ There are many credible sources. The reader who desires to study this area in more depth is encouraged to review these words and organizations: Wendell Berry, *Bringing It to the Table: On Farming and Food*, "Part I: Farming"; Stephen M. Drucker, *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth: How the Venture to Genetically Engineer Our Food Has Subverted Science, Corrupted Government and Systematically Deceived the Public*; Sallie McFague, *Blessed are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint*; and Citizens Organized to Protect Lake Superior from CAFOs. Although adequate discussion regarding genetic engineering, increased use of pesticide and herbicides, regional and global trade agreements, or public policy is beyond the scope of this study, the hope is to shed some light on to the significance of these topics. Chapter Six will discuss ideas for further research in these areas.

Wendell Berry warns, “The notion that a so-called perfect storm of factors coming together in a way that threatens the future of life on earth is no longer the unique perspective of bearded prophets, street preachers, and religious fundamentalists.”³⁴ The national and international state of food has become that of a commodity to be bought and sold to the highest bidder.³⁵ The multinational agrichemical corporations and public policy and trade agreements that tend to ignore small farmers, organic growers, and indigenous peoples, are a cause for health, safety, availability, and security concerns for all humankind—especially at this juncture for poor, marginalized, indigenous persons without political voice or adequate advocacy.

Within the current postmodern consumer culture and throughout the cross-section of humanity, there is a robust disconnect between food and faith. Eating is meant to be a community celebration and is a practical way to bring people together. Although this is true, there is a growing disconnect substantially due to unawareness, misinformation, and deceptions disseminated by the multilevel worldwide corporations that seek financial gain, control, and autonomy that promotes individual corporate agendas.

Among other things, McCormick argues that we cannot deny the broken relationship between food and land in a society that eats too much meat:

There is a growing brokenness between food, land and faith. This brokenness is detailed in a number of subcategories evidenced in our postmodern consumer society. One major brokenness with food is the failure to feed the world. Though we can now produce enough food for the whole planet without environmental problems, our global food system leaves 3 billion people hungry or malnourished

³⁴ Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Edition, 2015), 13.

³⁵ “The massive ascendancy of corporate power over democratic process is probably the most ominous development since the end of World War II, and for the most part ‘the free world’ seems to be regarding it as merely normal.” Wendell Berry, *Bringing It to The Table: On Farming and Food* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2009), 68.

or overfed. On the one hand, over 1.1 billion are afflicted with hunger, while on the other hand, over 1.1 billion eat too much. Although eating organic foods was not a consideration 50 years ago (as all food was organic) today it is a subject that we must pay close attention to. Consuming organic food that does not rely on chemical fertilizer or pesticides has a number of ethical, nutritional and environmental advantages, not before recognized.³⁶

To suggest that food carries multiple layers of moral, cultural, ecological, and religious significance does not mean that eaters are fully aware of what they are doing or what they are communicating when they eat. A vast disconnect between what people believe and what they do can exist, for example, when people profess a love of animals but then eat meat produced by an industry that systematically degrades animals.³⁷

Today's food industry presupposes a unique development in the history of eating: the near complete separation between food production and food consumption. Never before in human history have so few people had a direct hand in the growth, nurture, production, and preparation of the food they eat. That means that a considerable amount of eating happens in a cloud of ignorance in which eaters know little about where their food comes from, under what conditions it was produced, and what social, economic, and ecological conditions need to be in place to insure healthy production of food well into the future.³⁸

Viewed from this angle, today's growing interest in food is a welcome event, because it suggests that at least some people want to overcome food ignorance and thereby become more responsible eaters.

Why must we as Christian leaders become knowledgeable about and be effectively involved in social justice and human rights issues related to food, food security, and availability? Food calls us to new awareness as to our simple and common

³⁶ Patrick McCormick, from lecture handout notes from presentation at Gonzaga University on November 21, 2015. Among other things, McCormick argues that we cannot deny the broken relationship between food and land in a society that eats too much meat.

³⁷ Wirzba, "Food for Theologians."

³⁸ Paul Roberts suggests in *The End of Food* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2008) that our collective ignorance, and thus also negligence, is putting sustainable production and faux future of healthy food in jeopardy.

human need, and also that of the earth and all the living plant and creatures inhabiting it. Our earth is perishing for lack of knowledge. Our first inclination is to be reactive to systemic evil or to subscribe to the belief that Christ's immanent return means we get a pass, but the *a priori*, the foundation, has been misplaced. We begin first with shared and common stewardship that begins and ends with the understanding of God's ownership: "To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it" (Deut. 10:14), only in this paradigm do we consider what it means to be bringers of God's Kingdom.

Eating matters not only because it allows us to satisfy a gustatory, physiological need. It matters because eating is the most regular and intimate way in which we place ourselves in our world. Eating together is the most fundamental way in which we connect our lives with others.³⁹ My hope is that the data presented within this study will awaken and move Christian leaders from our historical "us and them" mentality regarding food and faith by presenting compelling information as to why caring for the earth is a priority.

Need for a New Understanding/Narrative about Food and Faith

The efforts of activists are doing much to build awareness, however, the core "why" is still missing. The need for a new understanding/narrative/identity about the role of food, land, and community in daily worship grows more urgent. Intentional and collective identity formation while celebrating the food we eat and its relationship to the land is important to create a physically and spiritually healthy environment within the Christian community and also throughout society at large.

³⁹ The Basic desire to connect with others and one's neighborhood may go a long way toward helping us understand faux growth of farmer's markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), and restaurants that feature locally sourced and grown food.

After taking a look at the history of food and food justice, this research will turn to God's design for relationship found even in the Creator's imperative for nutrition, and the concept of food sanctity in Chapter Four. Scripture reveals a deepening understanding that food is the material medium of love. In God's creation of the world, the Creator delighted in the world's fertility and fecundity. God creates land that puts forth vegetation with plants yielding seed and trees bearing fruit with seed within it (Gen. 1:11–12), and then proclaims that they have been made as the gift of food for every creature that has the breath of life (1:29–30). Similarly, in Gen 2:9, God plants vegetation that is “pleasant to sight and good for food,” indicating that God finds pleasure in food that nourishes life. The presence of food is for intimate, material, mundane sign of God's providential care.⁴⁰ In other words, stewardship of our land is not only for our enjoyment, it is essential for survival.

Between Food and Faith

What is food? When I teach a class on food and the life of faith, I often hear students say, ‘Food *is* fellowship,’ thereby indicating the indispensable presence of food in shared life together. The point is not only that important life moments such as births, birthdays, graduations, weddings, funerals, co-feature good food and good company, it is that the sharing of food along the many stages of life's way signifies the sharing of love and support, the sharing of one life in another. To bring food to another's table is to communicate one's care and to declare that one is committing oneself to the others' health and happiness. In other words, food nurtures on more than one level: it nurtures by feeding the body essential nutrients, but it also nurtures by building a community of responsibility and care, a community in which life together is affirmed as good. Nutrients and nurture, food and fidelity, come together in the sharing of a meal.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Wirzba, *Food & Faith*, 374–382.

⁴¹ L. Shannon Jung has developed these themes in *Sharing Food: Christian Practices for Enjoyment* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2006).

The core of this study rests with the “why,” of food found in the sacred relationship between food and faith. The question of “How?” will be considered in Chapter Six. To discover adequate response to the complexity of food sanctity, justice and faith, I am working to find kernels of truth and wisdom from biblical sources, from contemporary Christian thought leaders, from activists, scholars, theologians and indigenous peoples all with truths to be heard and implemented.

Shalom Realized Here on Earth

Only in God’s great love will we find health, wholeness, holiness, and ultimately peace—in a word, *shalom*. Food is a way we experience and express this great and redeeming love in community with our neighbors and world—in a real sense we are sustaining a culture designed by the Master Creator himself. Food lets us commune with God. Writes Wendell Berry, “A culture is not a collection of relics or ornaments, but a practical necessity, and its corruption invokes calamity. A healthy culture is a communal order of memory, insight, value, work, conviviality, reverence, and aspiration. It reveals the human necessities and the human limits. It clarifies our inseparable bonds to the earth and to each other.”⁴² Furthermore, shalom is realized here on earth when church leaders realize the message of redemption and need for renewed practice of food and faith that is sustainable and with hospitality, welcoming strangers around a table. On a broader scale, Shalom demands action on a national and global scale.

What can US-Americans do in an ever-increasingly industrialized, corporatized, politicized, monopolized and profit-driven food system? As a global superpower we have commoditized food, including genetically modified plants and animals, and production of

⁴² Berry, *Unsettling of America*, 47.

plants and animals is driven by producing more as cheaply as possible. Industrialized and fast food production is profit driven, not nutritional quality driven, and we are facing significant health consequences. The trends continue moving toward fewer and fewer companies controlling most inputs and outcomes agriculturally, politically and economically. The Green Revolution⁴³ brought about increased productivity and in the past twenty years agriculture has seen a dramatic increase in genetically modified foods (GMOs), monoculture farming, a huge increase in toxic chemicals and the monopolization and patenting of even seeds, which has always been a basic human right, now is proprietary.⁴⁴

While it appears that organized grassroots responses to these changes are gaining traction and that the technological revolution and world of the Internet and globalization of communication has been a Godsend in these arenas; education, advocacy, and decisive actions are clearly needed relative to food sanctity, safety, sustainability, availability, human rights, and human dignity framework. The voices, research, and concerns of these grassroots organizations need to be heard and their concerns addressed.

How do Christian leaders become knowledgeable about these humanitarian issues? How do Christian leaders advocate for, affect change, and serve as change-agents? What does the Bible say? What can we learn from a Christian historical perspective? What are contemporary theologians and Christian institutions doing to address this issue? Is Western Christianity's individualism and capitalism a large part of

⁴³ William S. Gaud, "The Green Revolution: Accomplishments and Apprehensions," *AgBioWorld*, March 8, 1968, accessed November 4, 2015, <http://www.agbioworld.org/biotech-info/topics/borlaug/borlaug-green.html>.

⁴⁴ Philip Landrigan and Charles Benbrook, "GMOs, Herbicides, and Public Health," *New England Journal of Medicine* 373 (2015):693–695, accessed October 21, 2015, doi: 10.1056/NEJMp1505660.

the problem? If so, what are we to do about it? The issues are complex, going beyond biblical and theological debates and touching on economics and ethics. Though nothing is inherently wrong with the concept of capitalism, problems always occur when people take advantage of and divert social and societal assets for personal use.

Pope Francis, for example, seems to be attempting to address two types of capitalism, the first being extractive and the other inclusive (See Chapter Three: Case Studies). In the United States and globally, we are in a struggle between these two forms of capitalism, each of which is self-reinforcing. In extractive capitalism the government tends to protect the interests of the wealthy and the power of the wealthy elites granting them monopolies and rights while allowing exploitation of the working class. As a country we have a history of Imperialism and expansionism. Inclusive capitalism tends to be more egalitarian where hard work, initiative, and innovation is rewarded and the government breaks up monopolies and acts to safeguard the public welfare and works to ensure that the market is fair for all. We need ethical decision-making in order to bring Shalom. We need leaders who are readily asking questions such as:

“Is this moral, right, ethical and helpful?”

“Do we as Christian leaders take on the wrongs and stand up for the marginalized, the destitute, and the hungry or the culture of consumption?”

“What are we called to do mission ally right where we stand?”

This dissertation briefly explores Christian human rights and advocacy movements related to food and faith, and proposes strategies for becoming better consumers of accurate information, and thus changes agents in the lives of parishioners, communities and their families.

Limitations and Qualifications

The complexities and nuances of the world of food, food and faith and diet, nutrition, and the political manifestations and global consequences, are in and of themselves each major topic for continued research and exploration. Other related topics of ozone depletion, declining fresh water availability, unstable marine fisheries, ocean dead zones, forest loss dwindling biodiversity, climate change, and other such related topics are much needed areas of study, but remain outside of the scope of this paper. Rather, the focus of this current study is directed at building awareness specifically among Christian leaders, and then suggesting strategies for implementing that awareness into simple doable action steps for making food and eating choices based on evidence and faith.

The entire arena of food and eating could go many directions and with many related topics including: vegetarianism; the economics of food production; trade agreements and political impacts on the planet; and the pros and cons of GMOs and chemical input. The geopolitical, social, environmental, and humanitarian issues alone are interconnected, complex, and fraught with power and control at the global corporate level. Therefore, after a brief look through the lens of Case Studies, this researcher's focus will remain on food and faith in one's own local setting, with questions of how and why in an effort to think differently and become better stewards and consumers based on evidence and faith.

Many voices are rising up, calling us to take charge, and become the servants and stewards that God has directed us to become. The goal of this dissertation is to join these voices in offering hope and direction for engaging local clergy, chaplains, and

congregations to consume reliable information regarding food and faith and affecting positive change, while also providing preliminary direction in knowing how to think globally and act locally. Our physical, communal, and spiritual health and the health of our planet require a stewardship relationship to food, eating and faith in accordance to biblical mandates.

Conclusion

Theologian Norman Wirzba raises awareness that we have an exile relationship with food. Taking his work further, this study first looks at presenting problems of Food and Faith and considers biblical, theological, contemporary, and case study frameworks while presenting some solutions. The opening vignette of Jim and Karen illustrated the premise of this paper—how for US-Americans we have a disconnect between food and faith, and that as Christians and other faith tradition leaders, we must reevaluate and choose to repair this broken relationship. Reconciliation will be accomplished by becoming better consumers of information that is accurate, inclusive, and that recognizes the interdependence of all things. Our relationship with food does not begin with prepackaged items at the grocery store or with a trip through the fast food drive through, but with stewardship, creation care, sustainability, and living so that others may live.

The chapters that follow will explore how one might teach and encourage Christian leaders and pastors like Jim and Karen, chaplains, other church leaders to help them locate and consume unbiased and quality information; to research, explore and advocate for a new paradigm of sustainability, food diversity options, food quality as well as how they might serve as advocates for their congregations, themselves and communities. If Christians are educated and offered opportunities to develop better

understanding of a theology of food, food availability, quality, sanctity, and availability, then families and communities can make choices leading to health and improved stewardship relationship with God's creation.

Chapter Two briefly reviews ten thousand years of historical and contemporary views of food and food justice, further establishing the premise of food sanctity, and loss of human connection with food growing and gathering after the Green Revolution.

Chapter Three takes the form of case studies, illustrating selected and current advocacy/leadership activities that address food and food sanctity and Christian leadership. Its focus will be on successful advocacy efforts across many settings including indigenous cultures.

Chapter Four provides biblical foundations of understanding our relationship to food as a gift from God. After developing the biblical basis for food and faith and the interconnectedness of food, faith, ritual, community, worship and stewardship.

Chapter Five will look at the nature of stewardship and hospitality and relate them to food and faith, highlighting why many theologians and other Christian leaders believe we have an exile relationship with food and food production, safety, and stewardship.

Chapter Six speaks to next steps for Christian communities to address food and faith. There are compelling needs for ongoing research, review, and educating people how to consume information, and research, while exploring and advocating for a new paradigm of sustainability, diversity of food options, and action advocacy on the local, state, regional, national, and international levels.

We have begun to establish the breadth and depth, as well as complexity, of the issues related to food and food justice. Without advocacy and action will anything change? Are we ready to advocate for and become activists ourselves regarding food, food safety, sanctity, food as a human right, and availability of food? The theologian Jonathan Moo ascribes and articulates succinctly the position held by this researcher: “I will proceed from the assumption that the mission of the Christian church *does* necessarily include concern with such earthly problems as environmental degradation, unsustainable resource use, ecosystem integrity, and the plight of the poor and of future generations.”⁴⁵ Changes in thinking and the inclusion of food justice, as a priority in advocacy and action, requires a paradigm shift that encompasses greater awareness and understanding that expects personal, cultural, government, and business ethics.

⁴⁵ Jonathon A. Moo and Robert S. White, *Let Creation Rejoice: Biblical Hope & Ecological Crisis* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 37–38.

CHAPTER TWO:
HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY VIEWS
OF FOOD AND FOOD JUSTICE

Introduction

The subject of Chapter Two is the historical and contemporary foundations of understanding humanity's collective gathering and growing of food and how that process has been radically disrupted and broken. Why should Christian leaders care about food production? Why should we be concerned with the history of food and its current growing techniques? Food and faith is deeply rooted in our human and Judeo-Christian tapestry. Food and faith relates to human rights, as a critical local and missional priority, and perhaps in establishing a new paradigm in how we as Christian leaders might need to "go back" to origins and embrace the interconnectedness. A brief overview of food history follows.

Food History: 10,000 Years

In order to understand the complexity of food and the acceleration of progress and perils related to agriculture, we will briefly review human history from nomadic hunter-gathers, to agrarianism and its natural dependence on God; the explosive revolution of agriculture and use of tools and advancements leading up to post-industrial agri-corporations and monoculture farming; and our evolving attitudes regarding pesticides, food, and sustainable and just farming. A brief but relatively complete outline of food history is embedded in a Monsanto Corporation web article (this author utilized the outline and data for the following):

Origins: Humans, (*Homo Sapiens*) were hunter-gathers for most of our history, back at least 10,000 years ago but perhaps longer as new archeological findings are suggesting that humans were on this earth earlier than this date.

Gradual Advancement: ... around 8,500 BC, humans in the Fertile Crescent (an area that stretches through modern-day Egypt, Israel, Turkey and Iraq) slowly started to plant grains, instead of gathering them in the wild...and around 7,000 BC they also began to domesticate animals...

Agriculture became a predictable, centralized source of food. Consequently humans had incentive to stay put and small communities were formed.

Over the next 8,500 years, agriculture evolved relatively slowly. Through trial and error, humans began to save seeds from plants and sow them for the next year's harvest.

During the Bronze and Iron Ages... metal tools replaced stone and wooden tools. However, farming remained a time- and labor-intensive pursuit that involved nearly 80% of the world's population.

It is of note that tools of farming remained essentially unchanged for millenia. The early colonists in North America used plows that were no different or better than the plows used during the Roman Empire.

Agriculture Revolution: During the 1800s and 1900s agricultural innovation exploded. Plow design was improved; Jethro Tull invented the world's first seed drill; horse-drawn, mechanized harvesting equipment followed and agricultural productivity soared. This period indeed was revolutionary and the changes came rapidly.

Industrialization: During the 20th century, gasoline-powered machines began to replace traditional, horse-drawn equipment. This, combined with advancements in fertilizer and pesticide technology after World War II, allowed agricultural productivity to take another leap forward. The new technological efficiencies meant farmers could manage more land... that led to fewer, larger farms... it also led to a shift in the labor force...with fewer and fewer persons living and working in rural communities...

Post Industrialization: Between 1900–2012 the world's population grew from 1.6 billion to more than 7 billion. In 1700 only 7 percent of the earth's surface was used for agriculture. Today it is more than 40 percent... and in the United States, less than 3 percent actively farm and live on farms.¹

¹ Monsanto, accessed November 30, 2017, <http://www.monsanto.com/global/au/improvingagriculture/pages/growing-populations-growing-challenges.aspx>.

Because a treatment of each time period is beyond the scope of this study, I have chosen to: 1) highlight the time period and people of the Ancient Near East (ANE) whose practices parallel and include Scripture; 2) highlight small farming practices in the 1940s and 1950s, also giving my personal farming story to set the stage for 3) the Green Revolution and how farming has radically changed Post Industrialization.

Ancient History of Food (800–1400 AD)

What did ancient peoples eat? What did they *not* eat and why? In light of this dissertation's premise, we are interested in what this tells us about their culture, their health, and their beliefs, as well as with how animal husbandry and farming was considered. We can surmise the ancient's relationship with the land by their attitudes toward food. History of food in Scripture and in ancient civilizations bears witness to how important food choices and customs were to God, and subsequently to people groups, giving meaning and order to how we are to treat each other, share the bounty, and have the right to accept wholesome and available food from God's bounty. In the very first chapter of Genesis it says, "Then God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.' And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good."² And if that was not enough, God said, "Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now

² Gen. 1:11–12.

give you everything.”³ Numerous passages serve as illustrations of God’s provision and instruction regarding food and will be reviewed in more depth in later chapters, but for now a quick review of early words recorded.

In 1826 the French Physician Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote, “*Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es*”: “Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are.”⁴ This seems to be not only true of individuals, but also of societies. By examining the diets of ancient peoples, we can tell much about their relationship to food: their values, culture, and religion. For Old Testament people, and also early Christians, the dietary record is clear. In Genesis, God (the original gardener) said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seedbearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds...”⁵

As described by Jerome Neyrey, John Pilch of Georgetown University looked to the *Book of Wisdom* for evidence of such reflected values. He describes “what people drank (water, goat’s milk, honey, wine, oil) and what they ate (various types of grain). Grain, oil, and wine were the most important commodities, especially grain and the bread made from it.”⁶

The Bible’s frequent mention of bread, wine, milk, and honey are more than metaphor. They reflect staple elements that would be consumed daily by Mediterranean, Ancient Near East people. Food in the ANE was more than simply something people

³ Gen. 9:3.

⁴ James Hamblin, “1922: Strength and Vigor Depend on What You Eat,” April 1, 2014, accessed March 1, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/amp/article/284604>.

⁵ Gen. 1:11.

⁶ John Pilch, “The Necessities of Life: Drinking and Eating,” *BibT* 31 (1993): 231–237 as quoted in Jerome H. Neyrey, “Reader’s Guide to Meals: Food and Table Fellowship in the New Testament,” University of Notre Dame, accessed November 11, 2016, <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/meals.html>.

took for granted. They were the producers, stewards, and consumers of food and fiber, whereas in US culture, many people are anywhere from one to three or more generations removed from food sources and the stewardship required for providing.

Bread and wine served as primary calorie sources for much of the ANE, with bread accounting for as much as half of one's caloric intake and wine for another quarter—especially for men and wealthy women: “It is estimated that an adult male in ancient Rome consumed a liter of wine daily.”⁷ Milk would have appealed to people in Biblical times as a renewable resource, while honey served as their primary sweetener. That the hungry Hebrew tribes escaping Egyptian slavery would seek the land of milk and honey is consistent with their desire for health and prosperity for themselves and their descendants.

Hebrew Dietary laws, developed over centuries of food observation, and subsequent food rules reflect the values of the culture and their concern for health. The Kashrut is a set of Jewish dietary laws based on the Torah's Leviticus and Deuteronomy. We must assume that such laws were not arbitrary notions; but rather, practical food considerations based on people's evolution and observation of their own health and well being.⁸

The history of food and food and faith is a deeply ingrained part of our very existence as humans being and of our Judeo-Christian experience. Food is love and

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ For more specific and detailed accounts regarding ancient history of food and dietary restrictions please refer to Appendix G. Here the reader will find the links and sources contained within Jerome H. Neyrey's “Reader's Guide to Meals, Food and Table Fellowship in the New Testament” with the specific references and sources of the other scholarly works contained therein of Pilch, Brochi, Douglas and Solar. Another applicable compendium prepared by Jerome H. Neyrey is “Reader's Guide to Clean/Unclean, Pure/Polluted, and Holy/Profane: The Idea and System of Purity,” accessed December 12, 2017, <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/purity.html>.

ceremony; food is community and intimacy; and food is something that we can never live without. It is more than a mere convenience and God taught us that we are the stewards of his good earth.

Brunner, Butler, and Swoboda cite Wirzba's work in their book *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology: Foundations in Scripture, Theology and Praxis*, wherein they observe:

More than a nostalgic return to bygone days of farming and rural life, agrarianism lifts up the interdependence of human well-being of the land '...' Agrarianism calls all of us to this kind of imagination, rooted in land and place and mutuality and reliance on God. The Bible, much more than many in our generation realize, fosters this kind of foresight and resourcefulness.⁹

What follows is a "fast forward" through eras from the ancients to Farming before moving through industrialization to post-industrialization.

Farming Then and Now: My Story

"In the United States only 1 percent of Americans are farmers, and 85 percent of America is so far removed from Agriculture, they do not understand what we do, even when we tell them."
—Damian Mason¹⁰

Growing up as a "farm kid" in Northern Wisconsin¹¹ and being involved directly with: raising animals such as dairy cows and beef cattle; growing crops such as oats, hay, and corn on rotation year-by-year to allow the soil to rejuvenate; gardening; and poultry

⁹ Daniel L. Brunner, Jennifer L. Butler, and A.J. Swoboda, *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology: Foundations in Scripture, Theology, History, and Praxis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 155.

¹⁰ Damian Mason, "Agriculture, the 1 Percenters," Damian Mason Keynote Speaker at Business & Agriculture, accessed October 19, 2017, damianmason.com.

¹¹ Northern Wisconsin is not known for being a major agricultural area, however, farming has had a presence there since the turn of the century. What farming followed was the exploitation of the White Pine forests, a tale of greed and extraction on a scale so massive that will have to remain a story for another day.

(some family farm land is still in production) provides a unique perspective. Instinctively and through good modeling I knew a “good farmer” was one who: taught their children to work; treated their cattle and other creatures well; allowed fields to lay fallow in rotation; attended to erosion and contoured the hills to avoid erosion and runoff; and tended to clean water sources. A clear and uncompromising stewardship relationship with the land was born into us. Some of the unwritten rules were: rotating fields and crops to allow rejuvenation; organic input such as manure, seeding and plowing under seeded grasses and legumes such as alfalfa, timothy, and clovers; and assisting neighbors with harvesting and planting when needed.

The journey began with my growing up on an eighty-acre farmstead in northwestern Wisconsin. I never entirely departed from farming, or at least from thoughts about farming, and my affection for my homeland/homestead remain strong. In fact my family has chosen to keep some acreage of fields and woods from our original farmstead. We practice crop rotation and organic input to the soil and selectively cut and manage the woodland. For me there is and always will be a kindred connection and deeply spiritual reverence for the land, beautifully described by author Ben Logan. In *The Land Remembers: The Story of a Farm and its People*, Logan tells about growing up on a farm in southwestern Wisconsin in the 1920s and 1930s, during “a simpler time, a time before industrialization and commodification of the art and science of farming.”¹² What is nearly impossible for urbanites to grasp about country life still exists in some parts of the United States, though the farming community has shrunk to a small minority.

¹² Ben Logan, *The Land Remembers: The Story of a Farm and its People*, 9th ed. (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2017).

Our collective knowledge of food, animal husbandry, stewardship, and understanding or appreciation for the model of the farm family—functioning as independent businesses able to making a living with sustainability and diversity as hallmarks of living and thriving in healthy interdependent communities—is too often decoupled from food and faith. Without being overly nostalgic, there are many tenants applicable to food, faith, and farming today.

During the 1940s through the 1960s, the farms were small in scale—most one hundred acres or smaller. The farm families were independent and proud stewards of their land and of the animals they cared for. They produced a diversity of crops and animals, some for their own consumption, and most for the market place, which often was a cooperative enterprise in which each farmer-member was a shareholder/stockholder. This business and distribution model was often seen in milk, cheese, and crop production and, in some farming areas and states, this is still valued and followed. The farmers were owners and stewards of the land and crop rotation, organic inputs to enrich the soils and times to let the land lie fallow was practiced. Many farmers saved seeds from year to year for replanting the following year. The animal husbandry practices (caring for the animals in a humane manner) and stewardship of the land, soil, water, and surroundings were holistic as there was an appreciation for and balance in which interdependence and interconnectedness was a virtue and a practice. The rural communities, farms, and towns were interconnected with one relying on the other in a synergistic way. The economics of rural America was interdependent and mostly cooperative. The community of Shell Lake was and still is a combination of “town and country” and each summer a Town and Country Days Festival is held signifying and

celebrating the identity and interdependence of town and country lives, each valuing and appreciating the other.

I attended Plainview School, a one-room country school serving families of the surrounding area. Mrs. Toll was our teacher and she taught grades one through eight. We all brought our lunches: sandwiches made of fresh home-made breads, fresh homegrown fruit and vegetables in season or canned in winter, and a cookie or two, and fresh milk—nothing “store bought.” We had little material wealth but we had community and the sense of peace that all was right with the world.

Change is inevitable. Some change is gradual and goes without notice, but in this instance, shifts were radical, and I personally witnessed the demise of the small family farm, of the rural communities, of workmanship and pride in farming, and of the changing face of agricultural production. The events that began to unfold came in tandem with the otherwise silent arrival of the Rural Electric Cooperative (REA). I can still vision the large, slowly moving utility truck. It had a huge tank on the back and a man was sitting there with a spraying hose, spraying all of the blackberry bushes, the pine cherry and choke cherry trees, and the brush and trees that held so many birds and offered sanctuary. The right-of-ways were now being sprayed with brush killing chemicals rather than by manually cutting down the offensive growth that occasionally reached the high lines. There was no prior notification and/or precautionary education for the farmers.

My family and neighbors still recall the cause-effect: the roadside vegetation shriveled up and died and it smelled of chemicals and death. The chokecherries, pin cherries, apple tress, crab apples, and wild strawberries our grandparents and parents always looked forward to “putting up” as delectable jams, jellies, and sauces were killed,

if not the first year, certainly in consecutive years of spraying. After the fact, when we received news from the REA about what they were doing and why, we were assured that the “products” were safe and a great cost-saving measure, not to mention much less labor intensive. Like Rachel Carson wrote in her seminal book *Silent Spring*, our songbirds that graced the hedges long the roadways quit singing. The Spring Peepers (frogs) that greeted each spring with their lovely chorus of praise and promise of the warming earth no longer sang in the little ponds along the right of way.

The results of chemical sprays were also being felt and seen in new personal and costly ways. For the first time since animal husbandry was established, our cattle began to have deformed and/or stillborn babies. That shift from a “pre-chemical” time in our Bashaw Valley Homestead and Bashaw Valley Township was magnified and we were witnessing from a front row seat how life was changing with industrialized, untested, chemicals and agents that were non-organic and consequential—not just to the desired target—but to the ecosystem in total. The collateral damage brought about by efficacy from an industrial, corporate model was beginning in earnest in rural US-America.

Wendell Berry, in chapter four of his book, *The Unsettling of America*, “The Agricultural Crisis as a Crisis of Culture,” speaks about his boyhood in Henry County, Kentucky, a rural farming community. The events and circumstances he describes are akin to my own rural farming experiences. Regarding the changes to industrialized agriculture Berry states,

There seems to be a rule that we can simplify our minds and our culture only at the cost of an oppressive social and mechanical complexity. We can simplify our society—that is, make ourselves free—only by undertaking tasks of great mental and cultural complexity. Farming, the best farming requires a farmer—a husbandman, a nurturer—not a technician or businessman. A technician or a businessman, given the necessary abilities and ambitions, can be made in a little

while, by training. A good farmer, on the other hand, is a cultural product; he is made by a sort of training, certainly, in what his time imposes or demands, but he is also made by generations of experience. This essential experience can only be accumulated, tested, preserved, handed down in settled households, friendships, and communities that are deliberately and carefully native to their own ground, in which the past has prepared the present and the presence safeguards the future.¹³

The result is a loss of community, loss of livelihood, and loss of hope. Small family farms that operated as independent businesses and with the stewardship of care for the land, the plants and animals as well as community were being altered, perhaps irrevocably. Since at least the mid 1940s with the post WWII industrial and chemical inputs and the Green Revolution with artificial inputs such as nitrogen, phosphorous, and other non-organic inputs coupled with great chemical inputs; the farm mantra of “get bigger or get out” put small farmers out of business, leaving fewer caring for and living on the land, leaving less than three percent of the US population farming.

In contrast, the top-down organizational chart that signifies most farming *today* is that of big and bigger and of corporatization and high mechanization. The results are a vertical integration that places the farmer on the bottom of the heap in which they are subservient to “big four” seed companies; Monsanto, DuPont, Syngenta and Dow own 80 percent of the corn, 70 percent of the soy, and 60 percent of all seeds.”¹⁴ Farmers are now required to purchase genetically modified seeds for over 90 percent of the corn and soy production, which are patented and commoditized and monopolized (patent of life itself), and which are genetically modified to withstand the chemical inputs to control weeds and other unwanted foliage. In other words, inputs require both the genetically modified seeds

¹³ Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Press, 1996), 49.

¹⁴ Farm Aid, accessed August 10, 2017, www.farmaid.org/issues/gmos/-top-5-concerns-for-family-farmers/.

and the chemicals to control weeds. The farmer is prohibited from attempting to save and replant the genetically modified (GMO) seeds, as they are proprietary.¹⁵ In order to farm in this manner, the scale of operations has to increase, as does the size of the equipment: low or no till equipment, sprayers, cultivators, tractors, harvesters, and other equipment all provide an efficiency of scale and a decrease in labor input. In many cases the farmers have to either “get big or get out” and leave farming altogether or, for example, sell off their dairy cattle, as the milk prices they receive cannot compete with the mega dairy operations for hundreds of cows. The movement of meat production from smaller family-owned ranches and farms to concentrated animal feedlot operations (CAFLO’s) is another example of scale, of seeing meat as just protein, with little regard for the welfare of the hogs, chickens, turkeys, and cattle. The operations are ever increasing in size and locales; all the while there continue to be outcries and advocacy actions attempting to protect the air, soil, and water from these intensive factory operations.¹⁶

The population exodus from rural US-America continues as fewer and fewer individuals are required to plant, tend to, and harvest crops than ever before. Consequently, there are fewer farmers on the land and more vertical integration with big brand name corporations controlling the inputs, the sale of the harvest or animals,

¹⁵ National Research Council, *The Impact of Genetically Engineered Crops on Farm Sustainability in the United States* (Washington, DC: National Academic Press, 2010), accessed July 14, 2016.

¹⁶ Currently in the State of Wisconsin, for example, industrial scale CAFLO’s have succeeded politically to advocate for downgrading in air and water quality standards. Leonard Sweet, in his book *From Tablet to Table: Where Community Is Found and Identity Is Formed*, shares that the exposés of factory farms must receive attention from Christians: “Christian tables need to embrace forms of locavorism, farmers’ markets, kitchen-gardening, and especially the eating of ‘ethically raised’ animals” (102, 169). Some organizations have been advocates for change in public policy as it relates to food, quality, and holistic and environmental concerns. Examples are: The Center for Food Safety & Seeds; Center for Food Safety, globalseednetwork.org; Center for Biological Diversity; Earthjustice, earthjustice.org; Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy; The Alliance of World Scientists (AWS); Environmental Health News; Ipsnews.net; The Farmacy realfarmacy.com; Non-GMO Project <http://www.nongmoproject.org/>

distribution, and profits. It is of note that the majority of these non-profit advocacy organizations have members who are scientists, environmentalists, and others with personal and professional experiences in these matters. They are activists attempting to affect changes at all levels.

The current era is marked by the reality that Federal as well as some state Governmental agencies such as United States Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration, Consumer Protection Agency for examples are beholden to the political winds, to lobbyists, and to the politicians and lobbyists' deep pockets and influences. The small voice of those who are asking for a level playing field to produce organic foods are those advocating to have products tested and labeled before releasing; those individuals and organizations seeking public policy for scientific study of foods and the chemical inputs versus "ok until found otherwise"; and advocates for clean air, clean water, and fairness in trade. Corporatization has an ever-increasing presence in all public policy decisions on the state and national levels.

Green Revolution, Biotech

Father of the so-called "Green Revolution" was Norman E. Borlaug, a plant geneticist who received the Nobel Prize for his work on hybridization and increasing yields in Mexico and India. It is significant that in the United States Department of Agriculture's article "Milestones in ARS Research," published in November 1983, stated:

Plant breeders rely on the collection and preservation of still-extant germ plasm. A major effort is underway to save from extinction not only the seeds of plants now cultivated but also their wild relatives with rich and irreplaceable genetic qualities—from resistance to disease and drought to higher yields. A wide variety

of genetic material is essential if breeders are to improve and perpetuate the world's crops.¹⁷

In what proves to be a short thirty-two years between then and the present, we have witnessed losses of genetic diversity. We have witnessed the Supreme Court of the United States (with a Monsanto attorney appointed to the highest court of the land not recusing himself on this case, Clarence Thomas¹⁸) allow the patenting of the basic and living organism—seeds. We have witnessed the politicization of Federal agencies charged with health, safety, and testing of products before they are released to the public. We have witnessed independent federal research dollars “dry up” to less than 15 percent in total, while corporations fill in the gap with scholarships and funding for their products. It is also of note that with seeds not patented and propriety that independent research is nearly at a standstill.¹⁹

¹⁷ Russell P. Kaniuka, “Milestones in ARS Research,” *Agricultural Research* (Washington, DC: USDA, November 1983), accessed November 26, 2017.

¹⁸ Clarence Thomas was employed as an attorney at Monsanto for four years. In the case before the United States Supreme Court *Monsanto Co. V. Geertson Seed Farms* (2010), Justice Clarence Thomas did not recuse himself from this case. In contrast, Justice Breyer recused himself because a relative was the Federal judge whose decision was being appealed. Nor did Justice Thomas recuse himself from *Bowman v. Monsanto Co.* (2013), a case that the Supreme Court decided a case to expand the patent rights of GMO manufacturers to include naturally reproduced seed stock. This would prevent farmers from saving and naturally replicating Monsanto seeds as they would do with spare non-GMO seeds. US Supreme Court case law; also <https://theprogressivecynic.com/2014/06/10monsantos-revolving-door>.

¹⁹ Steven M. Druker, *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth: How the Venture to Genetically Engineer Our Food Has Subverted Science, Corrupted Government, and Systematically Deceived the Public* (Salt Lake City, UT: Clear River Press, 2015). See also, Jason Louv, *Monsanto Vs. The World: The Monsanto Protection Act, GMOs and Our Genetically Modified Future* (Lexington, KY: Ultraculture Press, 2015). Furthermore, we have witnessed trade pacts promulgated by corporate insiders such as Michael Froman creating tribunals so that if any corporation believes that they are not able to make a profit or inroad into a market in a country that signs on (TPP, WTO, NAFTA, and Atlantic Pact) they come before said tribunal and plead their case with peers and *outside* of a state or countries due process. The most recent “trade agreement” the Transpacific Partnership Act or TPP was “fast tracked” with little or no input from our elected representatives and with no input from the public. This “agreement” was completed in secrecy with only “stakeholders” (read corporations) in the majority, writing the rules and regulations. This unfettered capitalism will lead to oligarchy and a New World Order. Since Citizen’s United which unleashed torrents of money into the political process also a United States Supreme Court decision, it is small wonder that the growing polarization and frustration on the part of most Americans is so great at this point in history.

According to Philip Howard, an associate professor at Michigan State University, just four agrichemical companies own 43 percent of the world's commercial seed supply. In addition, ten multinational corporations hold 65 percent of global commercial seed for major crops. Further evidence of monopolization and consolidation is that "The commercial seed industry has undergone tremendous consolidation in the last 40 years as transnational corporations entered this agricultural sector, and acquired or merged with competing firms. This trend is associated with impacts that constrain the opportunities for renewable agriculture, such as reductions in seed lines and a declining prevalence of seed saving."²⁰ Howard further states, "The Big Six chemical/seed companies (Monsanto, Bayer, Dow, Syngenta, DuPont and BASF) have increased their cross-licensing agreements to share genetically engineered traits, strengthening the barriers to entry for smaller firms that don't have access to these expensive technologies."²¹

Of note is that hybridization and selection of traits is *not* the same as genetically modified and/or inserting terminator genes that is foreign to the living cells. This is an important point because some advocates of biotechnology share that there is no difference between selecting plants for specific characteristics and genetic manipulation in reorganizing the genetic code itself. The general public has so much information and misinformation coming at them that making intelligent decisions as to what to believe.²²

Genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, and the resultant dramatic increased adulteration of chemicals, particularly in crops such as soya, corn, canola, and sugar

²⁰ Phillip Howard, "Visualizing Consolidation in the Global Seed Industry, 1996–2008," *Sustainability* 1 (2009): 1266–1287.

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Food, Water, Land," *The Progressive* 79, no. 6 (July 17, 2015).

beets, has become “the standard” and is a rapidly growing movement moving away from diversity to large scale industrialized monoculture agriculture controlled by very few corporations, and this has been accompanied by concentrated animal feeding operations or CAFO’s. The movement, which includes patenting even the basic necessities of life—seeds—has created even more dissociation. The results of these rapid and unparalleled changes are being felt and seen in many areas. To name a few: public health (people sickened by meat and produce, pesticide contamination of foods); exploitation of workers and animals all around the world; United States Federal Trade policies giving multinational corporations unfettered control over expansion including Transpacific Partnership Pact, World Trade Organization, and North American Free Trade Agreement incorporating tribunals separate from constitutional law and democracy to create, sell, and force agricultural products such as genetically modified food, seeds, and associated products on countries or face unprecedented fines; the embedding of corporate executives and lobbyists to the highest positions in government²³ including, for example, trade (Michael Frome), United States Department of Agriculture (Tom Vilsack) USDA, Food and drug Administration (Michael Taylor).²⁴

One of the many undeniable facts related to the proliferation of genetically modified, monoculture crops is the dramatic increase, not decrease, in chemical applications. Glyphosate or the trade name Round Up, for example, has increased in some areas of the world including North America in significant amounts. The impact is reported in Agronews:

²³ This link to a Venn Diagram exposes the revolving door of influence.
<http://www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread778152/pg1#pid12852948>

²⁴ Jason Louv, *Monsanto Vs. The World*.

“According to research from the Brazilian Association of Collective Health (Abrasco)... an increase of 162.32 percent in the volume of pesticides assumed between the years 2000 and 2012. The data of the study called “Abrasco Dossier - An alert on the impacts of Agrochemicals on Health: was released in an event at the State University of Rio de Janeiro. Since 2009, Brazil dominated the position of largest consumer of agrochemicals...consumption would be 5.5 kilograms per Brazilian per year,” affirmed the director of the Brazilian Association of Agroecology, Paulo Petersen. Peterson further states, “When GMO products were launched, advertisement said the use of agrochemicals would be reduced because they would be resistant to plagues, while what we’ve verified was quite the opposite. Not only agrochemicals are more used, but also stronger, more powerful agrochemicals have been used. We were led to import on urgency policy some agrochemicals that were not even allowed in Brazil to combat plagues on soybeans and cotton that were attacked by caterpillars.”²⁵

The history of food leads up to the present era of global industrial agricultural corporatization that is accelerating as seen by mega mergers, fewer persons farming and with just a handful of corporations to market to (for cattle, crops, chemical, and seed inputs), and we as human beings and stewards must be aware and take action. The impacts of concentrated animal feedlot operations, of monoculture farming with genetically modified seeds and increasing inputs of chemicals such as glyphosate, with the necessity of farming with larger and larger equipment on increasing acres and with vertical integration where the farmer of the past was the independent business person to the current movement of a farmer at the bottom subservient to the whims of corporations selling them the seeds and chemicals and controlling how and where products are sold is a large part of the picture of food today. Such impact is better understood, in part, thanks to private not for profit organizations and some Christian leadership examples that will be explored in Chapter 6.

²⁵ *Agronews*, May 20, 2015, accessed November 13, 2017, <http://news.agropages.com/News/NewsDetail---14870.htm>.

Wendell Berry, in *Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food*, captures the issues of changes from farming and from quality food and nutrition to what we have today which is largely industrialized scale agribusiness corporations and scope and scale of “production” being in the hands of very few.²⁶ This is not a new topic of interest but rather a robust revisit that will incorporate and embed in to the consumer conscious of today.

Conclusion: It Is Not Our Imagination

This dissertation journey began “up close and personal” for me and continues to this day. After witnessing the small family farms—the land, the plants, and animals—and community being altered, perhaps irrevocably with the “Green Revolution’s” artificial inputs such as nitrogen, phosphorous, and other no-organic inputs coupled with greater and great chemical inputs, is not an issue we can let rest.

This chapter has made a sweeping survey from the ancient civilization to our current conundrum of corporatization agriculture and food production and its resulting exile with food for most US-Americans. Why should Christian leaders consider food, food sanctity, and food justice as it relates to human rights, as a critical local and missional priority? It just is not our imagination that the world is more frenetic, more demanding, and more complicated. For a Christian leader concerned about food and food justice as a missional charge, more than ever, there is a need to become informed, educated, invested, and willing to advocate for justice. The politicization of democracy, of food, and human rights as a byproduct of the rush of the six or fewer consolidated multinational corporations—in this case biotechnology, chemicals, monoculture, and

²⁶ Wendell Berry, *Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2009). Wendell Berry, Rachel Carson, Barry Commoner and a host of other writers and thinkers from the 1960s began raising serious concerns about the direction that agriculture was moving.

patented seeds—will in all probability change the landscape of food, food sanctity, and food justice well in to the foreseeable future. Yet, hope remains. Advocacy groups will be discussed as part of Chapter Six, but first two case studies in Chapter Three show more detailed accounts of the broad historical claims posited here.

CHAPTER THREE:
CASE STUDIES

Introduction

Food and faith is truly a complex study that includes global, ecological, sociological, and humanitarian concerns. If human beings and the crops and animals they rely on for sustenance are unable to access clean, nutritious, available, and diverse foods, along with adequate water resources as basic human rights, what are we to do? The evidence suggests that these issues related to food are real and present in North America and around the world. To bear witness and bring credibility to the need for greater awareness and action, this chapter presents three case studies with the purpose of illustrating and amplifying the concerns, while describing advocacy efforts and the impediments and successes from a local, state, and global perspectives.

Case Study One: Hawaiian Islands

Mainland US-Americans view Hawaii as an island paradise with its swaying palms, sand and surf, aqua water, and fragrances of Plumeria and other flowers wafting in the air. Waterfalls cascade into clear pools. Hawaii's rainforests, fresh showers, and nearby fields are loved. Historically famed not only for tourism, but also for its sugar cane, pineapple, coffee, macadamia nut plantations, we carry a romantic notion about the bountiful foods grown on the islands. However, what most are not aware of is that this island paradise is number one in the United States for field-testing and propagation of genetically modified crops. The tiny Hawaiian island of Kauai seems an unlikely ground zero for such, but due to its year-round moderate climate and its position within the

United States with favorable State and Federal support and policy for this technology wherein multinational seed and chemical corporations can grow several crops in one calendar year, it has indeed become a contentious place. Issues are related to research and development, propagation, and spraying of these genetically modified seed plots (land that was abandoned by the sugar and pineapple corporations in pursuit of cheaper labor markets and less environmental oversight).¹

The public is generally kept in the dark about what is being sprayed on the numerous fields surrounding homes, schools, and hospitals, but with the Trade Winds creating drift there are concerns for health and safety. When advocates ask for detailed information about the spraying, including what is used and when it is sprayed, the corporations state that the information is proprietary and to date have been unwilling to disclose what kinds of experimental chemical cocktails are being spraying on these lands. This has created a perfect storm for outrage on the part of activists, consumers, and others worldwide that are fighting similar issues. Consequently, not only on Kauai and the other Hawaiian islands of Molokai, Maui, Big Island, and Oahu, but around the planet, a growing consciousness is raising a collective concern.

The January 2016 Food Justice Summit entitled *Challenging Global Impacts of the Agrochemical Industry*, in which I participated, brought together international advocates, researchers, and activists from Nigeria, Malaysia, Switzerland, Mexico, and

¹ For accounts of American imperialism and land use policies impacting the Hawaiian Islands see Andrea B. Brower, "From Sugar to Monsanto: Today's Occupation of Hawaii by the Agrochemical Oligopoly," *The Hampton Institute*, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.hamptoninstitution.org/sugar-to-monsanto.html>. Also, "SEED, Hawaii 'Our Vision,'" accessed January 29, 2016, <http://hawaiiiseed.org>. Also, Syngenta Corporation <http://www.syngenta.com/>.

the Hawaiian Islands.² The issues presented in tandem with scientific and first person documentation told the stories of indigenous peoples losing their livelihoods, of monoculture crops taking the place of diversity, and in some locations, forced upon the countries and peoples by their own as well as outside governments; of chemical input and GMO monoculture agriculture and loss of livelihood and of health. There were also stories of activists and indigenous people standing strong, supported by other groups from around the world, to stop the assaults on the people, land, and livelihood. It was simultaneously a heartwarming and heartbreaking experience to hear these stories and to see the impact being made both positively as well as negatively.

I interviewed an individual of Hawaiian ancestry and her family on the West Side of Kauai where the majority of the seed testing, spraying, growing, and experimentation on the island occurs. They were willing to share if they remained anonymous. They were fearful of repercussions from community, family, neighbors, and industry. The year-round population of Kauai is only 66,000 people (2008 census) and composed of small communities and scattered homesteading, especially on the West Side. These individuals allegedly had been exposed to dust and chemical overspray for a period of months. They had contacted public health and also received treatment for respiratory distress at the

² Food Justice Summit, “Challenging Global Impacts of the Agricultural Industry.” Sponsored by Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action and Pesticide Action Network (PAN) of North America, Kauai, HI Community College, January 17, 2016. I participated in a food summit at the “Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action and Pesticide Action and Pesticide Action Network North America’s event, “Challenging Global Impacts of the Agrochemical Industry: 2016 Food Justice Summit.” This summit was held January 17, 2016. The four international experts are: Mariann Bassey Orovwuji who is the program manager of Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria; Sarojeni V. Rengamm who is executive director of Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific in Malaysia; Adelita San Vincente Tello is director of “Seeds of Life Foundation” in Mexico; and Eva Schurmann an activist with MultiWatch, a Swiss-based group that monitors international corporations. The purpose of these efforts are two-fold: the first being meeting with experts from these university settings who have accomplished research, have written and who lecture on the issues of human rights, food sanctity and justice. The second is to gain access and exposure to international experts who are advocates for food justice and to learn about the strategies that they have used and found successful in their work.

local hospital. The twenty-one-year old daughter shared with me about the public school in Waimea being evacuated on at least two occasions where she was a student when spraying operations and Trade Winds carried the dust and residue eastward and into the buildings from the fields that are literally within yards of the buildings. Her grandfather and grandmother have experienced chronic upper respiratory issues and they affirmed that this was consistent with the advent of GMO and field spraying, which often occurred several times a day. The family reported that they are “very careful to say much” as several neighboring friends and families work for these agrochemical corporations, which are essentially the only major source of employment, other than some tourism-related jobs now that the sugar and pineapple are no longer produced and processed.³

One of the major corporations using the lands for experimentation and the growing GMO seeds, Syngenta, a biotech company (on lands previously used as sugar cane and pineapple plantations, which, before that, belonged to the Hawaiian people) believes that GMO and chemical inputs will save the world from starvation. They attribute some of the pushback from the public as knee jerk reaction, fueled by “bad science.” It is of note that ten Syngenta workers were hospitalized January 20, 2016 due to overexposure to pesticides sprayed on a plot of their GMO corn. The workers entered the field unauthorized and it was only twenty hours after the application of chlorpyrifos, a restricted agricultural pesticide that the EPA is considering banning, without heeding the authorized twenty-four-hour wait period.⁴

³ Anonymous Interview, interview by author, Waimea, HI, February 10, 2016.

⁴ Christina Smith, “10 Syngenta Employees Sent to Hospital Following Pesticide Use,” *Honolulu Civil Beat*, January 22, 2016, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://naturalsociety.com/10-syngenta-employees-hospital-insecticide-chlorpyrifos-67947/amp/>.

My conversations with Fred Cowell, General Manager Kauai Coffee Company, the largest coffee plantation in the United States, began by telephone regarding a press release from Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) that directly and by association made claims that the extensive report completed about the environmental, human, and air quality impacts of Syngenta and other agrochemical companies on Kauai was suspect. The press release alleged (in this author's reading) that Kauai Coffee Company, by being an agricultural enterprise on the Island, was a "member" of this group. Fact-finding revealed that HCIA is a private not for profit entity made of the five multinational agrochemical giants who research, develop, and produce GMO seeds on the Islands. Mr. Cowell assured me that his company is not associated with, nor belongs to HCIA: "No we're not a member of HCIA."⁵

Mr. Cowell shared with me the history of the land now in coffee production. The land that his company has been developing into a world class coffee plantation was land previously used for the production of sugar cane and pineapple until those corporations pulled out and left for other places in the world with more opportunities for cheaper labor and even fewer environmental standards. Consequently, over the past thirty years, as coffee has come into production, much of the workforce and surrounding communities have been in a process of "reeducation" about land stewardship, including cover crop strategies that include grasses, nitrogen fixing legumes and forbs. Mr. Cowell shared that the reeducation of the workers and communities about the importance of "green crops" (meaning minimal pesticide, herbicide and "clean") is a new concept for most of the

⁵ Frederick Cowell, telephone interview and email correspondence with author, March 11, 2016.

workers.⁶ This led me to think about the dynamics of a population of workers who worked, as their families had before them, on the sugar and pineapple plantations and in the mills producing the end product and then, in a flash, the jobs disappeared and much of the agricultural land lay fallow until finally the Hawaii Department of Agriculture encouraged the GMO research and chemical companies to come to Hawaii. Thus jobs current jobs at least provide employment for some. Consequently, there is a fine line for government, advocates, workers, and companies to walk, especially with the history of imperialism.

Finally, and for the purpose of this dissertation, it is of note that a joint fact-finding group of experts from science, chemistry, agriculture, environment, and health was pulled together—including scientists and experts from the agrochemical corporations—to evaluate existing studies to determine whether pesticide harms health and environment. Activists, as well as the seed industry, immediately responded to the draft report by the seed industry. This draft report was released March 2016 and if anything the polarization has only grown and become even more contentious.⁷

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ A County and State funded expert panel worked over a 12-month period to review, research, explore issues and present a fact finding report. To date it is in draft for public comment. To see the full report “Joint Fact Finding Study Group Genetically Modified Crops and Pesticides on Kauai (Draft for Discussion and Signature on March 7th, 2016.” <http://www.accord3.com/docs/GM-Pesticides/JFFKauai-Charter.pdf> For the corporate seed industry response see... The push back from all sides continues to fracture and polarize. For the full report see (HICA) Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (Seed industry feedback on the Kauai joint fact finding group) <http://www.bettercropshawaii.com/home>. (Note this organization is a PNP which represents the interests of the five largest global agrochemical corporations. Its member companies are BASF, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Monsanto, and Syngenta)(from their web site).

Policies and Impacts

Although it is outside the scope of this dissertation to attempt to complete an in-depth analysis related to the myriad politics, governmental policies and interventions, posturing, embedding of corporate insiders in to all aspects of US Government such as Trade, United States Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection and more; suffice to say that reports from highly regarded governmental insiders, researchers, reporters, and advocate groups, all point to a government that increasingly bids to the multinational and global corporations, and that the agrichemical and big food corporations are no exception.⁸ Further, many as the new American Imperialism see Transpacific Partnership Pact (TPP) with Fast Track and ISDS (Investor Dispute process) which works outside of countries' legal systems. With these trade agreements, corporations are anticipated to work around any existing sovereign nations laws, rules and regulations and can sue if the given nations' laws, rules, and regulations either now or in the future, keep them from creating profit.

Winds of Positive Change?

The vast consumer movements in the United States and Canada demanding and promoting the labeling of food have been fought against by The Grocer's Manufacturing

⁸ See Jason Louv, *Monsanto Vs. The World* (Lexington, KY: Ultraculture Press, 2013); *A Generation in Jeopardy: How Pesticides are Undermining our Children's Health and Intelligence* (Oakland, CA: Pesticide Action Network North America, 2012); Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium: Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, no. 7-458, 2013); Caroline Leaf, *Think & Eat Yourself Smart: A Neuroscientific Approach to a Sharper Mind and Healthier Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016). This newly released and deeply researched book encapsulates some of the issues and concerns. See Chapter Six "Who Rules the Economic Roost," 60–66; Chapter Seven "The Genetic Elephant in the Room," 67–80; and research cites and notes 268–277); and David K and P. B. Thompson, eds. *What Can Nanotechnology Learn from Biotechnology? Social and Ethical Lessons for Nanoscience from the Debate over Agrifood Biotechnology and GMOs* (Burlington, MA: Academic Press, 2008).

Association (GMA) and millions of dollars have been spent to defeat labeling initiatives in states where the citizens have fought to have initiatives passed, as in California, Colorado, Oregon, and Washington. For whatever reasons, one thing remains clear: there is clearly a deepening politicization of food, food quality, and even the right for consumers to know what is in the foods they consume by the food manufacturing giants who are largely responsible for creating MAD (Modern American Diet) consisting of highly processed foods, sugars, chemicals, food coloring, and high fructose corn syrup, much of which contains GMO high fructose corn syrup, GMO soy, GMO corn, and other byproducts.

The fight to control food and patenting of seeds comes to a head from a 1980 Supreme Court of the United States landmark (SCOTUS) decision on a 5-4 vote granting Monsanto the right to patent a living organism creating a proprietary environment such that outside and independent research is not allowed to be conducted on these products as they come to market to be fed to the populace because it is proprietary; and on to Transpacific Partnership Pact (TPP) where these global corporations sit in on the decision-making; this and much more calls at least for vigilance.⁹ Connecting the dots requires that advocates, activists, and Christian leaders understand the interconnectedness and complexities of food, food sanctity, security, diversity, and food as a human right.

⁹ To provide a balanced view of these hotbed issues, some resources are Steven Drucker, *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth* (Salt Lake City: UT, Clear Water Press: 2015); Jonathan A. Moo and Robert S. White, *Let Creation Rejoice: Biblical Hope and Ecological Crisis* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press: 2014); Edwin H. Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* (New York: Seabury Books: 2007); and Marion Nestle, *Safe Food: The Politics of Food Safety* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010). Such as among the global corporations, some world governments and their political leadership including the United States (especially concerning the proliferation of genetically modified seeds and chemical inputs and official USA sanctions for worldwide expansion of monoculture agribusiness).

Case Study Two: Pope Francis, A Leader in Times of Global Ecological and Human Crisis

Why does Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio (DOB December 17, 1936) and elected the 266th pope of the Roman Catholic Church March 2013, seem to be such a lightning rod for outpourings of deep love, respect, and admiration worldwide by Catholics and non-Catholics alike on one hand, and as a generator of deep dissent, criticism, and denial on the other hand?

Is this worldwide spiritual leader and activist the “canary in the coalmine” making desperate clarion call for humankind in this era of unfettered globalized capitalism, imperialism, and human rights violations perpetuated on the poorest, most disenfranchised, and least among us? “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”¹⁰

About Jorge Mario Bergoglio who was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in his biography on the Pope, Matthew E. Bunson writes,

Francis is the pope of many “firsts” including being the first pope from the Americas; the first Jesuit pope; and the first pope to choose the name of Italy’s most famous saint, St. Francis of Assisi. He is the son of an immigrant railway worker and sibling of four. As a young man in his formative years he was an active, social young man who trained to be a chemist before pursuing a religious vocation. He is a Jesuit priest and beloved spiritual director who even as archbishop of Buenos Aires was referred to as Father Jorge. (“Papa Jorge”). He is an outspoken leader who experienced first hand the challenges of a society ravaged by war, economic despair, and cultural unrest. A street priest at heart with a deep love for people and a pastor’s touch. He teaches in word and deed the truths of the church and God’s merciful love.¹¹

¹⁰ Matt. 25:40 (NIV).

¹¹ Matthew E. Bunson, *Pope Francis* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2013), back cover.

The world is ready for a solid, knowledgeable and credible Christian spiritual leader. There are beginning to be signs that the global collective consciousness accepts and are adopting his unassuming yet outspoken and passionate pleas? This person of the cloth, is it now his time to lead by thought, word, and deed the way out and up for this troubled world? In the forward to *Pope Francis*, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, offers an intriguing look behind the scenes at the Petrine ministry called the papacy.¹² Here, Cardinal O'Malley shares some insight into the mind, manner, and leadership of Pope Francis:

Pope Francis is the first pope from the American hemisphere and, being Hispanic, he is from a part of the world where almost half of all Catholics reside... One of the themes of Francis's life is the call to rebuild the Church, which is a call to reform, and to deepen our conversion to the Lord. Another theme would be Francis's theme of universal brotherhood; of making a world where we are brothers and sisters to each other. St Francis, (of Assisi) of course, saw himself as a brother to all creation and to everyone.¹³

Pope Francis is by very nature, and by virtue of Jesuit training and working in Argentina, especially with liberation theology, a change agent. St. Ignatius Loyola founded the Society of Jesus in 1534, better known as the Jesuits. "Today the Jesuits are the largest single religious order in the world, with approximately 19,000 priests and brothers working in 112 countries. The Jesuits have produced 42 canonized saints, 137 blessed, and now, in Francis, their first Pope."¹⁴

To further understand the spiritual formation of Pope Francis and especially serving the poor, dispossessed, disenfranchised, and abused we must look to the

¹² Thomas J. Craughwell, Forward by Cardinal Sean O'Malley, *Pope Francis: The Pope from the End of the Earth* (Charlotte, NC: Saint Benedict Press, LLC, 2013).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 15–17.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 86. The Jesuits arrived in what is now Argentina in 1573.

experiences of the early 1960s in South America and Argentina. Since the 1960s, liberation theology had been gaining ground in Latin America and many Latin American Jesuits took it up in their ministries especially to the poor and disenfranchised. Craughwell explains that generally in liberation theology, “They put forward the idea that Jesus Christ came into the world to deliver, or liberate, the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized from economic, social, and political injustice... The Church and the liberation theologians however stood on common ground when it came to their dedication to the poor and the oppressed.”¹⁵

A military junta seized power in Argentina... known as the “Dirty War” because it was clandestine and approximately 30,000 people “disappeared.” Two Jesuit Priests who were supportive of liberation theology, Father Orlano Yorio, S.J. and Father Franz Jalics, S.J. were operating a ministry for the poor in Buenos Aires.” The Junta captured, tortured, and murdered these two priests. Allegations arose that Bergoglio had expelled the priests from the Jesuit order and handed them over to the junta. This has been proven to be unfounded but served as a painful and formative time for Bergoglio.¹⁶

When the previous (and still living) Pope Benedict chose to resign officially due to infirmities exacerbated by age, many were shocked and surprised. The search for a new pope was underscored by a myriad of expressed leadership needs: resolution and management of the sex abuse crisis rocking the Church; dealing with the aggressive secularism in Europe and North America; pastoral sensitivity and leadership regarding dissident Catholics calling for women priests, abortion and contraception on demand; reaching out to the Third World; continuing evangelization around the world; and

¹⁵ Ibid., 94.

¹⁶ Ibid., 95–101.

continuing to focus the Church's ministry to the poor, disenfranchised, hungry and needy.¹⁷

Elisabetta Pique, a correspondent in Italy and the Vatican for *La Nacion*, Argentina's leading newspaper, has known Cardinal Bergoglio since 1999. Pique, who called him "Padre Jorge," has had a long time access and personal friendship with Pope Francis. In her book *Life and revolution Francis: A Biography of Jorge Bergoglio*, she portrays this spiritual leader from an intimate and in-depth freshness and knowledge. She says Pope Francis is "Unpredictable, inscrutable, and with clear ideas and strong nerves, Bergoglio goes on collecting enemies."¹⁸

It is clear that Pope Francis' leadership styles have changed and become more sophisticated and honed over time, being adept and always thinking about and having a clear vision of the end game. Within the Church in Rome, it appears that a poorly kept secret over the years was about the arrogance that lies with historic concentrations of power. Roman centralization has a certain way of doing business for literally centuries, and Argentine bishops tell of having suffered during many visits to the Holy See, "excluding the kind and respectful attitude of the then Cardinal Ratzinger."¹⁹

With Pope Francis in the lead, the Vatican and the world of Catholicism have had to make changes, and some more rapidly than comfortable. Pique points out "No, Francis's changes are not just cosmetic... 'It's as if what's happening is a sex change,' a

¹⁷ Ibid., 42–54.

¹⁸ Elisabetta Pique, *Pope Francis Life and Revolution: A Biography of Jorge Bergoglio* (Chicago: Loyola Press, English Edition, 2014), 125.

¹⁸ Craughwell, *Pope Francis*, 15–17.

¹⁹ Pique, *Pope Francis Life and Revolution*, 132.

European monsignor confesses to me one day, opening his eyes wide and raising his eyebrows while referring to significant changes made in such a short time.”²⁰ Pique goes on to note that not only is the Pope adept at adjusting leadership to meet the needs but that he is also strategic and skillful in leading by example. He is a Pope who is willing and able to break from traditions and for strategic purposes: “During Mass initiating the pontificate, an Argentine *cartonero* (cardboard collector), Serigo Sanchez, occupies a post of privilege next to heads of state and government. This is a new message from Pope Francis to the rest of the world.”²¹

Pique points out that “[Francis] Having always had excellent relations with the other religious communities, mainly the Jewish and Muslim communities, from his years as Archbishop Primate of Buenos Aires, Pope Francis confirms that he intends to continue on this path.”²² Pope Francis is a Christian leader of one of the largest organizations in the world and he continues to seek genuine input on the thorniest issues facing the Church such as communion and remarriages. An example is this response he shared with reporters when queried about communion: “When we talk communion, we have to ask ourselves about the nature of the Eucharist. Is the Eucharist just for the elite, the saintly spiritual elite, or is it also for those who are struggling to be better people and who want to grow?”²³ Pope Francis asks questions, opens dialogue, and seeks advice and advisors from near and far to weigh in on the substantive issues.

²⁰ Ibid.,181.

²¹ Ibid., 187.

²² Ibid., 189.

²³ Ibid., 297.

Chapter 17 of the highly regarded biography *Pope Francis: The Struggle for the Soul of Catholicism* by Paul Vallely, an internationally renowned commentator of religion, ethics, and society, aptly describes the Pope as being perceived as a Christian leader with deep personal integrity. Pope Francis is also a pragmatist, and he and his team deftly do their homework in preparation for State visits. It is of note, for example, that he and his staff appeared to be more than able to stand up to Barack Obama, as revealed at the 2015 White House meeting,

over the issue of poverty and inequality, at home and around the world, on which the Pope was well to the left of the President. That was clear from the searing criticisms of global capitalism contained in the copy of Francis' manifesto *Evangelii Gaudium* that he gave Obama to take away. The President took the denunciation of a global economic justice system that excludes the poor and said he would keep it in the Oval Office to read when he was feeling frustrated.²⁴

“As his papacy entered its third year the old debate whether Pope Francis was a conservative or a liberal began to look irrelevant. What is emerging is that this Pope is orthodox on doctrine but revolutionary in his application of it. He put the Gospel-and a vividly merciful expression of it-before dogma.”²⁵ Pope Francis has shown himself to be both politician and prophet: “It is characteristic of both prophets and politicians that they look forward rather than back.”²⁶

It should come as no surprise that Pope Francis and many other leaders and citizens from South America have a jaundiced eye towards globalization and unfettered capitalism due to their contemporary experiences and previous experiences from at least the 1960s in dealings with US-American/North American expansionism and imperialism.

²⁴ Paul Vallely, *Pope Francis: The Struggle for the Soul of Catholicism* (New York: Bloomsbury, USA, 2015), 391.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 399.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 403.

The term “Liberation Theology,” often associated with the Catholic Church’s clergy working and living in Central and South America, emphasizes a concern for the liberation of the oppressed. Aggressive outside influences impacting State decision-making and political outcomes including resource extraction, displacement of indigenous people, and a growing disenfranchisement and abuse of the poor and other marginalized are features.²⁷

Pope Francis has been clear about his disdain for the “throwaway culture” that incorporates everything from the waste of food to the loss of dignity of old people, the poor and others no longer considered worthy either due to depletion of the resources or commodification of livelihood. Vallely writes,

Previous Popes, including John Paul II and Benedict XVI, had included similar condemnations of unregulated capitalism in their social encyclicals, though John Paul in particular had included caveats about the need to respect wealth creation...But Pope Francis’s predecessors had not provoked major Catholic businessmen to threaten to withhold big donations from the Church as they did with Francis...But Francis will not let the rich off the hook on economics. What they don’t like about Francis is that he takes this stuff seriously.²⁸

Some United States conservative commentators, right-wing philosophers, conservative business magazines, politicians, and columnists aggressively came out swinging even prior to the release of Pope Francis’ encyclical on ecology and the environment, *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home: Encyclical Letter*. After the surprise and shock which they apparently received when reading Pope Francis’ manifesto *Evangelii Gaudium*, which was in part a condemnation of capitalism, they began saying things such as, “This Pope does not understand US capitalism; that he came from corrupt Argentina

²⁷ See previous pages 61–63, Pope Francis and description of Liberation Theology.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 404–405.

and not a ‘clean’ place of business like the US; that he is anti-American; that he is egotistical and is ignorant of the facts.” Frankly, this was to be expected as it appears that the United States has been completely overtaken by unfettered global capitalism including politically and public policy wise.”²⁹ As a Christian leader, Pope Francis is confident of what he intends to communicate, why, and for what proposed outcomes, and the consequences and pushback that will likely come. This is a Christian leader who operates with experience, with fortitude, with Godly mission. This is a holy leader who is not afraid of conflict and, indeed, welcomes it as a necessary artifact to get people to think, pray, and take action. Pope Francis is a model of advocacy and activism in the Christian community.

Pope Francis’ Leadership

In reviewing and researching leadership attributes for Christian leadership to emulate as it relates to food and faith, the book by Efrain Agosto, entitled *Servant Leadership: Jesus & Paul*, could have used Pope Francis as an illustration of a servant leader. The parallel of Pope Francis and John the Baptist’s leadership style and attributes, and their concerns and actions for the poor, reflect this. It speaks to why we need and must advocate for and have activists’ hearts, and that it is not about politics this caring for the poor and the outcast, not in Jesus’ time and not now.³⁰

Theologian Gerry Sittser and other works on faith and leadership reflect Pope Francis’ spiritual formation influences, spiritual theology, and historical influences. In the forward to Sittser’s book, *Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early*

²⁹ Ibid., 406–409.

³⁰ Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press. 2005), 30–35.

Martyrs to Modern Missionaries, by Eugene Peterson, Peterson says, “Without a cultivated memory we live from hand to mouth on fad and novelty. But Christians don’t sprint out of the starting blocks in each generation in a race for heaven. We are on a relay team. We need to know these members of our family who lived lives similar to what we are living and lived them well.”³¹ This is a powerful description and a reminder for us as well as others we work with that we are a part of the story and that the story continues.

In *Life in the Spirit’s* chapter titled “Spiritual Formation and the Sanctity of Life,”

David Gushee writes:

A socially disengaged spirituality or Christianity is inconceivable and inexcusable. Just me and Jesus, growing closer all the time, while the world suffers outside my field of vision, is a way of being Christian that can flow only from cloistered privilege...

I believe in a Christian spirituality rooted in two core convictions and obedient to two core commands. The first of these convictions is that God is the majestic, holy, just and loving God who created and rules the universe. The second is that the human being, created, sustained and redeemed by God in Christ, is infinitely sacred in God’s sight.

...Jesus’ teaching of the Great Judgment parable, in Matthew 25 closes the loop between these convictions and commands. He says that as we treat our fellow human beings, especially our most wretched, vulnerable and needy neighbors, so we treat the Son of Man, Jesus. In that terrifying parable, eternal judgment is depicted as hinging on whether we love our suffering neighbor and thereby love Christ himself.³²

If we were to sit around a table together with Pope Francis and ask him to reflect on these comments by Gushee, no doubt Francis would unequivocally agree that Christianity is active not passive.

³¹ Gerald L. Sittser, *Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early Martyrs to Modern Missionaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2007), 10.

³² Jeffery P. Greenman and George Kalantzis, eds., *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 213–15.

The principles of ethical leadership are to respect and serve others with justness, honesty, and community building. The attributes encompassing ethical Christian leadership tie closely to Pope Francis and his Christian leadership. It is tightly woven with advocacy, activism, and simply doing the right thing for our brothers and sisters, whoever they are and wherever they live.

This author submits that nothing is inherently wrong with the concept of capitalism, but problems arise when people take advantage of and divert social and societal assets for personal use. Pope Francis seems to be attempting to address two types of capitalism, the first being extractive and the other inclusive. In the United States and globally, we are in a struggle between these two forms of capitalism, each of which is self-reinforcing. In extractive capitalism the government tends to protect the interests of the wealthy and the power of the wealthy elites, granting them monopolies and rights while allowing exploitation of the working class. As a country, the United States has a history of imperialism and expansionism (Hawaii for example, being taken over by the United States, business interests, and overthrowing a sovereign nation). Inclusive capitalism tends to be more egalitarian where hard work, initiative, and innovation is rewarded and the government breaks up monopolies and acts to safeguard the public welfare and works to ensure that the market is fair for all. We need ethical decision-making that begins with questions such as: Is this moral, right, ethical and helpful? Pope Francis clearly takes on the wrongs and stands up for the marginalized.³³

³³ Ibid., 39–43. “It is worthwhile to note that Paul contrasts *Spirit* and *flesh* not Spirit and body... To live the Christian life is to live under the impulse of the Spirit, which converts us to the way of Christ.”

**Case Study Three:
“World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity—A Second Notice”³⁴**

The third case study is global in nature. To reflect and elaborate on the topic “Food and Faith: Making Food and Eating Choices Based on Evidence and Faith,” it would be remiss not to include the concerns shared by The Union of Concerned Scientists. This organization was established in 1969; current membership stands at 200,000, according to their website.³⁵

The Union of Concerned Scientists’ stated mission reads: “The Union of Concerned Scientists puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.”³⁶ Note independent research regarding food, genetically modified organisms, the increasing reliance on pesticides, herbicides, and monoculture. Unsustainable agriculture, for example, has in large part been supported by corporate funded *research* with seemingly little independent, third party analysis or unbiased peer review.

The juxtaposition of corporate agribusiness, political influence, lobbying, and placements of corporate insiders into government positions responsible for health, safety and independent evaluations has created a dearth of public policy based on little solid

³⁴ William J. Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Thomas M. Newsome, Mauro Galettie, Mohammed Alamgir, Eileen Crist, Mahmoud I. Mahmoud, and William F. Laurance, “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice,” *BioScience* 20, no. 10 (2017): 1–3, accessed December 12, 2017, <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article-abstract/doi/10.1093/biosci/bix125/4605229>.

³⁵ The Union of Concerned Scientists website can be accessed at <https://www.ucons.org>. This organization was founded by students and professors at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Accessed February 11, 2018.

³⁶ “The Union of Concerned Scientists,” accessed February 11, 2018, <https://www.ucons.org>.

evidence is perceived as problematic. Independent research such as was provided over the years by land grant institutions and funded by public dollars has shifted to corporate contributions. This is an example of a public policy issue for which an organization such as The Union of Concerned Scientists should be heard and their input sought before public policy is set.

One of the major initiatives addressed by The Union of Concerned Scientists is food and agriculture. Their evidence shows that the US food system is failing in many ways, including unsustainable industrial scale agricultural practices. US government policies that subsidize crops used to produce highly processed and unhealthy foods, which in turn create a health crisis including diabetes, heart disease and obesity. They cite sustainable practices, stewardship, and the need to strengthen healthy farm policy.

These world scientists published and widely distributed an appeal entitled “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice” in November 2017.³⁷ This is the second prediction and a follow up to the November 1992 warning. It too was written as a plea to the world including policy makers and all citizens/stakeholders in the future of life. Anyone concerned about the future of food, water, air, and soil should study these scientists’ facts, figures, research, and recommendations. These issues are all about food and faith and should be decided by those with the deepest wisdom, not the deepest pockets.

Thinking About Globalization from Two Sides

Though globalization is most often thought about as economy, trade, politics, and corporations, Richard Rohr of the Center for Action and Contemplation states, “I believe

³⁷ For the complete article please see Appendix C.

that what some refer to as the ‘emerging church’ is a movement of the Holy Spirit... Spiritual globalization is allowing churches worldwide to profit from these breakthroughs at approximately the same time, which in itself is a new kind of reformation!”³⁸

Globalization often has the connotation of outside influences, especially extraction activities irrespective of the local populous and often indigenous peoples want, needs, or input is ignored. Consideration for the greater good, collateral damage, and systemic impacts are often ignored. For example, in his *Encyclical Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis describes the Rio Declaration of 1992, which is a precautionary principle:

This precautionary principle makes it possible to protect those who are most vulnerable and whose ability to defend their interests and to assemble incontrovertible evidence is limited. If objective information suggests that serious and irreversible damage may result, a project should be halted or modified, even in the absence of indisputable proof. Here the burden of proof is effectively reversed, since in such cases objective and conclusive demonstrations will have to be brought forward to demonstrate that the proposed activity will not cause serious harm to the environment or to those who inhabit it... This does not mean being opposed to any technological innovations which can bring about an improvement in the quality of life. But it does mean that profit cannot be the sole criterion to be taken into account...³⁹

This precautionary principle was once applied in the United States to almost everything consumable or in use by the public.⁴⁰ This is no longer the case. A local, regional, national, and global protocol embracing these principles is long overdue. This principle does not necessarily mean “zero growth or development,” but it does reflect a responsibility for taking in to consideration the impacts of corporate decision making

³⁸ Richard Rohr, “The Emerging Church: Beyond Fight or Flight,” *Radical Grace* 21, no 4 (2008), accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.meditations@cac.org>. Time will tell if this breakthrough will lead to a strong social justice agenda such as has been a hallmark of some of the missional efforts of the Roman Catholic Church, especially South America.

³⁹ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’ : On Care For Our Common Home* (Huntington, IN: On Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2015), 185, 186–187, and 121–123.

⁴⁰ See Glossary for a description of precautionary principle.

fully considering more than just profit, power, and control. This is an ethical, political, corporate, and universal need.

Conclusion

Food is our sustenance, and food is political. The dynamics of food, food safety, diversity, availability, sanctity, and food as a human right has rapidly changed with the dynamics of increased globalization, commodification, production becoming industrialized agriculture with heavy inputs of patented seeds (life itself) genetically modified (GMO) technology and chemicals ever more powerful to combat plant insects and diseases; coupled with the loss of diversification not only in North America but literally around the world.⁴¹ As Christian leaders, servants, advocates and activists, how should we think about these dynamic changes? Should we care? Why is it important?

Here we begin to grasp the magnitude and seriousness of food and food justice issues with a case study regarding impacts on the Island of Kauai, Hawaii as well as globally as articulated by a cadre of international food justice activists and experts who participated in the Food Justice Summit there in January 2016. A case is made that food justice issues are issues Christian leaders need to research, understand, and advocate. There is too much at stake for humankind and changes are occurring at such a rapid pace that ignoring and/or inaction is not a viable option. Pope Francis, as a spiritual leader, calls for care of this world and of each other. His Encyclical Letter '*Laudatio Si*' *On Care*

⁴¹ There is a plethora of research, websites, activist organizations, books and articles regarding these issues. For some current accounts see Steven M. Drucker, *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth* (Salt Lake City, UT: Clear River Press, 2015); Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care For Our Common Home* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Inc. U.S., 2015); Barbara A.B. Patterson and Shirley M. Banks, "Christianity and Food: Recently Scholarly Trends," in *Religion Compass* 7, nos. 10, 11, ISSN 1749-8171, (2013): 433 and Patrick T. McCormick, *A Banqueter's Guide to the All-Night Soup Kitchen of the Kingdom of God* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004).

for Our Common Home, 2015 is impactful, urgent and so critical because he calls to *all of us*, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, to look at and to take action and it is a call for action with deep consequential warnings.

The calls of scientists from around the globe, the Union of Concerned Scientists, sound an alarm for all to hear and respond to. In some ways this is quite similar to the efforts to get the world's attention by Pope Francis. Pope Francis' encyclical on ecology and the environment, *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home: Encyclical Letter*⁴² and Pope Francis' manifesto *Evangelii Gaudium*⁴³ provide the world with diverse and yet similar and clear warnings and pleadings for our earth and food, whether from a scientific construct or from a spiritual and theological framework. The questions we must ask are "What are we to do with these warnings?" and "What can we as Christians and citizens do?"

I contend that as Christian leaders, we have a responsibility to be keenly aware of the rapidly changing corporate and cultural shifts as it relates to food. I suggest that Christian leaders on behalf of those we serve, should consider expanding our framework and thinking about human rights and social justice ministries to include food safety, food sanctity, availability, and diversity. Knowing how to research, understand, communicate, and stay on top of this rapidly changing landscape is essential. A unified and redemptive approach is imperative to offset deep levels of mistrust that abounds at every level of the process. The issue is not just how to feed the multitudes, but also what to feed them, how to distribute food, how to advocate on a local, community, state, national and

⁴² Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*.

⁴³ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium: Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World* no. 7 (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013), 7–458.

international levels, and how to be effective servants of Jesus Christ in the process. What do the Bible and biblical scholars have to say? Chapter Four is an attempt to take another step forward by looking at the biblical implications as well as the thinking of some well-versed contemporary theologians and scholars about food—especially in our narrative identity and culture as followers of Christ.

CHAPTER FOUR:
BIBLICAL BASIS OF FOOD SANCTITY, AVAILABILITY,
AND AS A GIFT FROM GOD

Introduction

What is food? Food is a gift. In fact, food is the *first* gift of God. In one sense, all things from God's good hands are gifts, and food is somehow unique. Genesis 1:29 describes God's gift of food: "Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.'"¹

Throughout the Bible, food and faith are inseparable. Food represents love manifested; it represents community, ritual, gatherings, fellowship, and hospitality. The Bible also instructs us how to be good stewards of God's earth. This chapter explores some pertinent biblical texts and their relationship to food, faith, and land that reveal God's intent for humans to employ in exercising His will in the stewardship of these God-given precious resources. God's will and intent for how humans interrelate with food and land through faith is established in the historical background from the Creation narrative and continuing through the Old Testament writings. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it."² This essential background is important to this dissertation in that the Scriptures reveal God's intent for humans in their relationship with food land and how faith should drive our confidence in what is best for our lives according to God's plan. In this light, with specific regard to faith, food, and land, appreciation and understanding are often neglected for how God

¹ Gen. 1:29.

² Gen. 2:15 (ESV).

sees us using food and land resources to the betterment of our lives and the lives of our neighbors around the world. In fact, taken as a whole, Scripture invites us to participate in creating health:

Master Creator designed the heavens and earth, land, water cycles of light and dark, plants and animals in a magnificent array and seasonal cadence. And at the apex, God fashioned a living image of God's own self to be in relationship with God and all that had been created—a magnificent human body fashioned from the very soil God spoke into existence, into whom God breathed life placed in a microcosm of the larger earth, the Garden of Eden—a fertile training ground. For humans, thus begins the discovery of all things sensory, relational, and spiritual in a wholly and holy fashion with the need to nurture the body with delicious and savory flavors, textures, relationships with God and animals while learning to steward and care for all that was given. Furthermore, The Jewish tradition of Sabbath is at the center of the relationship between God, humankind, food and land; at its very genesis and in its rhythm, this relationship between humankind, food and land originally established by God, was sanctified in the Garden of Eden.³

A Theology of Food and Eating:

The Relationship Between God, Humankind, Food, and Land

Adam was given stewardship over the lands to manage all that grew and lived in the garden. Brunner, Butler, and Swoboda in their book, *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology*, write,

...To be a keeper carries the notion of care and watchfulness, of being charged with a responsibility. Earthkeeping too is just such a responsibility... After Adam was created, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep (*shamar*) it (Gen. 2:15)... Earthkeeping springs from grace: we keep because God first kept (and keeps) us.... Humanity was not given the Earth to possess; rather Adam and Eve were given the divine responsibility of caring for (tending and keeping) the land... As humans, our primary vocation is taking care of-keeping-what belongs to God for the mutual flourishing of all life.⁴

³ Ibid., 45. Wirzba points out that the Sabbath on the seventh day, not the creation of man, reflects the climax of creation.

⁴ Daniel L. Brunner, Jennifer L. Butler, and A.J. Swoboda, *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology: Foundations in Scripture, Theology, History, and Praxis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 25–27.

In the beginning of human history, God granted the vegetable world for food to humans, with one exception:⁵ “Then God said, ‘I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.’”⁶ God’s exception was very simple and straightforward: “But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”⁷ In light of the sin of disobedience and subsequent fall of Adam and Eve, God’s intent for humans’ relationship with food and land stewardship in the Garden of Eden was obscured, and due to the disobedience of breaking relationship with God, they were banished. The first human’s sin of disobedience was the commencement of the adulterization of both food and land from that day forward. As a result of their sinful actions, Adam and Eve were banned from the Garden of Eden, never to return there again. Their sinful acts commenced the broken relationship between them and God, food, land, and faith. As a consequence of their sin, they would now have to toil and sweat, fight the weeds, and eat animals.

Animals for food was probably known to the antediluvian generation, however, God gave specific laws to Noah after the flood, articulating various foods to be used in the patriarchal age. Consider the following verses for example:

So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. “Quick,” he said, “get three seahs[fn] of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread.” Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it.

⁵ “Food,” Dictionaries – Easton’s Bible Dictionary - Food, accessed November 21, 2017, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/food/>.

⁶ Gen. 1:29.

⁷ Gen. 2:17.

He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.⁸

Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright.⁹

Now then, get your equipment—your quiver and bow—and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me. Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die.¹⁰

Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be, then do this: Put some of the best products of the land in your bags and take them down to the man as a gift—a little balm and a little honey, some spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds.¹¹

When the Israelites were in Egypt, although bonded by over 400 years of slavery, God gave them, through the Egyptians, wonderful food. The Bible documents this with following verses:

The Israelites said to them, “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.¹²

We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic.¹³

With the Israelites’ food paradigm established in Egypt, they were taught to thrive and their population grew in Egypt. And with a great paradigm shift from bondage of the Egyptian’s provision to freedom, learning to trust in God’s provision, they also experienced a profound shift in the food that they ate. This paradigm shift is evidenced by

⁸ Gen. 18:6–8.

⁹ Gen. 25:34.

¹⁰ Gen. 27:3–4.

¹¹ Gen. 43:11.

¹² Exod. 16–3.

¹³ Num. 11–5.

the fact that there was no food in the desert that could be harvested, and it was not physically possible to carry a food supply for forty years. God miraculously supplied manna that fell from heaven every evening except on the Sabbath, during the forty-year period that followed the Exodus:

Then the LORD said to Moses, I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days. So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we that you should grumble against us?" Moses also said, "You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD."¹⁴

Although manna was sufficient to sustain the Israelites from a family perspective, they were disgruntled and indignant in dealing with God because of the sharp contrast provided when compared to their rich diet in Egypt. Then Moses told Aaron, "Say to the entire Israelite community, 'Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'"¹⁵

The Bible documents this as follows: "The Lord said to Moses, I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, at twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God. That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp."¹⁶

¹⁴ Exod. 16: 4–8.

¹⁵ Exod. 16:9.

¹⁶ Exod. 16:11–13.

Regarding the food of the Israelites in Egypt, see Exodus 16:3. In the wilderness their ordinary food was miraculously supplied in the manna. They had also quail. Genesis provides specificity for the Israelites as to dietary expectations:¹⁷

The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being.¹⁸

As a result of God's direction in the Law of Moses, there are special regulations as to the animals to be used for food. Because of the importance to food sanctity of these verses, the entirety of Leviticus, Chapter Eleven is provided in Appendix A. The Jews were also forbidden to use as food anything that had been consecrated to idols,¹⁹ or animals that had died of disease or had been torn by wild beasts,²⁰ as well as other restrictions.²¹ But beyond these restrictions they were given a large grant from God.²²

Food was prepared for use in various ways. The cereals were sometimes eaten without any preparation. Vegetables were cooked by boiling,²³ and thus also other articles of food were prepared for use.²⁴ Food was also prepared by roasting.²⁵

¹⁷ Num. 11:31. Also "Food," Dictionaries - Easton's Bible Dictionary - Food, accessed November 21, 2017, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/food/>.

¹⁸ Gen. 9: 2–5.

¹⁹ Exod. 34:15.

²⁰ Exod. 22:31; Lev. 22:8.

²¹ Exod. 23:19, 29:13–22; Lev. 3:4–9, 9:18–19, 22:8; and Deut. 14:21.

²² Lev. 23:14; Deut. 23:25; 2 Kings 4:42. Also, "Food," Dictionaries - Easton's Bible Dictionary – Food.

²³ Gen. 4:38–39, 25:30, 25:34.

Biblical history and foundation is important to this dissertation in that it establishes God's design and intent for human's relationship with food, land, and faith and also serves as a launching platform to consider the way Christians deal with food, land, and faith in our society today. Agriculture, food, and faith appear in the Old and New Testaments time and again. Written by people of a deeply agricultural society, the stories tell of farmers, shepherds, agriculture, and labor.²⁶ God's plan and intent for sanctity of the land and food is well developed and established by God at creation, through sociological history up to the present age.

Theology of Hospitality

The virtue of hospitality plays a central role in biblical ethics and is the virtuous environment that God exhorted the Israelites and early Christians to practice.²⁷ God covenants with His people and communicates this virtue of hospitality first through scriptural references and then in His relationship with His people as seen with Abraham²⁸ and then again with early church leaders.²⁹ This covenant between divine and human, in other words, can be described as a partnership between the theocentric and the anthropocentric.³⁰ This covenantal perspective changes everything. "The earth is the

²⁴ Gen 27:4; Prov. 23:3; Ezek. 24:10; Luke 24:42; John 21:9.

²⁵ Exod. 12:8; Lev. 2:14. Also, "Food," Dictionaries - Easton's Bible Dictionary – Food.

²⁶ Norman Wirzba, *Food & Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 132.

²⁷ Rodney K. Duke, "Hospitality," *Bible Study Tools*, 2017, accessed December 7, 2011, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/hospitality.html>.

²⁸ Gen. 18: 2–8.

²⁹ 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8.

³⁰ Ps. 24.1.

Lord's and everything in it" and we are invited as God's stewards to care for it. It is not ours to use and waste as we wish.³¹ One writer claims, "As in the spiritual realm, so it should be in the material realm; that we might sow and water, but God gives growth."³²

In the first century, responses to this covenant of hospitality took several forms and included the humble and gracious reception of travelers into one's home for food, lodging, and protection,³³ permitting the alienated person to harvest the corners of one's fields (gleaning)³⁴ clothing the naked,³⁵ tithing food for the needy³⁶ and including aliens in religious celebrations.³⁷ Although this is broad application of the virtue of hospitality, this study, however, only deals with the narrower virtue of food and faith sanctity.

One of many examples recorded in Scripture, we return to the meal—virtuous act of the communal meal has great-embedded symbolic significances.³⁸ In the ancient world, to share food with someone was to share life. Such a gesture of intimacy created a bond of fellowship. Hence, God's meal with the elders of Israel,³⁹ Jesus' meals with tax collectors and sinners,⁴⁰ the Lord's Supper,⁴¹ Jesus' post-resurrection meals,⁴² Peter's

³¹ "What is our Theology of Food?" December 14, 2016, <http://www.psephizo.com/life-ministry/what-is-our-theology-of-food/>

³² Ibid.

³³ Gen. 18:2–8; 19:1–8; Job 31:16–23, 31–32.

³⁴ Lev. 19:9–10; Deut 24:19–22; Ruth 2:2–17.

³⁵ Isa. 58:7; Ezek. 18:7, 18:16.

³⁶ Deut. 14:28–29; 26:1–11.

³⁷ Duke, "Hospitality."

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Exod. 24:1–11.

⁴⁰ Luke 11:37, 15:1, 19:5–6.

meal with Gentiles,⁴³ and the common meal of the early Christians⁴⁴ all communicated powerful messages of intimacy and unity.⁴⁵

In the Old Testament, Israel as Guest, and God as Host identifies the Israelites as an alienated people that are dependent on God's hospitality.⁴⁶ In this example, God graciously received the alienated Israelites, met their needs, redeeming them from Egypt and feeding and clothing them in the wilderness.⁴⁷ He also brought them as sojourners into His own land,⁴⁸ where God offered them health, long life, peace, and fertility.⁴⁹ In a figurative sense, table fellowship is offered during meals of peace offerings and religious feasts where part of the sacrifice is offered to God and the rest is eaten by the sacrificer or community.⁵⁰ Indeed, God serves as host to humanity as the one who provides food and clothing for all.⁵¹ Hospitality, as it was defined in the Old Testament was righteous behavior. Christians now serve as co-hosts with Christ to a world consisting of those who are excluded from the citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the

⁴¹ Mark 14:17–26.

⁴² Luke 24:30–31, 24:40–43; John 21:12–13; Acts 1:4, 10:41.

⁴³ Acts 10:48, 11:3.

⁴⁴ Acts 2:42–47.

⁴⁵ Duke, "Hospitality."

⁴⁶ Psa. 39:12; Heb. 11:13.

⁴⁷ Exod. 16; Deut. 8:2–5.

⁴⁸ Lev. 25:23.

⁴⁹ Deut. 11.

⁵⁰ Lev. 7:11–18; Psa. 23:5; Prov. 9:1–6; Isa. 25:6.

⁵¹ Gen. 1:29–30, 2:9, 3:21; Psa. 104:10–15, 136: 25.

promise.⁵² Jesus is the model for Christians who serves as the host to the alienated world, who commended hospitality in His teachings, and who He, Himself is encountered as the one who receives the alienated person.^{53, 54}

Jesus' table manners included hospitality to needy strangers, being a friend of the outcasts, and being of service to the lowly. He made room for the poor and the strangers; Jesus welcomed the multitude and ordered his disciples to do the same (Matt. 14:16; Mark 6:37; Luke 9:13); and his command to invite the poor, blind, and lame to meals (Luke 14:12–22) are representative of just how much Jesus cared for and loved the disenfranchised. Jesus set a high mark for us to reach as His followers. Hospitality is a hallmark of living faithfully in him and with deeds. We are reminded in James 2:17 “In the same way, faith by itself, if not accompanied by action, is dead.” In the early church, hospitality was a central moral virtue of all (1 Tim. 3) and we are reminded in 1 Corinthians 11 that inhospitality violates the Lord's Supper. Challenges to the present in terms of food and faith require ongoing remembrances of the divine expectations bestowed upon we Christ followers. Jesus' table was a table of intimacy and of reconciliation. Jesus' table was neutral and open without class, gender, race separations.

The Meal

Eugene Peterson, author of *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology* states, “The meal provides an endless supply of metaphors for

⁵² Eph. 2:12.

⁵³ Matt. 10:40, 25:31–46.

⁵⁴ Duke, “Hospitality.”

virtually everything we do as human beings.”⁵⁵ Further Peterson states, “The preparation, serving, and eating of meals is perhaps the most complex cultural process that we human beings find ourselves in.”⁵⁶ If human beings and the crops and the animals they rely on for sustenance are unable to access clean, nutritious, available, and diverse foods, along with adequate water resources as basic human rights, the question must then be asked what do we do? The evidence suggests that these issues related to food are real and are present in North America and globally.

Meals, food, table etiquette, and commensality remained a constant problem in the traditions ascribed to Jesus and in the history of the early Church. In regard to foods, one of the three customs that characterize Judeans, a kosher diet, was done away with first by Jesus⁵⁷ and then by the early Church.⁵⁸ In Acts, Peter’s vision of unclean foods descending from heaven⁵⁹ functions as a cipher for a further discussion of impartial membership in the church.⁶⁰ The change from a restricted to an open diet, then, symbolizes for the disciples of Jesus a change in membership, from an exclusively Jewish

⁵⁵ Eugene H. Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2005), 220.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 221. Pairing of food and faith is nothing new, of course. In fact, Jewish dietary laws prohibit certain meats and all shellfish, as well as any food preparation that combines milk and meat. In Buddhism, nonviolence means no meat, dairy, or eggs, and dessert is reserved for special occasions. Christianity professes the communion of bread and wine, while the Bible warns against excess. As a metaphor, it is not good to eat much honey, nor is it glorious to seek one’s own glory. In the same way, with different words, Islam avoids “haram” foods and practices fasting, and the Koran also warns to eat and drink, but not waste in extravagance.

⁵⁷ Mark 7:19.

⁵⁸ Acts 10:14–16; 1 Cor. 10:23–27. Jerome H. Neyrey, *Reader’s Guide to Meals, Food and Table Fellowship in the New Testament* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame), accessed November 21, 2017, <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/meals.html>.

⁵⁹ Acts 10:9–15.

⁶⁰ Acts 10:28–29, 34.

group to one, which included Gentiles as well.⁶¹ The longest piece of exhortation in Paul's first letter to Corinth deals with diet, namely, the eating of meat sacrificed to idols.⁶² This issue and the foods of participants at the Lord's Supper⁶³ have major social repercussions in the community.⁶⁴ Diet, or what one eats, can serve as an identify mark (e.g., pasta, egg rolls, goulash, etc.), and so functions as an important social clue.⁶⁵

Jesus' own eating customs, His choice of table companions, His disregard for washing rites preceding meals, and His unconcern for tithed bread, all provoke controversy with alternate religious reformers. According to Luke 14, Jesus gives instructions for table etiquette and fellowship, which fly in the face of custom. Paul, too, had much to say about the eating habits of the Corinthian community.⁶⁶ He speaks to a different kind of problem in Romans 14–15, but one that also has to do with food, commensality, group identity, and unity. Paul criticized Peter's eating practices in the celebrated confrontation at Antioch.⁶⁷ Conflicts between Paul and Judaizers over kosher food play a major role in the struggles noted in Phil. 3:19. The issue of commensality was formally addressed in the instruction to Gentiles that they observe the Noachic dietary regulations, in part moving from a diet which previously had been a vegetable diet to one that now included meat (Acts 15:20, 29). Thus meals, table etiquette and commensality were major social concerns for Jesus, Paul, and the early churches.

⁶¹ Acts 10:28, 15:23–29.

⁶² 1 Cor. 8, 10.

⁶³ 1 Cor. 11:17–34.

⁶⁴ Neyrey, *Reader's Guide to Meals*.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ 1 Cor. 8:7–13, 10:14–11:1, 11:17–34.

⁶⁷ Gal. 2:11–14.

Why are meals important as symbols of broader social relationships? How can we peer below the surface and grasp the social dynamics encoded in meals and commensality, what anthropologists call “the language of meals?” A survey of writings on the various ways in which meals, diet, etiquette, and commensality may be profitably understood. Although historical studies of Jewish and Greco-Roman meals are beneficial to our understanding, cultural and social analysis of the function and dynamics of meals will be the focus.

Theological Aspects of the Meal

What the cross is to Jesus, the meal is to the early church, its primary symbol. Yet meals are never easy to read, for much more communication is put forth than the passing of plates and the eating of foods. Wirzba says,

To receive food as a gift and as a declaration of God’s love is to receive food in a theological manner. While it is a certainly true that ‘we eat to live,’ Trinitarian-inspired eating means that we eat to share and nurture life. In its ultimate theological bearing, eating is not reducible to the consumption of others. Instead, it is about extending hospitality and making room for others to find life by sharing in our own... To eat with God at the table is to eat with the aim of healing and celebrating the membership of creation.⁶⁸

Patrick T. McCormick in a lecture and presentation on food and faith on December 11, 2016, described the Exodus story as a history of Israel moving from freedom, to slavery and then out of slavery. In years of plenty food and good crops, the Children of Israel were food secure, but when seven years of famine struck neither they nor the land could sustain. They went to Egypt due to the famine and first the Pharaoh said, “Give me your animals for food,” then “Give me your land for food,” and finally,

⁶⁸ Norman Wirzba, *Food & Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 11.

“Give me your freedom for food.” Then as the Israelites became fed they also reproduced heartily and multiplied which put fear in the Egyptians because these immigrants were creating large families. This led to the battle between God and Pharaoh that leads to the delivery out of slavery of the Hebrew children.

McCormick describes Manna as God’s new relationship with His people and food: “Just take what you need for yourselves and your family; no more and no less.” This, argues McCormick, is a fundamental principle of sustainability.⁶⁹ The Bible shows clearly the intimate relationship to food, in contrast to our contemporary culture wherein we barely think at all about food and food production because we are so far removed from how food is grown, managed, treated, packaged, and sold to the grocery stores we frequent.

The Bible provides a great deal of resources that we can draw upon regarding the complexity and beauty of food.⁷⁰ Scripture also provides a reminder of just how much we Post-Moderns take for granted this absolutely essential blessing and gift that God has provided for all living creatures.

Biblical Directives and Interpretations

The agrarian cultures of the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament, speak to feast, famine, ceremony, community, and always a deep connecting relationship to food. These stories and verses remind us that the Children of Israel were not to take food for granted. We will look at some peer-reviewed scholarship to support and further clarify

⁶⁹ Lecture and presentation by Patrick T. McCormick, Spokane, WA. December 11, 2016.

⁷⁰ See Appendix E: Selected Bible Verses About Food for a biblical landscape of the historic connection with food, the land and the people.

our thinking about food and faith. For example, Henri Limet in his article, “The Cuisine of Ancient Sumer reconstructs the diet of the third millennium B.C.E.” reports that this land area of the Tigris and Euphrates River Valleys have been called the Cradle of Civilization. According to Limet,

Sumerian cuisine seems to have corresponded closely to the Mediterranean diet of ancient and modern times. It was essentially a vegetarian diet, made up of cereals, legumes, and garden produce supplemented by large quantities of milk, cheese, and fish, and smaller amounts of red meat. But in contrast to the nomads, the Sumerians were privileged. They had already passed the stage of hand-to-mouth existence and were not confined to a few products obtained by poorly managed agriculture, by meager barter, or by dangerous raids.⁷¹

Many of the tribes in the Ancient Near East (A.N.E.) were nomadic and often when they settled in an area struggled with the transition to agriculture and land resources. The Sumerian culture by virtue of the land and natural resources were able to secure a varied and bountiful diet. So much of the land in the A.N.E. is dry and relatively unproductive but with pockets of good soil and available water. Land that was productive and could produce food and sustenance was prized for their very survival. Mann describes the proverb in Deuteronomy that

“Humankind does not live by bread alone” (8:3) does not mean that we can live by the Word alone. Equally profound is the Hebrew Bible’s affirmation of ordinary food as God’s blessing, grace made visible, gratifying the senses and sustaining the body. The ethos of eating invites us to ponder how the production and consumption of our food affects the beauty and harmony of God’s creation, and if those who work in field and factory are justly compensated. The covenant community’s care for the hungry through welfare and workfare evokes our compassion and generosity. Already in Deuteronomy this vision contains the “seeds of the Messianic banquet” the day when “sharing by all will mean scarcity for none.” We, too, live in God’s fief in which faith and food are inseparable.⁷²

⁷¹ Henri Limet, “The Cuisine of Ancient Sumer,” in *The Biblical Archaeologist* 50, no. 3 (September 1987): 132–140.

⁷² Thomas Mann, “Not By Word Alone: Food in the Hebrew Bible,” *Interpretation* 67, no. 4 (October 2013): 361–362.

Daniel Stulac in “Rethinking Suspicion: a Canonical-Agrarian Reading of Isaiah 65” discusses the pastoral connective relationship of this culture. He points out that the text portrays an agriculture attuned to the integrity and health of the particular landscape in which it operates. In other words, it depicts “locally appropriate subsistence strategies involving both plants and animals: an *agro-ecological* model of food production.”⁷³

Stulac warns that while we have to be careful to not over interpret and apply Isaiah 65 to our lifestyle, realities such as our lack of connection to the soil, air, and water as inputs for food remain, and deserve unified and dedicated attention and care for local ecosystems that is possible only when “all hands are on deck,” and when food producers are free of political oppression. “If we take Isaiah’s vision seriously; industrial approaches to the land simply will not do, while grassroots coalitions that resist adherence to homogenized agricultural norms should garner our support.”⁷⁴ What then does this hold for those of living into the 21st century? Can and should we embrace a revised paradigm relative to food and faith? Can we afford not to? After reviewing the literature, we can surmise that these questions require dialog, deep reflection, and then unified action.

We would be remiss to not revisit the food laws of Leviticus and Deuteronomy here. Although seemingly arcane to us today, perhaps the structure and paradigms of food, clean and unclean and a system that helped people to really understand the significance of

⁷³ Daniel J. Stulac, “Rethinking Suspicion: A Canonical-Agrarian Reading of Isaiah 65,” *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 9, no. 2 (September 2015): 199.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 199–200.

food and faith is needed still. Perhaps we can learn from this. Jonathon Burnside while writing about how narrative shapes food laws states,

The laws take the form of narrative paradigms that make sense because they reflect day-to-day engagement with the environment, paradigm cases identify certain characteristics. The effect is to impart a complex body of knowledge about what can and cannot be eaten in an economical, unambiguous, and practical manner. The laws build on one another, enabling the audience to accumulate knowledge as they progress through the different categories. In this way, the very construction of the categories clean and unclean—and hence the structure and presentation of the laws themselves—is shaped by practical wisdom. The categories enable people to make firm distinctions based on visual images that can be easily applied at a popular level. This is consistent with self-executing narrative rules elsewhere in biblical law.⁷⁵

New Testament

The New Testament also has profound imagery and lessons regarding food and faith. Food as a celebration, food as a part of the Eucharist, food and growing food as a metaphor such as the mustard seed, as there for us to learn from and apply to our lives.

Laura M. Hartman states,

What does the Eucharist teach us? Puzzles abound: how to live in the world; how to consume in ways that manifest God and bespeak holiness, ways that avoid harming others or sinning; and how to properly steward physical resources while remaining committed to God above all. No one solution completely answers the call to ethical consumption, but the Eucharist, this practice where feasting meets fasting, where grace meets gastronomy and consumption meets Christ, constitutes a vital component of a Christian ethics of consumption.⁷⁶

Patrick T. McCormick, another distinguished theologian concerned about our relationship, or lack thereof to food, in his book *A Banqueter's Guide to the All-Night Soup Kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, examines the moral implications of the Eucharist through four

⁷⁵ Jonathan Burnside, "At Wisdom's Table: How Narrative Shapes the Biblical Food Laws and Their Social Function," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 135, no. 2 (2016): 244–245.

⁷⁶ Laura M. Hartman, "Consuming Christ: The Role of Jesus in Christian Food Ethics," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 30, no. 1 (2010): 58.

metaphors of bread, table, body, and sacrifice. McCormick makes the connection between Eucharist and food justice. He advocates for a clear, deliberate, healthy and positive connection with food rather than our contemporary exile relationship with food.⁷⁷

Current Implications

In our current society and world are we in danger of food shortages? The reality is Yes! There is abundant food being produced but also unbridled waste and misuse of food resources:

Monoculture farming puts us just one step away from food shortages and we are rapidly losing diversity of crops, which are planted, and of foods produced. In other words, soy, corn and wheat are the mainstays. Crops such as amaranth, maize, hemp, barley, and others are far behind in terms of acreage planted. . . In addition, with globalization not only is humankind losing diversity but also livelihood, especially indigenous peoples. Yet in spite of our technology and abundant resources as large part of humankind are living at subsistence or below.⁷⁸

Food shortages. Barry Danylak describes food shortages in Corinth in the mid-first century and Paul's letters to the Corinthian church. He states:

The food crisis Dinippus and the Corinthians faced may well have constituted a substantial threat to the lifestyle and well-being of the city. It is this threat that Paul would have seen and engaged with as he visited the city and corresponded with it. And it is this vulnerability of the city that provides part of the backdrop, not only to the multitude of food references in 1 Corinthians, but to the very issues Paul addresses in his correspondence with the Corinthian church.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Patrick T. McCormick, *A Banqueter's Guide to the All-Night Soup Kitchen of the Kingdom of God* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 27–34.

⁷⁸ Scholars such as Moo, Brunner, et. al, Wirzba and McCormick have documented these issues and offer suggestions and pathways for a change in thinking and in action.

⁷⁹ Barry N. Danylak, "Tiberius Claudius Dinippus and the Food Shortages in Corinth," *Tyndale Bulletin* 59, no. 2 (2008): 269–270.

Eucharist. As a contemporary pastor and theologian, Gordon Lathrop shares some wisdom about food and faith and the Eucharist. He writes:

Of course, we are still in need of recovering the very idea that the Eucharist in our churches is a meal. We need to celebrate with recognizable food at a recognizable if strong table, with staple food and festive drink, with generous and beautiful vessels, and with beautiful table prayers...

Recovery of sharing Eucharist in churches as a recognizable meal is the first movement of reform. But then, I believe that the words of Paul and of the gospels still speak critically in the life of the churches. What will unite us are the very themes of reform working in the midst of our various meals: that this is a “hungry feast” proclaiming the death of Jesus and the present gift of the Risen One, open for all to come and eat and drink, but then sending both its participants and its necessary excess into a hungry world as signs of the life-giving and merciful intention of God. The Eucharist will not solve world-hunger, but it will make a meaningful sign toward the poor and the hopeless. Such is a reform we still—and continually—need. The Eucharist ought not be centered on our consumption and us. It is to be centered on Jesus Christ for the sake of the life of the world. And that center is a continually revealed gift.⁸⁰

The Eucharist is the very heart of food and faith, representing community, healing, reaching out and across to the hungry. There is a need for a focus shift among Christian Leaders to more intentional and well-taught fasting, sustenance, and thanksgiving—rather than on “consumption without thought” and the resulting local and global consequences.

Biblical Food Metaphors

The Bible is rich in food metaphors, because food and drink are two things any human being can easily relate to and draw an analogy. God understands our sufferings of hunger and thirst and uses these conditions to relate to him. Consider the following verses: “Then Jesus declared, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go

⁸⁰ Gordon W. Lathrop, *The Four Gospels on Sunday: The New Testament and the Reform of Christian Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press eBook, 2012), 94, fortresspress.com.

hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty”⁸¹ and “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”⁸² Food and drink are essential to human life, providing strength and energy. From these vital resources, we are able to grow and think.⁸³ As an example, Jesus answered and said to the woman at the well in the Gospel of John: “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”⁸⁴

When Jesus was in the wilderness, Satan came to Him and tempted Jesus with food when He was hungry. Jesus responded by saying: “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”⁸⁵ This food metaphor actually provides two levels of meaning in that Jesus Himself is the very Word of God.⁸⁶ Just as physical food nurtures our physical lives, so spiritual food, the Word of God, fuels our spiritual lives. The unifying connection of the physical and the spirit is clearly seen in the food metaphors throughout Scripture.

Connecting the Dots

We find an undeniably strong biblical basis for our relationship with food with the covenantal relationship as found in the Eucharist and with the underpinnings of the

⁸¹ John 6:35.

⁸² Matt. 5:6.

⁸³ Kliska, “Biblical Food Metaphors,” accessed December 7, 2017, <http://www/Thechristianscribbler.com/2008/07/24blical-food-metaphors/amp/>.

⁸⁴ John 4:13–14.

⁸⁵ Matt. 4:4.

⁸⁶ Kliska, “Biblical Food Metaphors.”

sanctity of food and faith including gardening, growing and hospitality. Also noteworthy is the research and writings by Christian theologians related to food. The sources all point out that we all have a vital role in God's plan for creation. The role is not only to understand our cause and effect relationship with food and food production, but also the need for a theology [a renewed narrative] about our relationship to food. It is a complex issue as on the global industrial agricultural level as globalization and global corporations swell in size and little competition at that level is left. On the personal responsibility level—on the Christian leadership level we can affect change by staying engaged with this changing landscape and by caring for our congregants, community and selves with choices based upon knowledge. Connecting the dots requires us—Christian leaders, advocates and activists—to understand the interconnectedness and complexities of food, food sanctity, security, as designed by God. The food we eat, both what we eat and how we eat it, may be the most significant witness to creation care Christians can perform.⁸⁷ Food nourishes us and we carry deep memory about food in gatherings, around the table, in the Eucharist and in our very existence. When we eat so as to remember God, which is to eat properly, we eat with an appreciation for how food is a blessing and gift. Wirzba testifies that this is no small thing, because it means we will also relate to every other creature in a way that honors God.⁸⁸ When we know our “why” and the foundations of food to our well-being, our response is an overflow of love, responsibility to become better-informed consumers, growers, and thinkers is merely an expression of gratitude.

⁸⁷ Norman Wirzba, “Faithful Eating,” *Caring for Creation*. Wirzba is a Research Professor of Theology, Ecology and Rural Life at Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Conclusion

To establish God's sanctity of the relationship between food, land and faith, this chapter reviewed several examples of this sanctified relationship. The Old and New Testaments document numerous stories about farmers, shepherds, landlords, gleaners, agriculture, and labor,⁸⁹ and further establishes the covenant relationship with God and His people as recorded in Scripture demonstrating a God-mandated sanctity of food and land. The root of a theologically based food system is embedded in the relationship between God, humans, faith, food, and land. It is this key concept that identifies a theologically informed food system.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Wirzba, *Food and Faith*.

⁹⁰ Hunter M. Cropsey, "Food and Faith: Theology and Burlington's Local Food Movement" (2015). UVM College of Arts and Sciences College Honors Theses. Paper 11.

CHAPTER FIVE:
SUSTAINABILITY AND HOSPITALITY

Introduction

Scripture and theology are to form our narrative about not only the blessings of provision and goodness that God provides that comes with a built in warning, but also our role in caretaking. From the very beginning of Scripture, we are given directions for faithful eating. Beginning in Genesis when Adam and Eve commit the sin of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.¹ As a result of this sin, Adam and Eve died.² Scripture, in one sense, teaches from this verse that there are forms of eating that lead to life, even Kingdom of God life; however there are also forms of eating that lead to death. Christians and other faith tradition leaders are being called to reevaluate and choose to repair this broken relationship. We seek to become better consumers of information that is accurate, inclusive, while recognizing the interdependence of all things. Building on this premise, Chapter Five is dedicated to sustainability and hospitality as “right thinking” in the Christian tradition.

When food is properly understood as a gift, it becomes clear that food is a tangible expression of God’s love for us. Theologians such as Leonard Sweet, Norman Wirzba, Patrick McCormick, and others suggest that food is God’s love made edible.³ It

¹ Gen. 3:1–7.

² Gen. 2:17.

³ Leonard Sweet, *From Tablet to Table: Where Community is Found and Identity is Formed* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 2014); Patrick T. McCormick, *A Banqueter’s Guide to the All-Night Soup Kitchen of the Kingdom of God* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004).

is one essential way that The Creator shows his care for us.⁴ It is a physical embodiment of God's common grace, given for the good of his creation. It is one of the practical means by which Jesus Christ *sustains all things*. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that if we are passionate to know the heart of God, then we will press in to see how important stewardship of food and land through faith is important to our existence. It is therefore necessary to recognize that our societal stewardship of these God-given resources is severely damaged. The following discussion affords further insight into the substantial damage and depth of adulteration of food and land resources, but also the sustainability and hospitality available as modeled by The Creator. One could make the case that sustainability and hospitality are two sides of the same coin. Food, faith, and stewardship require a care that is sustainable through a caring attentive relationship to the land. Hospitality is represented in connections between living beings as a manifestation of love.

Food, faith, land, and sustainability, in accordance with scriptural guidelines, work together for the good of people the way God intended it. This is clearly demonstrated by the current condition of overall health, vitality, and longer life span, which are all impacted by a proper stewardship of the relationship between food, faith, land, sustainability, and hospitality. The quality of the water that we drink and the foods that we eat such as vegetables, meat, eggs, fruits, and dairy products, all, if properly nurtured, provide people with good health and vitality. Inappropriate stewardship over these resources is not sustainable for the long haul. Sustainability practices such as crop rotation, giving the land rest, love, and care for animals that provide food for people, and

⁴ Matt. 6:26.

other such practices sustain us. It is believed that this dissertation will impact many in understanding the disconnects in the food chain and will teach many what they should know about the food they eat.

Sustainability: The Challenge

Sustainability and doing more with less circles back to the issue of consumerism. Suffice to say that at this juncture consumerism, driven by mass advertising, compels us to want more “stuff” and as a result brings heavy consequences for us as consumers, and for the environment. We are simply not on a path of sustainability.⁵ Otto Scharmer and Karen Kaufer in their 2013 book, *Learning From the Emerging Future: From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies* ask, “How do we propose to think about these issues? How does a capitalistic, consumptive society see its role in the big scheme? I submit that very often the moniker, “Win at all costs and make money for the shareholders” as the driving force is a narrow vision that does not take in to consideration collateral damage and systemic impact. Scharmer and Kaufer’s model provides a vision of the ECO side, which recognizes that all humans, Mother Nature, all creatures, are to be valued and not exploited or marginalized for the gain of the few. What do you think Jesus would say about this? Or has He already spoken and clearly?⁶

⁵ Sallie McFague, *Blessed are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013). In this book, she makes the case for sustainability, living with less is more, and kenosis (emptying, making room).

⁶ Otto Scharmer and Karen Kaufer EGO ECO visual and Christopher Chase, “The Global Butterfly Effect” *Creative by Nature* (2014), accessed July 21, 2017, www.creativesystemthinking.wordpress.com.

Scharmer and Kaufer provide several visuals to illustrate their thinking.⁷ One of the most useful illustrations for the purpose of this paper, which is to identify and share salient resources and reasons that Christian leaders should be concerned and take action, is Ego-Logical/Eco-Logical (included see below). “Humans as Ego Centric vs. Humans are Eco-Logical” represents sustainability, interdependence and respect from a macro level. The implications for teaching, training and thinking are significant. For many Christian leaders a paradigm shift will occur in order to train others, take action and shift thinking to a more inclusive perspective of food and faith. (For more information regarding Ego – Eco, Schramer and Kaufer (see Appendix B).

Schramer and Kaufer present a model that Christian leaders may want to keep in mind when considering food and faith:

Sustainability transitions come about in diverse ways and all require civil-society pressure and evidence-based advocacy, political leadership, and a solid understanding of policy instruments, markets, and other drivers. Examples of diverse and effective steps humanity can take to *transition to sustainability* include (not in order of importance or urgency):

- Prioritizing the enactment of connected well-funded and well-managed reserves for a significant proportion of the world’s terrestrial, marine, freshwater, and aerial habitats;
- Maintaining nature’s ecosystem services by halting the conversion of forests, grasslands, and other native habitats;
- Restoring native plant communities at large scales, particularly forest landscapes;
- Rewilding regions with native species, especially apex predators, to restore ecological processes and dynamics;
- Developing and adopting adequate policy instruments to remedy defaunation, the poaching crisis, and the exploitation and trade of threatened species;
- Reducing food waste through education and better infrastructure;
- Promoting dietary shifts towards mostly plant-based foods;

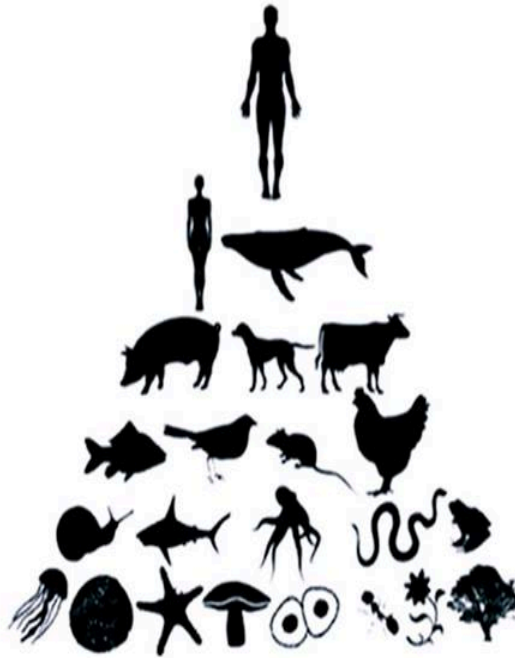
⁷ Otto Scharmer and Karen Kaufer, EGO ECO visual, accessed July 21, 2017, <http://www.p-plus.nl/resources/articlephotos/large/ego-eco.jpg>.

- Further reducing fertility rates by ensuring that women and men have access to education and voluntary family-planning services, especially where such resources are still lacking;
- Increasing outdoor nature education for children as well as the overall engagement of society in the appreciation of nature;
- Divesting of monetary investments and purchases to encourage positive environmental change;
- Devising and promoting new green technologies and massively adopting renewable energy sources, while phasing out subsidies to energy production through fossil fuels;
- Revising our economy to reduce wealth inequality and ensure that prices, taxation and incentive systems take into account the real costs which consumption patterns impose on our environment; and
- Estimating a scientifically defensible, sustainable human population size for the long term while rallying nations and leaders to support that vital goal.

To prevent widespread misery and catastrophic biodiversity loss, humanity must practice a more environmentally sustainable alternative to business as usual. This prescription was well articulated by the world's leading scientists 25 years ago, but in most respects, we have not heeded their warning. Soon it will be too late to shift course away from our failing trajectory, and time is running out. We must recognize, in our day-to-day lives and in our governing institutions, that Earth with all its life is our only home.⁸

⁸ E Crist, C. Mora, and R. Engelman, "The Interaction of Human Population, Food Production, and Biodiversity Protection," *Science* 356 (2017): 260–264, accessed January 10, 2018. Acknowledgments: Peter Frumhoff and Doug Boucher of the Union of Concerned Scientists, also Stuart Pimm, David Johns, David Pengelley, Guillaume Chapron, Steve Montzka, Robert Diaz, Drik Zeller, Gary Gibson, Leslie Green, Nick Houtman, Peter Stoel, Karen Josephson, Robin Comforto, Terralyn Vandetta, Luke Painter, Rodolfo Dirzo, Guy Peer, Peter Haswell, and Robert Johnson.

Ego-Logical



Authoritarian ~ Dualistic ~ Unsustainable
 Delusional ~ Mechanistic ~ Self-destructive
 Unwise ~ Imbalanced ~ Power Seeking

Eco-Logical



Democratic ~ Holistic ~ Sustainable
 Compassionate ~ Natural ~ Regenerative
 Wise ~ Balanced ~ Interdependent

Christopher Chase, 2014

See: <http://www.p-plus.nl/resources/articlephotos/large/ego-eco.jpg>

Example of Small Scale but Mighty and Replicable Sustainability

The Amish of America have been studied and often with elements of surprise in the findings, and may be the most vivid contemporary imagery available in the discussion of Sustainability. Amish communities in some ways are akin to the past generations of farmers who were “low tech, high touch” with little if any petrochemicals, monoculture farming, and distant ownership present. Interestingly, the Amish relationship to land and

community and families is one of sustainability and stewardship. The concept of sustainable agriculture is not simply an artifact from another day and age but a need to return to today. The growth of farmers' markets, organic produces, and clean and green is not an anomaly but a clear indication that many consumers are paying attention to food and want and demand change in the schema of food. Wendell Berry, in *The Unsettling of America* and *Bringing it to the Table*, speaks to the lessons to be learned and promulgated:

Factory farms increase and concentrate the ecological risks of food production... A farm, on the other hand, disperses the ecological risks involved in food production. A *good* farm not only disperses these risks, but also minimizes them... A good farm does not put at risk the healthfulness of the land, the water, and the air...and economically, a factory farm locks the farmer in at the bottom of a corporate hierarchy. In return for the assumption of great economic and other risks, the farmer is permitted to participate minimally in the industry's earnings. In return, moreover, for the security of a contract with the corporation, the farmer gives up the farms' diversity and versatility, reducing it to a specialist operation with one use...It is clear that the advocates for factory farming are not advocates of farming. They do not speak for farmers. What they support is state-sponsored colonialism-government of, by and for the corporation.⁹

In my own farming community in Northwestern Wisconsin, Bashaw Valley Township, farming families are increasingly trying to “get bigger or get out,” or are becoming concentrated animal feedlot operations (CAFLO's), raising poultry for one of the largest turkey processors in the nation, or becoming cash croppers.¹⁰ Two of our largest milk producers in the township discontinued their first love in animal husbandry, which are dairy cows. The milk prices kept going in a downward spiral due to increased competition from factory farms which are contained systems where the bovines never see

⁹ Wendell Berry, *Bringing It to the Table* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2009), 14–17.

¹⁰ “Cash crop” refers to an agricultural crop grown for sale to return a profit. Many farmers tend to work several smaller farm acreages in order to create enough products to cover their costs and hopefully make some net for their efforts.

the light of day, are milked three times a day and kept in a continually pregnant state so that they will continue to produce milk. Also, many of these herders are using Bovine Growth Hormones (BGH) another product from genetic modification technology. There are human costs and there are animal costs.

A good healthy dairy cow, defined as milked twice a day, allowed to free range and eat grasses and supplemented with oats, corn, and hay, will produce milk for twelve years or longer. Contained dairy cattle are “burned out” in a few short years and then sent on the meat packers. These dairy farmers who were true stewards of animals and animal husbandry have turned to cash crops, primarily corn for ethanol production and soy for animal feeds. They have moved to attempt to become more efficient by leasing or purchasing larger equipment, purchasing or renting more tillable land, using genetically modified seeds, which are patented and selling to companies that are multinationals controlling the markets. The farmer has gone from being their own boss, operating their business and selling their array of goods and services to becoming more like an indentured servant or a serf in medieval times. This model is not sustainable from a human, animal, water, soil, or community perspective.

This is not merely speculative or “old school” thinking but perhaps thinking outside of the agribusiness/corporate/ business model-dominated box we have been placed. Returning to Wendell Berry’s thoughts about what can we as a country learn about food, faith, and sustainability from the Amish, we can learn that they have not only survived, but continue to thrive through some very difficult years. This is not to imply that there is a panacea here,

but there are principles to embrace:

1. preserve their families and communities

2. maintain the practices of neighborhood
3. nurture the domestic arts of kitchen and garden, household and homestead
4. limited use of technology so as not to displace or alienate available human labor or available free sources of power (the sun, wind, water)
5. keep farms to a scale that is compatible both with the practice of neighborhood and with the optimum use of low-power technology
6. by the practices and limits already mentioned, limited their costs
7. educate children to live at home and serve in their communities
8. esteem farming as both a practical art and a spiritual discipline.

These principles are not new, or unique to the Amish (in fact such practices are ancient and still present in many areas of the world); they've simply preserved sustainable stewardship of life and land, which was lost in the United States during [say with time period], (see Chapter Two, History of Food), giving testimony to a world to be lived in by human beings, not a world to be exploited by managers, stockholders, and experts.¹¹

If people better appreciated that land and animals sustain human life, not only in what they provide for us to eat, but also with how they can be sustained with proper care for the long term.

In terms of sustainability to both animals and people, it is seen that physical labor is the best health remedy. However, it is apparent that the number one killer in the US is heart disease, a consequence of being sedentary.¹² The human and animal body is built for adversity and work. Also, animal husbandry brings a rhythm of peaceful living, just like appropriate sustainability to food sources brings rhythm to life.

Sustainability always circles back to consuming versus care giving. Sallie McFague, Distinguished Theologian in Residence at Vancouver School of Theology, has devoted much of her academic career investigating the connection of religion, economics, ecology, and sociology. McFague asserts that the practice of restraint must become a

¹¹ Berry, *Bringing it to the Table*, 38–47.

¹² Meagan Noe, “The Number One Killer of Americans: Heart Disease,” February 1, 2006, accessed January 19, 2018, <http://www.bu.edu/today/2006/the-number-one-killer-of-americans-heart-disease/>.

cornerstone of action in this world that is bent on consumption. She believes it is imperative that people of religious faith realize the significant role they play. Further, McFague argues that it is not just sufficient to consume in a “green” fashion; rather we must consume less, much less.¹³ The disconnect between environmentalism and consumerism or between economics and ecology is a distinct business model that focuses on creating margin and profit while the “collateral damage” is largely ignored.

Given our twin planetary crisis of climate change and unjust financial distribution, what is needed is not more information but the will to move from belief to action, from denial to profound change at both personal and public levels. The religions of the world, countercultural in their assumption that ‘to find one’s life, one must lose it,’ are key players in understanding and promoting a movement from a model of God, the world, and the self focused on individualistic, market-oriented accumulation by a few, to a model that sees self and planetary flourishing as interdependent. We live within our models and make decisions on the basis of them...The interdependent model demands self-emptying (Christian kenosis) or ‘great compassion’ (Buddhism) on the part of the well-to-do, so that all human beings and other life-forms may live just, sustainable lives.¹⁴

Exploiters or Nurturers

Wendell Berry raises the question: “Are we exploiter or are we nurturer, or are we some of both?” Berry outlines the characteristics of these opposite kinds of mind:

We are all to some extent the products of an exploitive society...I conceive a strip-miner to be a model exploiter, and as a model nurturer I take the old-fashioned idea or ideal of a farmer. The exploiter is a specialist, an expert; the nurturer is not. The standard of the exploiter is efficiency; the standard of the nurturer is care. The exploiter’s goal is money, profit; the nurturer’s goal is health-his land’s health, his own, his family’s his community’s, his country’s.

Whereas the exploiter asks of a piece of land only how much and how quickly it can be made to produce, the nurturer asks a question that is much more complex and difficult: What is its carrying capacity? (That is: How much can be taken from it without diminishing it? What can it produce *dependently* for an indefinite

¹³ McFague. *Blessed Are the Consumers*, 5, 30–32, 89–90.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xii.

time?) The exploiter wishes to earn as much as possible by as little work as possible; the nurturer expects certainly, to have a decent living from his work, but his characteristic wish is to work *as well* as possible. The competence of the exploiter is in organization; that of the nurturer is in order—a human order, that is, that accommodates itself both to other order and to mystery. The exploiter typically serves an institution or organization; the nurturer serves land, household, community, place. The exploiter thinks in terms of numbers, quantities, ‘hard facts’; the nurturer in terms of character, condition, quality, kind. It seems likely that all the ‘movements’ of recent years have been representing various claims that nurture has to make against exploitation.¹⁵

In the bigger picture, beginning with lessons learned from the Eucharist and Sabbath, we learn that sustainability and hospitality are essential to the preservation of God’s creation and the more near and familiar ecosystem that we live in.

Hospitality

God covenants with His people Israel as Guest, and God as Host, thus identifying the Israelites as an alienated people that are dependent on God’s hospitality,¹⁶ and this perspective changes everything. “God’s character is revealed in Genesis as the love that enables life of another to be itself.”¹⁷ As we saw previously, the responses to this covenant of hospitality took several forms and included the humble and gracious reception of travelers into one’s home for food, lodging, and protection, inviting in strangers, caring, clothing. In the ancient world, to share food with someone was to share life. Such a gesture of intimacy created a bond of fellowship.

What is hospitality from a Christian perspective? Christians now serve as co-hosts with Christ to a world welcoming and attending the well being of others, consisting of

¹⁵ Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Press, 2015), 9–10.

¹⁶ Psa. 39:12; Heb. 11:13.

¹⁷ Norman Wirzba, *Food & Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 50.

those who are excluded from the citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise.¹⁸ Jesus is our model.

This researcher agrees with Patrick T. McCormick's statement: "Two thousand years after Jesus began proclaiming and practicing the table fellowship of God's heavenly banquet, too many of the poor remain outside our gates and are unwelcome in our homes and communities—and churches."¹⁹

McCormick's reflections on food, faith and hospitality can be partially summed up as follows:

1. Jesus's table manners were radical and revolutionary. Hospitality to strangers, friend of the outcasts and service to the lowly.
2. Eucharistic bread breaking is leaven for a new community (inclusive hospitality, overcoming barriers and divisions, tearing down hierarchies by embracing service.
3. Table is the smallest political unit in society. Table is the smallest social-economic-political unit and a central metaphor. If there is a division between master-slave, it shows up at the table; if there is a division between man and woman, it shows up at the table; if there is a division between enough food vs. no or inadequate food, it shows up at the table; if there are other divisions such as race, orientation, culture, it shows up at the table.
4. Jesus's transformational work was akin to Marten Luther King—Let's change in place right where we are, let's start at the table.
5. The primary audience and participants with Jesus were not the "villains," but us.
6. Six times in the four Gospel accounts, Jesus teaches the Disciples how to be waiters. Table must be open and neutral without regard to class, gender, or race.
7. Every time we participate in the Eucharist, we are pledging to take action as Jesus asks.²⁰

¹⁸ Eph. 2:12.

¹⁹ McCormick, *A Banqueter's Guide to the All-Night Soup Kitchen*, 50.

²⁰ Author's personal notes taken from lecture by Patrick T. McCormick, Gonzaga University entitled "Table Manners: An Etiquetter of Peace and Justice," November 21, 2015.

Beginning with forming a theology of faith, food, and land from a biblical directive, the broader concept of hospitality is established by focusing on the character and relationship people have with God and their neighbors. When people welcome the marginalized, to also including the least of “My people” and also to make room for all of God’s creatures, then the forming a biblical theology makes life our autobiography—our story.

Wirzba reminds us that we all need to eat, we share common celebration, common needs, and delight in eating. He explains how eating food, is bearing witness, which is a form of worship of God’s sovereignty. Hospitality, as full sensory living, includes nurturing and loving others by being present, listening, and nurturing others. Chapter Six discusses these aspects more particularly and how to put theology into practice.

Home

In Luke’s writings the ancient practice of hospitality—the custom of welcoming travelers or strangers into one’s home and establishing relationships with them—becomes the prism through which Jesus’ disciples can view one another and others as valuable children of God.²¹

Today we think of hospitality as the custom of feeding family, friends, and neighbors in our homes or hosting these people for a night or two. The writers of the New Testament, however, were working with a significantly different definition of hospitality or ‘xenia’; the ancient custom of hospitality revolved around the practice of welcoming strangers or travelers into one’s home while promising to provide them with provisions and protection.²²

²¹ Ibid.

²² Andrew Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels: Hospitality in Luke and Acts* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005), 131–132. For a more complete description of hospitality in antiquity, see pages 15–132, accessed November 25, 2017, <https://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/53378.pdf>.

Christ taught us hospitality wherein, creating home can be as simple as being present and providing sanctuary for a friend or stranger to be heard and cared for.

Garden

Nicholas Lash writes, “God’s garden, made ‘in the beginning,’ does not lie behind us, but ahead of us, in hope, and, in the meantime, all around us as our place of work.”²³

He also says,

It is no accident that Scripture locates the first human drama in a garden. The Garden of Eden, literally the ‘garden of delight,’ is humanity’s original and perpetually originating home, the place of our collective nourishment, inspiration, instruction, and hope. It is the place where people first taste and fully sense the grace of God. Here we learn that we are the beneficiaries of a world of gifts, creatures made independent upon God. Unmanned plants and animals, and in terms of the varying conditions of the soul, water, and weather, people discover what it means to be marked by hunger, blessing, mortality, ignorance and interdependence. Gardening is the quintessential element that brings forth food to the table of hospitality. Gardening is therefore the Genesis that commences the expression of love through food and the dining table.²⁴

Norman Wirzba, in *Food And Faith: A Theology of Eating*, writes that gardening represents creation care. God was the first gardener and gardening is a form of hospitality: “Gardening is never simply about gardens. It is work that reveals the character of humanity, and is a demonstration of who we take ourselves and creation to be... Here we concretely and practically see how we relate to the natural world, to other creatures, and ultimately to the Creator.”²⁵ Wirzba further clarifies: “We have forgotten

²³ Nicholas Lash, *Believing Three Ways in the One God: A Reading Of The Apostles Creed* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1992), 124.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 50–52.

²⁵ Wirzba, *Food & Faith*, 49.

that God is the first gardener, the one who *planted* Eden (Genesis 2:8), and that we are called through our gardening (among other things) to be God’s abiding image on earth.”²⁶

Around the Table

Hospitality has always been, and is today the intimacy that draws many varied and diverse cultures, peoples, nationalities, genders, ages and all other forms of diversities to a common venue of relationship: the dining table. Jesus ate with sinners throughout His earthly ministry. He received children gladly. He taught us to invite the lowly to parties and to welcome strangers. He prepared breakfast for His wayward disciples, including Peter who had betrayed Him.²⁷ See the discussion of meals, in Chapter One.

Leonard Sweet, in his book *From Tablet To Table*, shares insight in to how we as Christian leaders might think about food and faith. His words and metaphors about table, hospitality, community, and purpose take on added meaning in the context of this study. Sweet writes, “If we were to make the table the most sacred object of furniture in every home, in every church, in every community, our faith would quickly regain its power, and our world would quickly become a better place. The table is where identity is born—the place where the story of our lives is retold, re-minded, and relived.”²⁸

²⁶ Ibid., 50.

²⁷ Tony Merida is the founding pastor of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh, NC. He also serves as Associate Professor of Preaching at Southeastern Baptist Seminary in Wake Forest, NC. His books include *Faithful Preaching*, *Orphanology*, and *Ordinary: How to Turn the World Upside Down*, accessed November 25, 2017, <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/practical-ways-to-show-christian-hospitality-tony-merida-ordinary>.

²⁸ Sweet, *From Tablet to Table*, 2–3.

Getting closer to the earth by understanding its seasons and considering the orchestration of nature and its creatures brings understanding to the calmness and serenity that calm wildlife and domesticated animals bring to the comfort of people.

Ultimately, hospitality has always been, and is today the intimacy that draws many varied and diverse cultures, peoples, nationalities, genders, ages and all other forms of diversities to a common venue of relationship; the dining table. Jesus ate with sinners throughout His earthly ministry. He received children gladly. He taught us to invite the lowly to parties and to welcome strangers. He prepared breakfast for His wayward disciples, including Peter who had betrayed Him.²⁹

In Luke's writings the ancient practice of hospitality—the custom of welcoming travelers or strangers into one's home and establishing relationships with them—becomes the prism through which Jesus' disciples can view one another and others as valuable children of God.³⁰ Hospitality is therefore mediation of social relationships and friendships with food that establishes a connection with all peoples as demonstrated by Jesus, the apostles, and disciples discussed in the book of Acts. It is through the hospitality of the dining table and the sanctity of food that Jesus teaches us how to demonstrate love for him and our neighbor. Of course, this carries significant meaning on both local and global scale.

Conclusion: Hope and Change

Richard Rohr sheds positive light that we as Christian leaders should consider as we discuss the role of food and faith in our ministries, families, and communities. Rohr

²⁹ Tony Merida, "4 Practical Ways to Show Christian Hospitality," *LifeWay Christian Resources*, 2017, accessed November 25, 2017, <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/practical-ways-to-show-christian-hospitality-tony-merida-ordinary>.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

shares evidence of a new kind of reformation. He calls this a spiritual globalization and provides evidence of what is propelling this movement:

Our awareness is broadening, recognizing that Jesus was clearly teaching nonviolence, simplicity of lifestyle, peacemaking, love of creation, and letting go of ego, both for individuals and groups. More and more Christians are now acknowledging Jesus' radical social critique to the systems of domination, money, and power...³¹

Critical biblical scholarship is occurring on a broad ecumenical level, especially honest historical and anthropological scholarship about Jesus as a Jew in the culture of his time. "This leads us far beyond the liberal reductionism and the conservative fundamentalism that divide so many churches" argues Rohr, "We now see the liberal/conservative divide as a bogus and finally unhelpful framing of the issues."³²

It is evident that there are no easy fixes, but we have learned that this hyper charged consumption cannot go on forever and as a start we must take personal responsibility are slow it down by our own habits and consumption choices. Hyper consumerism is a choice not a gift especially when juxtaposed on other global citizens. I suggest that addictive consumerism is not unlike other addictive patterns and choices such as sex, food, shopping, alcohol, and other drugs and might be thought about as a paradigm for addictive consumerism and choices. The steps are similar: awareness, recognition of the problem, education, intervention, treatment, group support, ongoing follow up and follow along, check-in's, and maintenance.

In summary, this chapter attempts to demonstrate that there is a biblically mandated connection that links faith, food, and land to sustainability, hospitality, and the

³¹ Richard Rohr, "The Emerging Church: Beyond Fight or Flight," *Radical Grace* 21, no. 4 (2008), accessed November 26, 2017, meditations@cac.org.

³² Ibid.

nurturing of others. Food is a form of communication from God that is His expression of love for humankind and His way of saying, “I love you.” He wishes to sustain people with food choices that are pleasing to site and delectable to taste. “The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.”³³ As the outward expression of His love, recall how God fed the Israelites in the dessert. Exploring this thought further, Norman Wirzba investigates the connection between food and faith begins with what the Bible teaches about eating well and how God invites people to share His love of others through people by being hospital and nurturing to others.³⁴ To grow and eat food consistent with biblical direction is to collaborate with God in sharing life and food with each other and to regularly and actively engage with others.

However, in spite of this wisdom, there is a wide disconnect that distances God and neighbors and grows into not expressing our faith through hospitality and nurture. God’s provision for food to people is provided at a high price because every living creature depends on the sacrifices of others that become food to some. In the highly urban environments, the disconnect is even greater because there is not a need or care to know the chain of events that feed people daily. This dissertation explores how people can become more educated and aware of God’s intent toward our nurturing with food.

³³ Gen. 1:12.

³⁴ Beliefnet, “10 of the Bible's Secrets About Food,” 2017, accessed January 19, 2017, <http://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/christianity/bible/food-and-faith.aspx?p=2>.

CHAPTER SIX:

NEXT STEPS FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

God's garden, made "in the beginning," does not lie behind us, but ahead of us, and hope, and, in the meantime, all around us as our place of work.¹

Introduction

A baseline for Christians is to never forget that celebrating the bread, table, body, and sacrifice of communion/Eucharist calls upon us "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). This basic tenant reflects sustainability, hospitality and stewardship for each other and for the good land that God has given us to care for. What is food? Food serves as a community and family focal point. It represents stewardship for the land and the crops; food is present in celebrating the Eucharist and in hospitality. Food and faith are deeply connected and intertwined. Leonard Sweet states, "But Jesus wants us to set a particular table, to demonstrate concrete love, not love in the abstract."² Sweet speaks of the table as love in the flesh, love in the present—not merely a theoretical concept, but love exemplified. Therefore, when brokenness occurs with food and faith we lose our bearing.³

In this chapter, we first cover a brief review of the dissertation: overview of the problem, historical and contemporary views of food and faith, case studies, scriptural mandates, and theological and sociological exploration of sustainability and hospitality. Next we ask the core questions of this chapter: In light of the evidence and faith, how are

¹ Nicholas Lash, *Believing Three Ways in The One God: A Reading of the Apostles Creed* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame press, 1992), 124.

² Leonard Sweet, *From Tablet to Table: Where Community is Found and Identity is Formed*, (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2014), 148.

³ *Ibid.*, 148–149.

we to make food choices? In light of Wirzba's claim that "food is a system of communication revealing what we believe and value about people, things, bodies, traditions, time, money, and places" what are the next steps for the Christian Church at large as well as for local ethical leaders and communities in creating a new paradigm?

Jonathan Moo writes,

The church today, especially in its evangelical expressions, still seems uneasy and uncertain about just what role it ought to play. There are those who argue strongly that Christians ought to jump on the bandwagon of environmentalists or global-warming activists; and there are others who argue just as strongly that environmentalism represents a threat to economic growth and traditional values and so Christians should oppose attempts to mitigate climate change or to implement costly environmental programs. Popular among many evangelicals is the apparently more innocuous notion that Christians ought to get on with proclaiming the gospel and let the rest of the world sort out earthly problems.⁴

It appears that this is an issue we as Christian leaders must seriously dialogue. Just what are our roles?

We have established the breadth and depth as well as complexity of the issues related to food and food justice; without advocacy and action will anything change? Are we ready to advocate for and become activists ourselves as regards food, food safety, sanctity, food as a human right, and availability of food? Moo goes on to ascribe to the position that I agree with as a writer, an advocate, and an activist; and for the purpose of this discussion, "I will proceed from the assumption that the mission of the Christian church does necessarily include concern with such earthly problems as environmental degradation, unsustainable resource use, ecosystem integrity, and the plight of the poor and of future generations."⁵ Changes in thinking and inclusion of food justice will require

⁴ Jonathan Moo, "Continuity, Discontinuity, and Hope: The Contribution of New Testament Eschatology to a Distinctively Christian Environmental Ethos," *Tyndale Bulletin*, 61 no. 1 (2010): 23–24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

a paradigm shift to encompass greater awareness, understanding and expecting personal, cultural, government and business ethics. Pope Francis is a Christian leader we must pay attention to regarding this complex human rights issues.

Leaders are being called to action. We are at a turning point in our world about food, our relationship to it and how to control it on a scale never before even imagined, and “it is the task of the Christian Community to give witness and guidance in the living of life.”⁶ In light of all we’ve explored in this study we ask again of each what are our daily choices, regardless of scale:

“Is this moral, right, ethical and helpful?”

“Do we as Christian leaders take on the wrongs and stand up for the marginalized, the destitute, and the hungry or the culture of consumption?”

“What are we called to do missionally right where we stand?”

What can we learn from Pope Francis regarding human rights to protect and innovate safeguards without exploiting working classes in favor of the wealthy, both in the US and beyond? How can we more fully participate in Christian human rights and advocacy movements related to food and faith, and proposes strategies for becoming better consumers of accurate information, and thus change agents in the lives of parishioners, communities and their families?

In Review

Overview of Food and Faith

In Chapter One the Overview of Food and Faith demonstrates how most US-Americans no longer have a direct relationship between the producer or consumer with

⁶ Ibid., 3.

the foods, plants and animals being grown, which in turn leaves us in a health crisis. Before we can learn to consume healthy foods, we must learn how to consume advertising.

While it is evident that there are no easy fixes, we have learned that this hyper-charged consumption cannot go on forever, and as a start we must take personal responsibility to slow down the cycle of destruction and unsustainable practices by making intentional choices, bringing dialog about being proactive and why to the forefront of our communities and worship gatherings, but first by changing our own daily habits and consumption. Hyper-consumerism is a choice, not a gift, especially when juxtaposed on other global citizens.

History of Food

After a quick sweep of history in Chapter Two, we are reminded that we no longer have a direct relationship between the producer and consumer. The way plants and animals are grown also means there is little or no recognition of foods other than those in the local supermarket. We are faced with a new food revolution of greater and greater monoculture farming, concentrated animal feedlot operations impacting soil, air, water, and land with fewer and fewer producers. Agriculture is now agribusiness resulting in an Exile relationship with food so articulately described by Norman Wirzba.

Case Studies

With the theme of food and faith, creation care and ownership, I reported on the gathering of representatives from indigenous people all over the world, who met in Hawaii to provide testimony about the impacts of multinational seed and chemical

corporations on their people and ways of life. I also talked with people who were directly involved with the growing of crops in Kauai, Hawaii. Their stories of challenges, hope, courage, and success are ones we can all learn from.

Since Captain Cook's "discovery" of Hawaii in the 1700s, followed by the missionaries, the Native Hawaiians have been living in an epicenter of plantations for pineapple and sugarcane production on an industrial scale, at least until owners found other countries to produce their products cheaper and without regulations. In Chapter Three, the first case study reveals how the land, which provided sustenance for generations of Native Hawaiians prior to "discovery", now imports 90 percent of its food-run by huge agri-corporations after the Hawaii Department of Agriculture recruited them to come in and use the land. Multinational seed and chemical companies such as Syngenta, Monsanto, Dow and Pioneer now utilize much of the tillable acreage. The seeds produced are created with genetically modified technology so as to withstand a variety of herbicides such as Dicambria and Glyphosate in large applications while not harming the target plants such as soy or corn, produced on the land prior to 100 percent of the produce being exported. It has no nutritional food value and is solely intended for selling as seeds for planting in other countries.

The second case study centers on the life of Pope Francis and his Christian leadership on creation care recorded in his second encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*. Using scientific research and social and moral teachings Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* shares the Gospel message as seen through creation; discusses the current state of our "home"; states human causes of the ecological crisis; describes what is our common good sounds a call to action for each of us irrespective of culture, age,

gender, country or religious affiliation.⁷ I make the case that Pope Francis is a beacon of hope and a Christian leadership voice that addresses and in fact pleads with the earth's human inhabitants to take action on an individual, family, community, national, and global level. One finds urgency in the Pope's message that is reflective of many other theologians, World Scientists (see Appendix C), advocacy groups and policy makers.

Biblical Bases for Food and Faith and How it is Broken.

In Chapter Four a select few Old and New Testament understandings of food and faith, and the biblical foundations of our relationship to food and how that has been broken were considered. Food serves as a community and family focal point. It represents stewardship for the land and the crops; food is present in celebrating the Eucharist and in hospitality. Food and faith are deeply connected and intertwined. When brokenness occurs with food and faith we lose our bearing.

Throughout the Bible, food and faith are inseparable. Food represents love manifested; it represents community, ritual, gatherings, fellowship, and hospitality. The Bible instructs us how to be God's stewards of His earth. Here we find hope, promise and guidance in Scripture to help us become better consumers of information and food, in a food and faith paradigm that is biblically based, environmentally friendly and stewardship sound. One can find many Bible passages relating to food and faith. With careful study of culture mores and God's purposes behind the directives we can gather what is good and healthy in our current culture.

Of the many lessons learned in the span of a lifetime, concerning theological, historical, and contemporary views of food and faith; the foundations of understanding our relationship to food and how that is broken, perhaps an

⁷ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Encyclical Letter, Includes Discussion Questions (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division. Encyclical Letter 2015, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City).

overarching lesson is for Christian leaders and in spiritual formation is to not “throw the baby out with the bathwater.” With this in mind, this study throughout gives a charge to rethink paradigms and engage more collaboratively, and with a deep respect, appreciation and welcoming of what has come before. Consequent to this passion, the Church has historically concerned itself with essential matters of life, death, healing...and food. From the feeding of the five thousand, to the Last Supper, and to Paul’s instructions on the just distribution of food in Corinth, questions about food have been central to Christian life.⁸

Food safety, sanctity, and availability continue to be of growing concern.

The Nature of Stewardship, Sustainability and Hospitality

When food is properly understood as a gift, it becomes clear that food is a tangible expression of God’s love for us. Food is a physical embodiment of God’s common grace, given for the good of His creation. Food and wine are two of the practical means by which Jesus Christ sustains all things. Chapter Five provides an exploration of sustainability and hospitality as Christian practices to address our societal stewardship of God-given resources. One can make the case that sustainability and hospitality are two sides of the same coin. Food, faith, and stewardship require sustainable relationship with the land. Hospitality is represented often as, and with, food and connections as a manifestation of love.

This study culminates here in Chapter Six where next steps for Christian community are suggested. What should we do about this problem in light of the evidence and arguments, thus making food and eating choices based on evidence and faith? Rather than provide pat answers, Christ’s literal and metaphorical words set the bar high calling

⁸ Princeton Theological Seminary Just Food Conference, September 22–24, 2016, accessed September 16, 2016, <http://coned.ptsem.edu/events/just-food/>.

us to macro and micro level action: “When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.”⁹

Christian Leaders as Life-long Learners: Continual Students of Food and Faith

A much-needed awakening is taking place. We recognize our need for a new narrative and theology, for being aware and well informed so that we can take right action. Jim and Karen from the opening vignette are not alone in their growing conviction to know and take action. Select seminaries are carrying forward the Church’s historical role of nurturing food and faith proving expertise and training for emerging seminarians and pastors and Christian leaders already field based.¹⁰ For example, a “Just Food” conference was held at Princeton Theological Seminary September 22–24, 2016 that brought together church leaders for essential conversations about food justice, sustainable agriculture, food insecurity, and innovative ways to change the way we relate to food. Princeton Seminary also has established a new “Farminary” project, demonstrating innovative programs that can be replicated and designed to nourish both body and soul.¹¹ Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA has developed and implemented an audit process to ascertain how and where energy usage can be cut back; where recycling efforts need to be expanded; and how to give students ownership of this resource-conserving process.

⁹ Luke 14:13.

¹⁰ Leadership is of paramount significance in describing action forward regarding food and faith. In this study models and leadership styles of contemporary Christian leaders were reviewed such as: Pope Francis, Nothhouse, Donovan, Kahneman, Lewis/Amini/Lannon, and Morse. As Christian leaders, teachers and theologians they provide direction, strategies and models for successful leadership.

¹¹ Just Food Conference, September 22–24, 2016, <http://coned.ptsem.edu/events/just-food/>.

Become Students of Ethical Leaders and Emulate Them

We are remiss to not review what other contemporary scholars' view as effective and potent leadership, especially while addressing these vital areas of concern.

Indigenous people around the globe are losing their livelihood, their ancestral lands and ways of life in rapid fashion due to the vast exploitative globalization; without checks and balances we are inflicting continued collateral damage on human beings as “progress” and growth continues. Therefore, background study for this dissertation included an examination of Northouse, Donovan, Kahueman, and Morse.¹² Rather than presenting a doom and gloom scenario, a wake up call was given to the exodus relationship we have with our world and its people. Power holders do not have all the answers. Christian leaders are called to slow, step into, listen, and learn from those who are otherwise invisible to us, but are in fact equal partners in God's kingdom.

The topic of food and faith and why this should be important to us as Christian leaders continues to become clearer the deeper we engage in writings and experiences such as Branson and Martinez. For example, the authors write, “As the church spread, the topic of fellowship around food received significant attention. Cultural practices concerning meals indicate inclusion and exclusion: Who is allowed into the fellowship at the table? What food is allowed or forbidden? Paul tends to answer these questions with a priority on shaping relationships for trust and inclusion.”¹³

¹² See Bibliography for sources. The theologians Northouse, Donovan, Kahueman, and Morse provide compelling evidence and applications regarding just what constitutes effective, Christ-centered leadership.

¹³ Ibid., 38.

It does take critical mass to have a movement become “institutionalized” and embedded but it takes time and it takes keeping our eyes on the prize. “The Green Seminary Initiative fosters efforts by theological schools and seminaries to incorporate care for creation into the identity and mission of the institution, such that it becomes a foundational part of the academic program and an integral part of the ethos of the whole institution.”¹⁴

These are scattered and not yet embedded efforts located here and there around the country but are critical efforts, nonetheless, to train current and future seminarians as well as offer courses and on line opportunities for Christian leaders already in the field. Food and faith as well as a developed theology of food as an emphasis is gaining momentum.

Consuming Credible vs. Incredible Information

As United States (Federal and some states as well) institutions and government become ever more complicit and ever increasingly turn away from consumer protection, food and drug enforcement, environmental protection, food inspection, air and water quality as priorities, and move more and more to oligarchy and corporatization, citizens must take it upon themselves to become even better educated and aware of accurate information regarding food, choice, and quality. Mass marketing and advertisement will not provide us with accurate information, nor will most corporations. In fact, with the patenting of seeds by companies such as Monsanto and Pioneer, the process of obtaining permission to test has become more difficult. There are less independent studies in the United States regarding food and health but still significant research and concerns for the

¹⁴ Ibid.

citizens of the Eastern Union countries, Great Britain, and Scandinavian countries as well. Currently, the United States regulatory agencies designed to protect the environment and the public have shifted the proof of harm or burden of proof to the public rather than the corporations. There is no independent third party evaluation on either short-term or long-term effects on humans or animals.

Fortunately, in the United States there are independent institutes, consumer groups, and agencies that still speak up and out about food, GMOs, chemical inputs, food safety, and sustainability. For example, the Cornucopia Institute calls for:

Ecologically sound agriculture; Humane animal welfare; Economic justice for family-scale farmers and ethical food companies; and Truly authentic organic food products-fight the corporate takeover of organics...As the demand for organic and local food increases, large agribusiness corporations have been weakening the meaning of organic, local and other terms we use to connect with each other so that they can get a bigger piece of the pie. Cornucopia's policy watch and marketplace activism works informs and empowers lovers of real food to stand up to corporate 'organic' (soil-less) hydroponics and livestock factories and reward the most ethical farmers and businesses.¹⁵

Become a Voice on Issues of Food Sanctity and Food Safety

Perhaps the most potent strategies available to address the issues of food sanctity, food safety, and human rights is a combination of research and careful attention to sources other than the media that is consumed each and every day, which tend to underreport or not report the issues at hand. Those who control the increasingly corporatized media ultimately hold power. One valuable source to be given serious consideration is Michael Pollan, an investigative writer who is clear and truthful about the power and control vested by the largest of these agrichemical corporations, and the

¹⁵ The Cornucopia Institute, "Your Authentic Food/Farmers in Peril," accessed November 28, 2017, www.cornucopia.org.

dysfunction of our political, bureaucratic, and governmental institutions whose charge is to protect and defend the public, but have lost their way. Pollan calls to account those who set the rules (e.g., politicians in Washington, D.C., bureaucrats at the United States Department of Agriculture, Wall Street capitalists, and agricultural lobbyists, in large part) for being part of the dysfunction rather than part of the solution.¹⁶

One of the most vocal and prolific advocates for change and transparency is Vandana Shiva.¹⁷ Shiva has been criticized with continued attempts to malign her and her credentials, but she still champions human rights relative to food around the world. Another example of a scholar and activist is Dr. Jennifer Ayres, who maintains that everything about food and eating is broken. Ayres maintains that at a food policy level, decisions must again be inclusive of the consumer rather than the current model that is run by lobbyists, politicians, and corporations nearly exclusively, and where decisions about food production have become removed from the consumers they affect.¹⁸

Good Food is a practical theology grounded in research that moves beyond a first world understanding of food and acknowledges the food practices of diverse populations. Ayres finds the Christian approach to food lacking, and thus she turns to actual practices of food justice, discovering in the process a rich theology for food. “Ayres challenges Christians to participate in communal initiatives that will make a real difference—to

¹⁶ Michael Pollan’s books *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* and *In Defense of Food: An Eater’s Manifesto* have many facets, including his exposé, that describe the issues of dysfunction rather than solution in terms of public policy.

¹⁷ For further information, the reader may find these sources invaluable in studying food and faith: Vandana Shiva, *Soil Not Oil* (London: South End Press, 2008); Vandana Shiva, *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace* (London: South End Press, 2005); Vandana Shiva *Water Wars* (London: South End Press, 2002); Vandana Shiva, *Stolen Harvest* (London: South End Press, 2000); and Vandana Shiva, *Biopiracy* (London: South End Press, 1999).

¹⁸ Jennifer R. Ayres, *Good Food: Grounded Practical Theology* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013).

support local farmers, start their own gardens, and advocate for fair food policies. Good Food equips readers with the theological and practical tools needed to ensure that which sustains us: food.”¹⁹

Advocacy and Activism Calls Us

There are non-governmental organizations deeply involved in food and future issues, especially as they relate to stewardship, sustainability, and influencing public policy. Do we as Christian leaders have a responsibility to be better informed and to consume the information provided? It is clear that corporatized mainstream media, the grossly unfair access that special interest lobbyists have to our Federal and state representatives, and the ever growing influence from the gigantic agribusiness corporations-food producers, and chemical and genetically modified and patented seed companies; that these voices are voices that should be listened to and engaged at least for a balance. For example, The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) has developed a well-researched, credible and noteworthy portal. This portal links several themes, research, concerns, and solutions in a user-friendly format. The “Principles of a new U.S. trade policy for North American Agriculture”²⁰ discusses the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the pros and cons for the small-scale non-factory farm and non-agro corporate producers and advocates. One of the features of these trade agreements is an investor dispute clause that allows multinational corporations to sue individual state, regional, national entities if their laws prohibit said corporations from

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Minneapolis, MN, “Principles of a new U.S. trade policy for North American Agriculture,” accessed November 18, 2017, www.iatp.org/collection/nafta-portal.

making a profit. In other words, laws promulgated to override sovereign governmental entities' law, rules, and values for the sake of globalized corporate profits. Obviously these are significant macro issues that leaders from all public and private sectors may choose to pursue. However, we can actively be involved in small actions this day, this week, this month, this year, that not only make a difference in our community, but in us. When we start to live with them, and experience the outcome, we grow into larger actions, and we can invite those we influence to join in.

Finding Soft Points of Entry

The question remains: How do we find soft points of entry with community Christian leaders, pastors, chaplains, congregants so that they will indeed see the gestalt of why Christians have an obligation to provide stewardship and care; to understand and once again turn to the Bible witness of the Old Testament through the life of Jesus in the New Testament for clarity about stewardship, food justice, sanctity, and hospitality?

We will not change the world, but we can create networking, educational opportunities, and find ways to help our Christian sisters and brothers rekindle the fire in the belly for food justice, sanctity, and stewardship as a part of our missional purpose. Just as several of these institutions have developed on campus green initiatives, food banks, Family Promise, volunteers in food banks and shelters, creating energy audits and doing renovations; serving, sharing, demonstrating and that is how change happens. Christian leadership and caring for our common home food and faith is a needed focus. We are entering a time in which a shift in thinking about globalization, food sanctity, food quality, and food security coupled with human rights and human dignity is gaining momentum.

Christian leaders can form “think tanks” to address pressing topics covered in this study such as:

- Thoughts on how and why to be good consumers of good information
- Issues of advertising and production vs. fact-based information
 - What is trustworthy?
 - What is factual?
 - What is applicable?
- Knowing how and what to select for food
 - The longer the list of ingredients the less we should consume
 - Shop on the perimeter of grocery stores
 - If it’s white don’t eat it: flour, sugar, salt
 - Protein portions should be the size of the palm of your hand
- Urban farming
- GMO labeling millions spent to stop it why?
- Identifying dangerous advertising practices
- What can we do to offset and quell the “isolation and convenience” foods?

We simply cannot continue consuming as we do. In response to the epidemic of consumption, Christian leaders must adopt the mantra “less is more,” and live it. What are creative ways to address our consumption without becoming critical and legalistic? We do not have to “act like Saints” but as McFague suggests, more like Dorothy Day’s idea of “the little way,” doing a minor something rather than despairing.²¹ New awakenings about food and faith, are taking place, which we explore. This is evidenced at

²¹ McFague, *Blessed are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013).

the seminary level, the local community, and church levels, as well as in large food-related companies such as COSTCO and others. Consumers are awakening to the need for wholesome foods for themselves, their families, and their communities. There is hope for us to return to better health, better food, and a cultural awareness of the interdependence of all living things.

Patrick T. McCormick, Catholic theologian and professor at Gonzaga University, makes some wonderful suggestions about actions we can take on a micro or personal level that bring lasting change. These actions include:

1. Eat locally and seasonally: There are significant ethical, nutritional and environmental advantages of buying and eating locally produced food and eating foods that are in season in your region.
2. Eat organic: Consuming “organic” food that does not rely on chemical fertilizer or pesticide has a number of ethical, nutritional and environmental advantages.
3. Eat less meat-particularly factory farm meat: Reducing or eliminating the consumption of meat in our diets has a number of positive environmental, ethical and nutritional advantages. At the very least we should eliminate the worst sorts of processed meats from our diet.
4. Buy “Fair Trade”: “fair trade” products from developing nations provide significant ethical and environmental advantages over other products.
5. Support Small Farms: Small or medium sized farms offer significant ethical and environmental advantages over large monoculture plantations and factory farms. Purchasing foods from farmers’ markets, CSAs or local gardens has several advantages.
6. Ask Questions: Inquire about the effects of food production on animals, workers, consumers and the environment.²²

I add to McCormick’s last suggestion that, if nothing else, we can teach our communities to be inquisitive. We can form study groups and help sort information, where we learn a process of asking hard questions, until they become muscle memory, such as: Who grew it? How were the custodians of the crops and the animals and the

²² Patrick T. McCormick, “Jesus’ Table Manners: An Etiquette of Peace and Justice,” Gonzaga University Lecture, November 21, 2015. Notes taken from lecture by author.

crops and animals themselves treated? Who is welcomed at our table? Who are excluded and do we care? What are our public policies irrespective of ideologies about food and faith? How do we or should we attempt to influence policy decisions about food safety, food quality, how food is grown and who controls the very seeds and other inputs?

If not for yourself, take action for our children. These data and findings are significant resources for consumption of clear, accurate, and well-researched information from which to make informed decisions. The American Psychological Association's article "The Impact of Food Advertising on Childhood Obesity" also lists "Tips for Parents." They are presented here as hope, direction and action that can be accomplished in the home, family, church, and community:

- Active healthy lifestyles for children and adolescents include moderate television viewing, regular family mealtimes, and regular exercise.
- Limit excessive time spent watching TV, video, gaming, or surfing the web.
- Monitor the media that your children consume, particularly if they are under age eight.
- Encourage healthy eating habits (i.e., greater consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or non-fat milk or dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, and beans) and promote physical activity.
- Eat with your kids and take pleasure in your mealtimes together.
- Lead by example by eating healthy foods and engaging in physical activity yourself. Remember you can have the greatest influence on your child's health.²³

It is a well-known fact that advertising has become very sophisticated. Marketers can now target children. Children learn by choosing, but adults can guide and affect food choices that are often not nutritious and high in sugars, chemicals, and fats. Addictive consumerism is not unlike other addictive patterns and choices such as food, shopping, alcohol, the steps are similar: awareness, recognition of the problem, education,

²³ American Psychological Association, "The impact of food advertising on childhood obesity," 2017, accessed November 15, 2017, www.apa.org/topics/kids-media/food.aspx.

intervention, treatment, group support, ongoing follow up and follow along, check-in's, and maintenance. And, with children, most of all, practice tough love, patience, and kindness. Always err on kindness.

Food and Faith in Praxis

Of the many deeply impactful lessons of guidance, support, and direction gained while at Portland Seminary, the understanding was to learn to discern, think, reflect, act, and realize that “one style or size does not fit all” in Christian leadership settings. Mark L. Branson and Juan F. Martinez, in *Churches Cultures & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*, clearly state the issues of Christian leadership as it applies to food and faith:

If there is no one ideal strategy or model for all churches, then each particular church, usually in local networks and other associations, must gain competencies and capacities that are specific to its own time and place. In order to do this the leaders of a church need to gain skills in theological reflection—this is called practical theology. Practical theology conceptually and practicality should be utilized in the necessary conversations around food and faith and consumption of accurate and reliable information in order to make good food and faith decisions. . . . Practical theology, a continual movement from experience to reflection and study, and on to new actions and experiences is what we call *praxis*. . . praxis is actually the whole cycle of reflection and study on one hand and engagement and action on the other.²⁴

Our collective relationship to food today has become a commodity that is in the grocery store, prepackaged, and with little thought on our part about how was it grown or by whom. How were the custodians of the crops and the animals and the crops and animals themselves treated? Who is welcomed at our table? Who are excluded and do we care? What are our public policies irrespective of ideologies about food and faith? How

²⁴ Mark L. Branson and Juan F. Martinez, *Churches, Cultures, & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 38–41.

do we or should we attempt to influence policy decisions about food safety, food quality, how food is grown and who controls the very seeds and other inputs? We are at a turning point in our world about food, our relationship to it, and who controls it on a scale never before even imagined. Given the demographic changes in our own country, we as Christian leaders here in the US as well as in our efforts globally, must rethink or perhaps think about seriously for the first time the critical topic of food and faith while serving others in the name of Jesus. Metaphorically and actually we must answer a very basic question: whom do we allow at our table and what are we going to serve them?

4 Practical Ways to Show Christian Hospitality

We want to get started, to gain traction and not get overwhelmed with the complexities. There are steps we can take just as walking to a destination, it begins with one step, and then another.

1. Welcome everyone you meet. I mean this literally and figuratively. Extend a kind word to everyone you meet, but also, share your time, energy and life with others—especially those who may need you more than you need them. Jesus welcomed strangers and outcasts.²⁵ In the same way that Zacchaeus was a “son of Abraham,” and worthy of Jesus’ time, the outcasts that you interact with are loved by God and worthy of your time too.²⁶ Also, the woman with the issue of blood. Jesus often saw, moved toward, listened, spoke a blessing of identity.

²⁵ Luke 19:1–10.

²⁶ Article courtesy of *Stand Firm*, a devotional magazine. Excerpted from his book, *Ordinary* (B&H Publishing), Tony Merida is founding pastor of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh, NC, accessed November 25, 2017, http://www.lifeway.com/Article/practical-ways-to-show-christian-hospitality-tony-merida-ordinary#author_bio_0.

2. Engage people. Engage others with the mindset of being Jesus, not just inviting them to a function at your church (see Romans 12:13–20). This kind of engagement involves a personal connection, not just a “connection” via text or social media, but face-to-face interaction.

3. Make meals a priority. Many of Jesus’ striking moments occurred around meals. Invite a person to a meal and serve him or her. Pay for the meal if possible, pray for your guest specifically, and serve him or her. Use mealtimes to build relationships and talk about things that really matter.

4. Pay attention. We all interact with people at work, at church, at school and in our communities. But how many of these people are outcasts that go unnoticed? Take some time out of your day to stop, look around, and show kindness to others. Your uplifting word or kind action may change someone's life forever. Instead, the blessing and peace of God will rest upon those hosts who extend hospitality to Jesus’ servants.²⁷

Hospitality is ultimately the mediation of social relationships and friendships with food that establishes a connection with all peoples as demonstrated by Jesus, the apostles and disciples.²⁸ It is through the hospitality of the dining table and the sanctity of food that Jesus teaches us how to demonstrate love for him and our neighbor.

Many voices are rising up, calling us to take charge and become the servants and stewards that God has directed us to become. May we join these voices in offering hope and direction for engaging local clergy, chaplains, and congregations to consume reliable information regarding food and faith and affecting positive change, while also providing

²⁷ Luke 10:4–6.

²⁸ Theologians Leonard Sweet, Norman Wirzba, Wendell Berry, Craig Goodwin, Sallie McFague, and others, speak to the nature of hospitality. Hospitality is also reflected throughout the Holy Bible.

preliminary direction in knowing how to think globally and act locally. Reconciliation will be accomplished by becoming better consumers of information that is accurate, inclusive, and that recognizes the interdependence of all things. Our relationship with food does not begin with prepackaged items at the grocery store or with a trip through the fast food drive through, but with stewardship, creation care, sustainability and living so that others may live.

Suggestions for Further Research

To preserve the momentum of this dissertation, further study is recommended to bring the issues addressed in this dissertation of food and faith to the forefront of the minds of all Christians and their relationship in churches.

- Step one: Further research to formulate strategies for teaching and training Christian leaders in Ecotheology.
- Step two: Development of an Ecotheology curriculum for institutions such as schools, hospitals, care facilities, and other social institutions where the most improvements in food sanctity can be initially realized.
- Step three: Research public policy and church missional initiatives as they relate to feeding the hungry in the church communities, the communities, United States, and globally with high-quality nutrient-dense foods.
- Step four: It is hoped that further study and dissemination related to individual churches and communities regarding accessing nutrient dense, sustainable, and locally sourced foods for all people will occur.
- Step five: With the explosion of technology, the agenda-driven food processing industries, and news reporting that shapes public opinion; it is

recommended that research be engaged to assist consumers in how to retrieve accurate, reliable data driven and faith based decision making food and faith, especially the interconnectedness of all.

Voice

I was born and raised as a “farm kid” in Northwest Wisconsin in the mid-1940s. Our 80-acre farm was diverse and we lived with a sense of fullness and pleasure in growing our own food, vegetables, animals, and crops. The land was and still is a combination of lovely glaciated woods with kettles, moraines, and features left from the great glaciers and rolling farmland that has been carefully tended for generations with organic compost added, crops rotated, and the land left fallow every so many years.

We knew about those who came before us: The Chippewa/Ojibwa Native Americans and those who came before them that they tell of in their oral traditions. Reading the deed and title, one will find the lineage of several generations prior to the time of the Ahasay’s being owners of record—our grandchildren being the fourth generation. How often I think that this is only a part of parcel of a much larger story, a story of ones who loved that land first because it was their home and we often talked about being visitors and stewards as in “our turn.” Occasionally with spring plowing and turning over the rich ground an arrowhead or spear point would appear. The poet Leo Dangel expresses the findings of artifacts of those who preceded us:

Behind the Plow

By Leo Dangel

I look in the turned sod
for an iron bolt that fell
from the plow frame
and find instead an arrowhead
with delicate, chipped edges,

still sharp, not much larger
 than a woman's long fingernail.
 Pleased, I put the arrowhead
 into my overalls pocket,
 knowing that the man who shot
 the arrow and lost his work
 must have looked for it
 much longer than I will
 look for that bolt.²⁹

I was in fourth grade attending Plainview School, a one-room country school and Mrs. Toll was our teacher. We all brought our lunches: sandwiches made of fresh homemade breads and jams, everything homegrown: We had little material wealth but we had community and the sense of peace—that all was right with the world. My fourth grade proved to be a year marked by loss, as that bucolic life that I believed would be “always,” was in fact, coming to an end. The heavy-duty tracks had large tanks on the back. A man was seated there with a long spray hose making sure that the entire brush, and other vegetation was saturated with the chemicals. The smell was a moldy sickening sweet smell and the otherwise silent arrival of the Rural Electric Cooperative (REA) spraying their right-of-way with brush-killing chemicals. Like Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, our songbirds that graced the hedges long the roadways quit singing. The Spring Peepers that greeted each spring with their lovely chorus of praise and promise of the warming earth no longer sang in the little ponds along the right of way.

How does a young boy forget the day his cows, and the neighbors' cows delivered stillborn and aborted fetuses? The results of chemical sprays were felt and seen in new and personal, and costly ways. Indeed, we had a front row seat to a life changing with

²⁹ Leo Dangel, *Old Man Brunner Country* (Peoria, IL: Spoon River Poetry Press, 1987), Poem 'Behind The Plow.'

industrialized, untested, chemicals and agents. The collateral damage brought about by efficacy from an industrial, corporate model was beginning in earnest in rural America.

What is Food?

I had the privilege to grow up, not only in a wonderful community of friends, family and extended family, but in a family that celebrated, understood and honored the sanctity of food and hospitality in its fullest expression. My mother, Helen, was the only daughter in a family with seven children. The Grandparents were immigrants from Sweden and food and faith were inseparable. Every holiday held a special place in the family. Several of the relatives were farmers and all grew up on a farm. The early history of these immigrant parents, Hilda and Anton, was one of hardship, hard work, “breaking” the eighty acres of cut-over pine stumpage land in order to begin farming and creating a life for the family. There were lean years and years of very little sustenance. The DNA of these pioneers and their offspring as well as those of the surrounding community were as survivors, and they had a healthy and hearty resiliency. Each knew how long and hard the seasons, knew work, and knew how to wait, pray, and eat. There was respect and kindred spirit for the precious sacredness of food. These dear people, my people, lived by faith, food, and community. They would not have known another way.

Conclusion

There is much written and talked about today regarding food and food justice. Peer-reviewed journals, news articles, popular books (some well-sourced), advocacy groups, multinational corporations, and political organizations each in their own way and often for their own audience view food as a “food crisis.” This crisis is described in many

ways and from many different stakeholder positions such as: not enough foods; not enough integration in terms of distribution; a greater need to move ahead with genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to meet the caloric needs of a growing world population and it is *the* answer; the loss of farming communities and farmers as well as indigenous people due to the accelerated industrialization of and monopoly of agriculture; too much power and control over seeds, food, and distribution by a handful of deeply connected multi-national corporations; as minority farmers in third world countries losing their lands and livelihoods as the ever increasing corporatization and monoculture of industrialized agriculture takes over; and of the deeply divisive and political manipulations creating far reaching connections of the handful of mega corporations continue to expand with governmental blessings, at least and most certain in the United States.

So we ask again, “What is food?” Are we consuming information and foods to improve our health and that of our neighbor? Do our congregations and communities understand the difference between what is nutritious versus what they are being sold? As Christian leaders we have a responsibility to speak from the pulpits, from the heart, from our communities, and from our seat at the table, to these macro and micro level issues. We live in a deeply connected and global economy; and we all have a responsibility to ask questions and demand answers and action about what God’s children are being fed around the globe and how and why our government policies play a role in all of it.

As modeled by Master Creator God and God’s most perfect representation on earth, Jesus, Christian leaders, activists, and progressives are to seek understanding and wisdom regarding the big picture of action versus inaction, and active versus passive

consumerism (in this case of food, food sanctity, food justice, and availability). We have a moral, ethical, and Christian responsibility to be the voices for the voiceless, to come alongside the abandoned socially, economically, spiritually, and environmentally. For if we do not who will?

With Pope Francis, who is willing to call out the societal wrongs and stand up for the marginalized, calling for humanity to join while there is still time,³⁰ this researcher claims that each of us—and especially any follower of Christ in a position of influence—are to be the voices of conscience and reason. Pay attention, as the Native Americans do, to every decision made, and ask what will be the impact of the decision to seven generations removed? Our country is in dire need of ethical leaders, ethical expectation, and ethical decision-making beginning with us. With each action, we must learn to ask: Is this moral, right, and helpful?

What does food safety, food sanctity, human rights, and advocacy mean to us in our country, our community, and our homes? Are we passive and detached, or contemplative, studied activists? Food, food sanctity, diversity, and availability without deleterious chemical inputs and without genetic manipulation are receiving growing interest and concern. As food sources become ever more monopolized, patented, and commoditized there is a growing outcry for openness, transparency, and for food safety. The question to be answered for each Christian leader is, “Why should I care about these

³⁰ Both of Pope Francis’ works *Evangelii gaudium* Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today’s World (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013), Chapter Two; and *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Inc. U.S., 2015), are theological, contemporary, universal, and timeless works that will serve all global citizens who wish to affect change as Christ’s servants.

issues related to food, food sanctity, diversity and future? Is this within the scope of my calling? If not, what are the consequences for my people and their children?"

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APPENDIX A:

LEVITICUS 11

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, Say to the Israelites: Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud.

There are some that only chew the cud or only have a divided hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel is ceremonially unclean for you. The hyrax is unclean for you. The rabbit is unclean for you. And the pig is unclean for you. You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.

Of all the creatures living in the water of the seas and the streams you may eat any that have fins and scales. Creatures in the seas or streams that do not have fins and scales you are to regard as unclean. Anything living in the water that does not have fins and scales is to be regarded as unclean by you.

These are the birds you are to regard as unclean and not eat because they are unclean: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture.

Flying insects that walk on all fours are to be regarded as unclean. Some flying insects that walk on all fours you may eat: those that have jointed legs for hopping on the ground. Of these you may eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket or grasshopper. But all other flying insects that have four legs you are to regard as unclean.

Every animal that does not have a divided hoof or that does not chew the cud is unclean for you. All the animals that walk on all fours, those that walk on their paws are unclean for you.

The animals that move along the ground, these are unclean for you: the weasel, the rat, any kind of great lizard, the gecko, the monitor lizard, the wall lizard, the skink and the chameleon. They are unclean, and you are to regard them as unclean. A spring, however, or a cistern for collecting water remains clean, but anyone who touches one of these carcasses is unclean.³⁷ If a carcass falls on any seeds that are to be planted, they remain clean. But if water has been put on the seed and a carcass falls on it, it is unclean for you.

Every creature that moves along the ground is to be regarded as unclean; it is not to be eaten. You are not to eat any creature that moves along the ground, whether it moves on its belly or walks on all fours or on many feet; it is unclean. Do not defile yourselves by any of these creatures. Do not make yourselves unclean by means of them or be made unclean by them. I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves along the ground. I am the LORD, who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.

These are the regulations concerning animals, birds, every living thing that moves about in the water and every creature that moves along the ground.⁴⁷ You must distinguish between the unclean and the clean, between living creatures that may be eaten and those that may not be eaten.¹

¹ Lev. 11.

APPENDIX B:

“Learning from the Emerging Future: From Ego-system to Eco-system Economies”¹

Otto Scharmer, September 23, 2013

We live in an age of profound disruptions. Global crises in finance, food, fuel; water, resource scarcity and poverty challenge every aspect of our societies. These disruptions also open up the possibilities for personal and societal renewal. To seize these possibilities we need to stop and ask ourselves some basic questions: why do our actions collectively create results that so few people want? What keeps us locked into old ways of operating? And what can we do to transform the root problems that keep us trapped in the patterns of the past?

Here’s a clue to the answers to these questions: the root causes of today’s global crises originate between our ears, in our outdated paradigms of economic thought.

The symptoms of these crises can be summarized in three divides that disconnect us from each primary source of life: ecological, social, and spiritual. The ecological divide manifests in symptoms like environmental destruction. We currently use one and a half times the regeneration capacity of planet earth in our economic activities. The social divide manifests in increasing rates of poverty, inequity, fragmentation and polarization. And the spiritual divide shows up in increased rates of burnout and depression, and in an increasing disconnect between GDP and people’s actual wellbeing.

These structural disconnects indicate a broken system. But what is the root cause that produces them? I believe it originates directly from the ways in which we currently think about economics.

Like most things on earth, economic frameworks have their own life-cycle of birth, development and growth, before they finally outlive their usefulness. Modern economic theory is no exception. For example, after the global depressions of the 1930s, mainstream economic thinking evolved by opening up to Keynesian macroeconomics, which then shaped policy-making for the better part of the remaining century. Then, after the stagflation crisis of the 1970s, the mainstream moved to adopt Milton Friedman’s articulation of monetarism, which influenced policy-making for the next 30 years.

¹ Otto Scharmer and Karen Kaufer, *Learning from the Emerging Future: From Ego-system to Eco-system Economics* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2013). On line summary by author “From Ego-system to Eco-system Economics,” accessed October 20, 2017, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/transformation/otto-scharmer/from-ego-system-to-eco-system-economies>.

How has this lifecycle continued? Has mainstream economic thinking changed as a result of the global financial crisis of 2007 and 2008?

Unfortunately, not much: economic debates are still shaped by the same frameworks, faces, and false dichotomies that ushered in the crisis. The successful intervention of Wall Street banks after 2008 to prevent effective banking regulation and the collapse of the global climate talks in Copenhagen at the end of 2009 are prime examples of the systemic failure of capitalism in its present form to deal with the major challenges of our time.

The main shortcomings of conventional economic theory can be summarized in two words: externalities and consciousness. Policy-makers and researchers have discussed economic externalities - the costs of economic activity - at length. They have been dealt with, at least in part, through successive attempts to regulate and incentivize corporate behavior in order to reduce pollution and the exploitation of human beings - small first steps, though much remains to be done. By contrast, consciousness is completely ignored, not even registering as a legitimate category in economic thought. Why is it so important?

The current capitalist economy is fundamentally **ego-centered**: it is structured to satisfy my wants as an individual and to privatize or even atomize decision-making. Most attempts to deal with this problem (like corporate social responsibility) do so by extending the awareness of consumers and producers beyond themselves to take in the welfare of other stakeholders. But this process is inadequate to deal with the size and complexity of the crises that we face.

What's really needed is a deeper shift in consciousness so that we begin to care and act, not just for ourselves and other stakeholders but in the interests of the entire ecosystem in which economic activities take place. Otherwise, there is a danger that these externalities will be mitigated while the consciousness that creates them is left untouched, allowing the same costs and inefficiencies to re-appear in a different guise. There is little point, for example, in arguing for commons-based property rights and shared ownership if people's consciousness is still stuck at the individualist, self-interested, ego-driven level.

Therefore, the economic imperatives of our time call for an **evolution of our consciousness from an ego-based system to an eco-based system, from one state of awareness to another**. To paraphrase Einstein, the problem with today's capitalism is that we are trying to solve problems with the same consciousness that created them. How can we construct pioneering pathways into a co-creative, eco-system economy?

The shift from ego- to eco-system awareness requires a journey that involves walking in the shoes of other stakeholders, and fine-tuning the instruments through which consciousness is created: namely an open mind, an open heart, and an open will.

An open mind represents the capacity to see the world with fresh eyes and to suspend old habits of thought. An open heart means the capacity to empathize, to see any situation

through the eyes of someone else. And an open will is the capacity of letting-go and “letting-come.” letting-go of old identities (like “us versus them”), and letting-come a new sense of self and what that shift can make possible.

Moving the economic system to an eco-centered model is impossible without this shift in consciousness, but on its own it will not be enough. What’s really required is a threefold revolution: an individual, relational, and institutional process of inversion, or turning current practice inside-out and outside-in.

Individual inversion means opening up our thinking, feeling, and will so that we can act as instruments for the future that already wants to emerge.

Relational inversion means opening up our communicative capacities, and shifting from a focus on conformity and defensiveness to generative dialogue, so that groups can enter a space of thinking together, of collective creativity and flow.

Institutional inversion means opening up traditional geometries of power that are characterized by centralized hierarchies and decentralized competition, and re-focusing institutions around co-creative stakeholder relationships in eco-systems that can generate wellbeing for all.

Fostering these inversions requires new types of innovation infrastructures that can build collective leadership capacities on a massive scale. Many people think that what’s missing in order to move societies towards a new economy is just a set of ideas and policy proposals that are better than those we have already. But that’s not the case. We also need new structures and technologies that enable groups to move from their habitual thinking and practices to co-create an eco-centered economy.

These infrastructures include spaces for convening stakeholders in efforts to co-initiate new systems, and also:

- “co-sensing,” or going to places that allow us to see the system from the edges - if listened to with one’s mind and heart wide open, they hold the golden keys to the future;
- “co-inspiring,” or creating channels for connecting to the sources of creativity;
- “prototyping,” or exploring the future by doing things in the present in very different ways; and
- “co-shaping” the spaces in which these prototypes can be embodied and scaled-up.

Of these various infrastructures, those for co-sensing and co-inspiring are particularly underdeveloped in society today. Trying to advance societal innovation through prototyping and scaling-up alone is like building a house without foundations. That’s why so many current efforts fail, because they ignore the deeper conditions of the social field (the mindsets, attitudes and intentions), and focus only on the superstructure of

incentives and institutions. Without a fundamental shift in consciousness it will be impossible to sustain an eco-centered economy

A profound renewal of this kind at the personal, societal and global levels are crucial for our planetary future. What's needed to underpin these renewals are change-makers who are willing to lead from the emerging future: leaders who are willing to open up to, learn about and practice the journey from ego-system to eco-system thinking. We already have much of what we need to hand in the form of living examples, tools and frameworks. What's missing is the co-creative vision and the common will to make this revolution a reality.

APPENDIX C:

“World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice”¹

Twenty-five years ago, the Union of Concerned Scientists and more than 1,500 independent scientists, including the majority of living Nobel laureates in the sciences, penned the 1992 “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity.” This significant effort by the Union of Concerned Scientists expresses dire warning and a pleading to humanity:

These concerned professionals called on humankind to curtail environmental destruction and cautioned that “a great change in our stewardship of the Earth and the life on it is required, if vast human misery is to be avoided.”² In their manifesto, they showed that humans were on a collision course with the natural world. They expressed concern about current, impending, or potential damage on planet Earth involving ozone depletion, freshwater availability, marine fishery collapses, ocean dead zones, forest loss, biodiversity destruction, climate change, and continued human population growth. They proclaimed that fundamental changes were urgently needed to avoid the consequences our present course would bring.³

The authors of the 1992 declaration feared that humanity was pushing Earth’s ecosystems beyond their capacities to support the web of life. They described how we are fast approaching many of the limits of what the planet can tolerate without substantial and irreversible harm. The scientists pleaded that we stabilize the human population, describing how our large numbers—swelled by another 2 billion people since 1992, a 35 percent increase—exert stresses on Earth that can overwhelm other efforts to realize a sustainable future.⁴ They implored that we cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and phase out fossil fuels, reduce deforestation, and reverse the trend of collapsing biodiversity.

On the 25th anniversary of their call, we look back at their warning and evaluate the human response by exploring available time-series data. Since 1992, with the exception of stabilizing the stratospheric ozone layer, humanity has failed to make sufficient progress in generally solving these foreseen environmental challenges, and alarmingly,

¹ William J. Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Thomas M. Newsome, Mauro Galettie, Mohammed Alamgir, Eileen Crist, Mahmoud I. Mahmoud, and William F. Laurance, “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice,” *BioScience* 20, no. 10 (2017): 1–3, accessed December 12, 2017, <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article-abstract/doi/10.1093/biosci/bix125/4605229>.

² William J. Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Mauro Galetti, Thomas M Newsome, Mohammed Alamgir, Eileen Crist, Mahmoud I. Mahmoud, William F. Laurance and signatory countries (A full list of signatories can be found in the Supplemental file S1).

³ Ibid.

⁴ E. Crist, C. Mora, and R. Engelman, “The Interaction of Human Population, Food Production, and Biodiversity Protection,” *Science* 356 (2017): 260–264.

most of them are getting far worse. Especially troubling is the current trajectory of catastrophic anthropogenic climate change due to rising GHGs from burning fossil fuels,⁵ deforestation,⁶ and agricultural production—particularly from farming ruminants for meat consumption.⁷ Moreover, we have unleashed a mass extinction event, the sixth in roughly 540 million years, wherein many current life forms could be annihilated or at least committed to extinction by the end of this century.

Humanity is now being given a second notice as illustrated by these alarming trends. “We are jeopardizing our future by not reining in our intense but geographically and demographically uneven material consumption and by not perceiving continued rapid population growth as a primary driver behind many ecological and even societal threats.”⁸ “By failing to adequately limit population growth, reassess the role of an economy rooted in growth, reduce greenhouse gases, incentivize renewable energy, protect habitat, restore ecosystems, halt defaunation, and constrain invasive alien species, humanity is not taking the urgent steps needed to safeguard our imperiled biosphere.”⁹

⁵ J. Hansen, et al. 2013. Assessing “dangerous climate change”: Required reduction of carbon emissions to protect young people, future generations and nature. PLOS ONE 8: e81648.

⁶ R.J. Keenan, G.A. Reams, F. Achard, J.V. de Freitas, A. Grainger, and E. Lindquist, “Dynamics of Global Forest Area: Results from the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment,” *Forest Ecology and Management*, 352 (2015): 9–20.

⁷ W.J. Ripple, P. Smith, H. Haberl, S.A. Montzka, C. McAlpine, D.H. Boucher, “Ruminants, Climate Change and Climate Policy,” *Nature Climate Change* no. 4 (2014): 2–5, doi:10.1038/nclimate2081.

⁸ Crist, Mora, and Engelman, 260–264.

⁹ William J. Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Mauro Galetti, Thomas M Newsome, Mohammed Alangir, Eileen Crist, Mahmoud I. Mahmoud, William F. Laurance (A full list of signatories can be found in the Supplemental file S1.)

APPENDIX D:

“Principles of a new U.S. trade policy for North American Agriculture” Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy¹

Current United States trade policies are top-down with corporate control of the trade and political process designed to maximize access and profit for them as stakeholders. What is lost in the process, however, are the voices of small family farms, of sustainable, chemical free and non-patented seed input. The following is an example of a private non-profit entity creating an avenue for other voices to be heard. This represents macro issues related to food and faith.

Current U.S. trade policy is designed to promote the interests of agribusinesses and other multinational corporations over those of family farmers. The resulting agreements have contributed to the economic and social erosion of rural communities in the U.S. and oftentimes devastation of its trading partners and fail to address very real problems of price volatility and environmental sustainability. Simply increasing exports will not solve these problems.

We support the demands of many civil society organizations who reject NAFTA and similar free-trade agreements. NAFTA should be replaced with a different agreement with the goal of increasing living standards in all three countries. This should start from a thorough, open and democratic assessment of those agreements that involves both rural and urban communities. The trade negotiation process itself must be made more transparent to include the participation of all affected sectors, including independent farmers. If trade agreements include provisions related to agriculture, the overall goal should be to achieve balanced trade that supports fair and sustainable rural economies and food supplies. We call for the following priorities:

1. **Restore local and national sovereignty over farm and food policy:** Trade agreements subjugate national laws and standards to legal rulings of foreign trade tribunals. U.S. farm programs must adhere to the World Trade Organization Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), which restricts farm policies that address price or production — the two most effective policy levers to ensure that farmers are not hurt by the vagaries of weather, disease or market volatility. All nations should have the right to democratically establish domestic policies supported by their citizenry. That includes farm policies that ensure that farmers are paid fairly for their crops and livestock and other farm and food policies that protect farmers and consumers. In the case of NAFTA, this should include:
 - Restore Country-of-Origin Meat Labels (COOL): The 2002 farm bill established country-of-origin meat labels for beef and pork, but Canada

¹ Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Minneapolis, MN, “Principles of a new U.S. trade policy for North American Agriculture,” accessed November 18, 2017, www.iatp.org/collection/nafta-portal.

and Mexico challenged the commonsense label as an illegal trade barrier in 2009. Canada and Mexico should withdraw their WTO COOL complaint and award in the NAFTA Renegotiated Agreement. The U.S. should clearly address the complexity of the label to clarify points previously raised by Mexico and Canada. All countries should enforce consumers right to know about what is in their foods.

- Reject new proposals on Regulatory Cooperation that undermine state and local authority to determine the best rules for their communities. Current proposals in TTIP and TPP would establish new international bureaucracies to pass judgment over local and federal rules on pesticides, food labels, and other measures designed to improve local food systems.
 - Together, the NAFTA countries should advocate for revisions in the rules at the WTO AoA to protect the right of each country to establish policies with respect to food and agriculture that allow for inventory management and strategic food reserves and to establish border control and other mechanisms to protect the right of each country to prevent dumping of agricultural commodities at below the cost of production. A first step in this direction would be to agree to a Special Safeguard Mechanism for agricultural commodities key to food security.
2. **Stop corporate giveaways in trade agreements.** NAFTA has consolidated corporate control over many aspects of agriculture in ways that are unfair to farmers, farmworkers and consumers. It was the first trade deal signed by the U.S. to include the controversial investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism, which allows foreign companies to sue for damages over laws, rules or actions that allegedly undermine their profits. ISDS dispute in NAFTA have already been used to challenge rules on softwood lumber, high fructose corn syrup and pesticides. U.S. trade policy should:
- Remove ISDS provisions in NAFTA and other trade agreements. Investment disputes should be dealt with under existing national legal systems.
 - Respect and protect regulations or policies intended to reduce anti-trust and anti-competitive practices in agriculture, including laws on price manipulation and limits on mergers of agribusiness firms. Such rules should not be limited by state-to-state or any other form of dispute resolution in trade or investment agreements.
 - Reject intellectual property rights or other provisions in trade agreements that limit farmers' ability to save and share seeds and strengthen the power of seed companies and agribusinesses over farmers. Mexico is not currently bound by those rules and should not be coerced into signing it under the guise of a trade agreement.
 - Reject new proposals in TPP that speed up rules on approval of agricultural biotechnology products in ways that bypass national efforts to assess their safety, effectiveness and impacts on rural communities.
3. **Ensure economic viability and resilience in rural communities.** Major changes in domestic farm policy are needed to ensure that farmers and ranchers receive prices that meet their costs of production. In addition, countries should have the

right and ability to protect their farmers from unfair imports that distort the domestic market, undermine prices and ultimately compromise the economic viability of independent farmers.

- Apply existing laws to prevent dumping. The United States has several tools to prevent unfair imports, including anti-dumping mechanisms (when imports from a company are unfairly priced below the cost of production), countervailing duty mechanisms (for artificially low-priced imports that benefit from government subsidies) and import surge protections on products that flood and distort domestic markets. The U.S. International Trade Commission generally has not effectively applied them to farm products despite numerous investigations. Similar mechanisms should be employed in all three NAFTA countries, starting with investigations of fruit and vegetable imports to the United States and corn imports to Mexico.
- Protect the rights of farmworkers to decent wages and working conditions. One of the consequences of the devastation of Mexican farming communities under NAFTA has been an increase in migration to the U.S., where farmworkers often labor under precarious conditions. New rules should be established that generate rural jobs in all three countries and that protect farmworkers' labor and other human rights.

Endorsed by

Food & Water Watch
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
National Family Farm Coalition
National Farmers Union
R-CALF
Rural Coalition

www.iatp.org/collection/nafta-portal

APPENDIX E:
SELECTED BIBLE VERSES REGARDING FOOD AND FAITH
(ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)

Old Testament

Genesis 1:29

And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.”

Genesis 1:30

“And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

Genesis 9:30

“Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything.”

Genesis 27:28

May God give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine.

Exodus 16:1–36

They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.”

Exodus 23:25

You shall serve the Lord your God, and he will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you.

Leviticus 11:1–30

And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them, “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, these are the living things that you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth. Whatever parts the hoof and is cloven-footed and chews the cud, among the

animals, you may eat. Nevertheless, among those that chew the cud or part the hoof, you shall not eat these: The camel, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. And the rock badger, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you.”

Leviticus 19:19

“You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind. You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor shall you wear a garment of cloth made of two kinds of material.”

Leviticus 23:1–26:46

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, these are the appointed feasts of the Lord that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the Lord in all your dwelling places. These are the appointed feasts of the Lord, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is the Lord's Passover.”

Numbers 11:1–14:45

And the people complained in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes, and when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp. Then the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire died down. So the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burned among them. Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, “Oh that we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!”

Deuteronomy 8:1–11:32

“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you.”

Deuteronomy 8:8

A land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey.

Deuteronomy 14:1–29

“You are the sons of the Lord your God. You shall not cut yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead. For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. You shall not eat any abomination. These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep.”

Deuteronomy 22:9

“You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the whole yield be forfeited, the crop that you have sown and the yield of the vineyard.”

2 Samuel 23:1–39

Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel: “The Spirit of the Lord speaks by me; his word is on my tongue. The God of Israel has spoken; the Rock of Israel has said to me: When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth. For does not my house stand so with God? For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire?”

2 Chronicles 26:10

And he built towers in the wilderness and cut out many cisterns, for he had large herds, both in the Shephelah and in the plain, and he had farmers and vinedressers in the hills and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil.

Job 23:12

I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.

Psalms 22:26

The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever!

Psalms 72:1–5

Of Solomon. “Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son! May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice! Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness! May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor! May they fear you while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!”

Psalm 72:16

May there be abundance of grain in the land; on the tops of the mountains may it wave; may its fruit be like Lebanon; and may people blossom in the cities like the grass of the field.

Psalms 81:10

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.”

Psalms 104:14–15

You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart.

Psalm 119:103

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Psalms 136:25

He who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 145:15–16

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Proverbs 15:17

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fattened ox and hatred with it.

Proverbs 17:1

Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting with strife.

Proverbs 23:3

Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food.

Proverbs 23:21

For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will clothe them with rags.

Proverbs 24:13

My son, eat honey, for it is good, and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste.

Proverbs 25:27

It is not good to eat much honey, nor is it glorious to seek one's own glory.

Proverbs 27:7

One who is full loathes honey, but to one who is hungry everything bitter is sweet.

Ecclesiastics 9:7

Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do.

Isaiah 1:19

If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land.

Isaiah 7:15

He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Isaiah 17:10–11

For you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the Rock of your refuge; therefore, though you plant pleasant plants and sow the vine-branch of a stranger, though you make them grow on the day that you plant them, and make them blossom in the morning that you sow, yet the harvest will flee away in a day of grief and incurable pain.

Isaiah 33:15–16

He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, who despises the gain of oppressions, who shakes his hands, lest they hold a bribe, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed and shuts his eyes from looking on evil, he will dwell on the heights; his place of defense will be the fortresses of rocks; his bread will be given him; his water will be sure.

Isaiah 55:1–13

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and a nation that did not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.”

Isaiah 65:3–6

A people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and making offerings on bricks; who sit in tombs, and spend the night in secret places; who eat pig's flesh, and broth of tainted meat is in their vessels; who say, “Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you. These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all the day. Behold, it is written before me: “I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will indeed repay into their bosom.””

Ezekiel 4:9

“And you, take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet and emmer, and put them into a single vessel and make your bread from them. During the number of days that you lie on your side, 390 days, you shall eat it”.

Joel 2:26

“You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame”.

Zechariah 7:6

And when you eat and when you drink, do you not eat for yourselves and drink for yourselves?

New Testament

Matthew 3:4

Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

Matthew 4:4

But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.””

Matthew 5:6

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”

Matthew 6:25–26

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”

Matthew 6:1–34

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that others may praise them. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.”

Matthew 7:13–21

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.”

Matthew 15:11

It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.”

Mark 7:14–23

And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.” And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean).

Luke 6:43

“For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit.”

Luke 12:23

“For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing”.

Luke 12:33–34

“Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

John 4:34

Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.”

John 6:1–13:38

After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?”

John 6:27

“Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.”

John 6:35

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”

John 21:1–25

After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, “Children, do you have any fish?” They answered him, “No...”

Acts 14:17

“Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

Romans 14:1–23

“As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.”

1 Corinthians 6:13

“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.”

1 Corinthians 8:13

“Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.”

1 Corinthians 10:20–21

“No, I imply that what pagan’s sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.”

1 Corinthians 10:27

“If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience.”

1 Corinthians 10:31

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

1 Corinthians 11:29

“For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.”

1 Corinthians 15:38–39

But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Colossians 2:16–17

Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

Colossians 4:6

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Hebrews 12:14–16

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.”

Hebrews 13:9

Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.

3 John 1:2

“Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.”

APPENDIX F:

OTHER AUTHORITATIVE RESOURCES

The following journals, articles, and Internet websites provide additional research and data to support this dissertation and to create further understanding of the relationship between food and faith; sustainability; interdependence; land practices; and the critical nature of why action is required.

“A Christian Vision of Ethical Eating.” April 24, 2012. <http://everydayliturgy.com/a-christian-vision-of-ethical-eating/>. Accessed March 30, 2016.

“Bio-Imperialism: Why the Biotech Bullies Must Be Stopped.”
https://www.organicconsumers.org/old_articles/monsanto/muststop090304.php
Accessed April 2, 2016.

“Christian Earthkeeping Curriculum.” George Fox Evangelical Seminary. 2016.
<http://www.georgefox.edu/seminary/programs/christian-earthkeeping/curriculum-courses.html> Accessed April 3, 2016.

Corcoran, Michael. “Democracy in Peril: Twenty Years of Media Consolidation under the Telecommunications Act.” 1997. <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/34789-democracy-in-peril-twenty-years-of-media-consolidation-under-the-telecommunications-act>. Accessed April 2, 2016.

“Demand Our Leaders Take Action to Protect Hawai`i from Pesticides Now!”
https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/demand-our-leaders-take-action-to-protect-hawaii-from-pesticides-now?source=direct_link&.. Accessed March 31, 2016.

Food, Inc. Directed and produced by Robert Kenner and Elise Pearlstein, Sept. 7, 2008, River Road Entertainment. (Examines corporate farming in America)

“Genetic Imperialism” and “Bio-Serfdom” the Implications of Genetic Engineering for Farmers and Agriculture Rafael V. Mariano, Chairperson of the Peasant Movement of the Philippines (KMP) 30mar00’.
<http://www.mindfully.org/GE/Genetic-Imperialism-Bio-Serfdom.htm>. Accessed April 2, 2016.

“Glyphosate and the Deterioration of America’s Health.” November 21, 2014.
<http://gmwatch.eu/index.php/news/archive/2014/15774-glyphosate-and-the-deterioration-of-america-s-health>. Accessed April 3, 2016.

‘GMO Free USA’. “Watch the Short Version of Genetic Roulette.” 2016.
<https://www.facebook.com/GMOFreeUSA/posts/982172541823209> Accessed April 4, 2016.

Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics ISSN: 1187-7863 (print) and 1573-322x (online) (“The Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics presents articles on ethical issues confronting agriculture, food production and environmental concerns).

“SEED, Hawaii ‘Our Vision’”. <http://hawaiiseed.org>. Accessed January 29, 2016.

“The US Government at Work with Monsanto... “ The Organic & Non-GMO Report. 2016. https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=10154130070780348&id=98397470347. Accessed March 31, 2016.

<http://www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread949515/pg1> (Seeds of Death, film)

<http://press.georgetown.edu/book/georgetown/journal-society-christian-ethics-13> (Christian ethics)

<http://www.georgefox.edu/seminary/programs/christian-earthkeeping/curriculum-courses.html> (University program)

<http://www.thelibertybeacon.com/2014/02/14the-difference-between-a-farmer-and-a-global-chemical-corporation/> (David and Goliath)

<https://www.organicconsumers.org/> (Organic Consumers advocacy organization)

<http://ydssustainability.yale.edu/ministry-earth-community> (Yale)

<http://farminary.ptsem.edu> (Princeton Theological Seminary’s innovative project)

<http://jonrappoport.wordpress.com/2014/11/25/chemical-warfare-the-state-of-hawaii-vs-the-people/> (Syngenta and other multinational agrichemical companies and poisons).

<http://www.emoregon.org/food.farms.php> (Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership (IFFP), a project of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns).

<http://www.cornwallalliance.org/2005/10/31/a-theological-framework-for-evaluating-genetically-modified-food/> (Theological framework GMO’s)

<http://www.cfr.org/energy-and-environment/role-religious-environmentalism/p36315> (Role of religious environmentalism)

<http://www.openbible.info/topics/thefoodweeat> (What does the Bible say about food?)

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/i.0038-4941.2005.00297.x/pdf> (Religious values and environmental concerns)

<http://catholicecology.net/blog/interview-dr-celia-deane-drummond-part-1-global-variations-eco-theology> (Catholic discourse on foods)

<http://elcafactchecker.com/page/2/> (ELCA and foods)

<http://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/school-history-philosophy-and-religion/ideas-matter/2001-biotechnology-philosophical-perplexities-ethica;-enigmas>
(OSU symposium)

<http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=GMOs:+Theological+and+ethical+Perspectives+Forum&hl=en&as> (Scholarly articles)

<http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/siteimages/peace/resources/socialjusticecolition/Readings/CRLFaithFoodtheEnvironmentSymposiumWinter2015.pdf> (One symposium many views)

<http://advocacydays.org/2013-at-gods-table/> (Food justice)

<http://www.hungerreport.org/2013/featured/christian-advocacy-and-the-millennium-development-goals/> (Lord's pray, give us this day our daily bread)

<http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/5477/should-christians-engage-in-advocacy>
(Should Christians engage in advocacy?)

<http://www.globalethics.net/documents/4289936/13403260/GEThesis8web.pdf/8a9d1fff-efe-45b2-8045-6ea34de9e3c7> (Major thesis on food and rights to)

APPENDIX G:

ANCIENT HISTORY OF FOOD 800–1400 AD

This appendix is a selection of passages quoted directly from Jerome H. Neyrey's "Reader's Guide to Meals, Food and Table Fellowship in the New Testament,"¹ including the footnotes citing his sources. It provides an important survey of the ancient history of food from 800 to 1400 AD:

John Pilch, an Ancient Near East scholar at Georgetown University, organizes his study of ancient foods and diet around a citation from Sirach, who penned *The Book of All-Virtuous Wisdom*, commonly called *The Wisdom of Sirach*: "The basic necessities of human life are water, fire, iron, and salt, flour, honey, and milk, the juice of the grape, oil, and clothing."² Pilch then describes what people drank (water, goat's milk, honey, wine, oil) and what they ate (various types of grain).³ Grain, oil, and wine were the most important commodities, especially grain and the products made from it. One-half of the caloric intake of much of the ancient Mediterranean region came from bread. Since wheat was superior to barley, the husband who provided an estranged wife with barley bread was required to provide her twice the ration of wheat. Vegetables (lentils, beans, peas, chickpeas, lupines, cabbage, and turnips) were common, but of inferior status. Olive oil

¹ Jerome H. Neyrey, "Reader's Guide to Meals, Food, and Table Fellowship in the New Testament," accessed December 11, 2017, <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/meals.html>. Also see Jerome H. Neyrey, "Reader's Guide to Clean/Unclean, Pure/Polluted, and Holy/Profane: The Idea and System of Purity," accessed December 12, 2017, <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/purity.html>.

² Yeshua B. Sirach, as quoted by John Pilch, "The Necessities of Life: Drinking and Eating," *BibT* 31 (1993), 231–237, as quoted in Jerome H. Neyrey, "Reader's Guide to Meals: Food and Table Fellowship in the New Testament," University of Notre Dame, accessed November 11, 2017, <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/meals.html>.

³ John Pilch, "The Necessities of Life: Drinking and Eating," *BibT* 31 (1993): 231–237, as quoted in Jerome H. Neyrey, "Reader's Guide to Meals: Food and Table Fellowship in the New Testament," University of Notre Dame, accessed November 11, 2016, <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/meals.html>. Another Jewish text, a certain messianic passage (Ket. 5:8–9), has served as the organizing principle for several studies of the diet in Roman Palestine. Also relevant in Neyrey's article are citations of Magen Broshi "The Diet of Palestine in the Roman Period-Introductory Notes," *The Israel Museum Journal* 5 (1986): 41–56; and Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 339–340. "He who maintains his wife by a third party may not provide for her less than two qabs of wheat or four qabs of barley [per week] . . . And one pays over to her a half qab of pulse, a half log of oil, and a qab of dried figs or a maneh of fig cake. And if he does not have it, he provides instead fruit of some other type" (m. Ket. 5.8). Malina and Rohrbaugh fill out these terse remarks in the Mishnah, which concern the support a man owes to his divorced wife. They observe that the amounts specified suggest an intake of about 1,800 calories per day, slightly above what the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization recommends. The article is valuable also for its excellent bibliography.

and fruit, principally the dried fig, were also a required part of the provisions an estranged husband must provide. Another quarter of the caloric intake came from wine, usually for males and wealthy women. It is estimated that an adult male in ancient Rome consumed a liter of wine daily.⁴

Meat and poultry were expensive and rarely eaten by peasants. Most people ate it only on feast days or holidays, though temple priests ate it in abundance. Livestock kept solely to provide meat was unknown in Roman Palestine and was later prohibited by the Talmudic sages. Fish was a typical Sabbath dish. Milk products were usually consumed as cheese and butter. Eggs, especially chicken eggs, were also an important food. Honey was the primary sweetener (figs met some needs) and was widely used in the Roman period. Salt served not only as a spice but also as a preservative for meat and fish; and pepper, ginger, and other spices were imported and expensive.

Examining the “bread basket” of Palestine, Broshi takes the reader through the same food groups mentioned above, but with a more scientific concern for the caloric value of each item and a comparison of their consumption patterns in contemporary nations. He also cites valuable comparative materials from ethno-archaeological research and from mishnaic and Talmudic texts. In this study we learn in detail about various qualities of bread and how they were made. Besides information on olive oil, we learn about other oils made from seeds and nuts. The full array of fruits and vegetables (30 kinds each) available is also noted. Broshi introduces the reader to the cattle economy of the Roman period, when the raising of animals for meat was actually prohibited. Fish, especially in fish sauces, formed a regular part of the diet. Mention is also made of the raising and consumption of non-kosher items such as boars and rabbits.⁵

A third study of this material was done by Gildas Hamel. In a chapter called “Daily Bread,” Hamel documents in considerable detail from ancient authors the various food groups consumed in Roman Palestine (fruits, grains, legumes, vegetables, meat and animal products, spices and drinks). His recounting includes important information on the amount of a given item from a typical tree or field, food preparation of various items, popularity of certain foods, and accessibility of certain foods to rich and poor. His treatment of bread is especially worthwhile. He borrows from other classicists the judgment that “roughly speaking, classical diet consisted mainly of bread and porridge made from wheat or barley supplemented by vegetables, fish and spices and not much else.”⁶ There are, of course, descriptions of the luxurious banquets of aristocrats, who were delighted in consuming exotic and rare foods found in the Roman empire, almost in the sense of “can you top this?”⁷

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Magen Broshi “The Diet of Palestine in the Roman Period-Introductory Notes,” *The Israel Museum Journal* 5 (1986): 41–56, as quoted in Neyrey, “Reader’s Guide to Meals.”

⁶ Gildas Hamel, “Daily Bread,” *Poverty and Charity in Roman Palestine: The First Three Centuries* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), 8–56, 21.

⁷ Among the many texts available, see also Philo’s brief description in his *Contemplative Life* 48–57 and Petronius’ elaborate satire of such meals in his *Satyricon*. Other classical authors mention in great detail the variety of foods available for consumption, in particular Pliny, *Natural History*, books 17–19 and Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, books 1–2.

Dietary Restrictions of Biblical Times

Dietary restrictions of a culture also tell a great deal about a people group's attitude and posture toward growing and producing food. Of particular interest is the diet of Judeans in the second-temple period. It was a kosher diet, from which "unclean" foods were prohibited. Anthropologist Mary Douglas refocused critical analysis of the biblical diet by offering valuable clues on the cultural significance of the classification of foods, in particular "the abominations of Leviticus."⁸ After discussing the ancient tradition of allegorizing the distinction between clean and unclean foods in terms of virtue and vice, Douglas interprets the abominations of Leviticus in terms of symbolic anthropology, specifically in terms of God's holiness and separateness. *Holiness is related to wholeness—both words stemming from the same root word, "health," and is at the heart of the word "sacred"*; Leviticus focuses attention on the necessary physical perfection of things that may be offered in sacrifice and eaten. Correspondingly, hybrids and imperfect things are an abomination because they do not conform to the class to which they presumably belong. Douglas points to a cultural understanding of what constitutes a "clean" sky, land, and sea animal, an understanding which is not fully spelled out in the Bible, but which can be teased out with careful reading.⁹

Douglas' taxonomy of clean and unclean animals adds to scholarly conversation and of her analysis of the diet of the Israelites.¹⁰ In examining the classification of birds, fish, and animals, she adds that concern must be had for the multiple dimensions of Hebrew thought and culture. She notes three rules for meat: (a) rejection of certain animal kinds as unfit for table (Lev. 11; Deut. 14), (b) of those admitted as edible, the separation of the meat from blood before cooking (Lev. 17:10; Deut. 12:23–27), and (c) the total separation of milk from meat, which involves the minute specialization of utensils (Exod. 23:19; 34:26; Deut. 14:21). Analyzing dietary restrictions, Douglas then identifies what makes an animal an abomination, a classification that now includes notions of suitability for temple sacrifice and consumption as food.

Douglas then argues that the three rules noted above have close social and cultural correlations with other aspects of the world of the Hebrews. Animals fit for temple sacrifice (and so consumption) must be bodily whole or unblemished. This is consistent with the rule that Levites, who are selected for sacred temple duties, must be of pure descent and unblemished (Lev. 21:18–23). In regard to the second rule, certain birds, for example, may neither be offered nor eaten (m. Hul. 3.6), because they eat carrion and do not separate the meat from blood before eating. The third rule, which prohibits meat cooked in milk, replicates procreative functions, thus reflecting sexual rules concerning who may marry whom. Thus dietary restrictions replicate values, structures, and patterns

⁸ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 41–57.

⁹ Foods are clean that completely fulfill their definition in terms of diet, locomotion, and place. Perfect sky animals (birds) should not dive into the sea, nor should they eat fish in place of grain, nor should hop on the ground. Complete land animals should walk on legs, eat grass or grain (i.e., chew the cud). Likewise, clean sea animals should not crawl out of the sea; they must swim as fish do, and thus have scales.

¹⁰ Mary Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," in *Implicit Meanings* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), 262–273.

found in other areas of Hebrew culture. In examining dietary concerns, then, readers of ancient documents should be aware how these rules replicate other aspects of the social world of the peoples they represent.

Jean Soler's excellent article brings an anthropologist's eye not only to Leviticus, but also to the priestly material in the early parts of Genesis, which serve as the appropriate lens for reading Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.¹¹ Soler offers confirmation and expansion of Douglas' observations, especially the replication of the cultural understanding of wholeness and purity in relation to the physical body. The importance of his contribution lies in the careful analysis of the creation story (Gen. 1) and its symbolic replication in the ideology of the Israelite and Judean peoples.

The symbolic meaning of dietary restrictions for Judeans and Christians is based on the old adage, "You are what you eat." Hence, holy people eat holy (or whole) foods. Hence, when Apostle Peter objects to God concerning the unclean foods he is commanded to eat, as a "holy" person, he has kept a holy diet.¹² Part of the conflict with Jesus' disciples over eating grain plucked on the Sabbath lies in the issue of whether the grain was properly tithed; un-tithed food is not clean and so those who ate it could be considered unclean themselves.¹³

¹¹ Jean Soler, "The Dietary Prohibitions of the Hebrews," in Robert Forster and Orest Ranum, eds., *Food and Drink in History* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 126–138.

¹² Acts 10:13–14.

¹³ We have concentrated on the diet and dietary customs of Judeans because these impact biblical texts. For further study, see Walter Brothwell, "Foodstuffs, Cooking, and Drugs," *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean: Greece and Rome* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 247–61 on the Greco-Roman world, relying heavily on Pliny the Elder, favoring the Roman over the Greek world, which makes the article of particular importance to students of second-temple Judaism and early Christianity. Brothwell describes in great detail the various foods eaten and their percentage and importance in the diet of the ancients. He focuses on the basic elements of diet, but includes the more unusual foods available and their sources of origin.