

# The Bullseye

Our introductory Health and Temperance topic is entitled “The Bullseye.”

God's word declares: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” *1 Corinthians 10:31 NKJV*

The subject of temperance, in all its bearings, has an important place in the work of salvation. *Testimonies, Volume 9, p112.1*

In a simple dartboard target, there are a series of concentric rings around a central circle. The central circle is the bullseye. Hitting the bullseye results in the greatest number of points—the greatest benefit for your effort. Hitting succeeding rings outside the central circle result in lesser number of points—less benefit for your efforts. The greatest benefit for your efforts results from accumulating the greatest number of points—the greatest reward for your efforts throughout the period of play.

In a similar manner, “hitting” the bullseye in our lifestyle results in the greatest benefit. So, in our Health and Temperance time together, we will look at what our God has told us has the greatest benefit for both our short lives here on earth AND our future eternal lives with Jesus in Heaven.

The central bullseye is that which God first told Adam and Eve immediately following their creation. <sup>29</sup>And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. *Genesis 1:29 NKJV*

On the third day of Creation, God created foods. <sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. <sup>12</sup> And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> So the evening and the morning were the third day. *Genesis 1:11–13 NKJV*

Three foods:

1. Grass—primarily for the beasts of the field—which at that time included both those that chew the cud and those that today we consider to be flesh eaters.
2. Herb that yields seed—wheat, rice, corn and other vegetables.
3. Fruit of a tree—seed is in itself.

The beasts of the field included both what we think of today as domesticated farm animals—the cow and the lamb are examples—as well as wild animals of the world such as the bear and the lion.

The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. *Isaiah 11:7 NKJV*

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox. *Isaiah 65:25 NKJV*

Fruit is the seed found on a tree.

<sup>8</sup> The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. <sup>9</sup> And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. . . . *Genesis 2:8–9 NKJV*

One of the advantages of eating fruits is that God says that we may eat as much as we want without harming either the quantity of our life or the quality of our health.

<sup>15</sup> Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; *Genesis 2:15 NKJV*

He (God) does not say the same for green herbs or any of the many other things that we are accustomed to eating today.

<sup>17</sup> Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

<sup>18</sup> Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.

<sup>19</sup> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return." *Genesis 3:17–19 NKJV*

Because of sin, our lives now require work to bring grass, herbs (vegetables), and fruits to our tables. We eat more of the herbs (vegetables) now than was in the original diet. And bread from grains has replaced fruits as our primary food.

<sup>23</sup> therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. *Genesis 3:23*

Some of us can tell you that tilling the ground—digging it up so the grasses (and weeds) die—breaking up the soil so that the seeds can be planted and easily sprout, removing the rocks so the seeds can be planted, removing the thorns and thistles (weeds), praying for rain and sun at the appropriate times, and even harvesting can be hard work that is needed to be done at certain times of the year.

The fruit versus vegetable debate can sometimes reach such a fever pitch that the law must step in. In the 1893 United States Supreme Court case *Nix. v. Hedden*, the court ruled unanimously that an imported tomato should be taxed as a vegetable, rather than as a (less taxed) fruit. The court acknowledged that a tomato is a botanical fruit, but went with what they called the "ordinary" definitions of fruit and vegetable — the ones used in the kitchen.

Even the now abandoned North American Free Trade Agreement had pages and pages of specific definitions and identifications of fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts.

Fruit, herb (vegetable), or grass quiz:

1. Green beans? Fruit, herb, or grass?—Herb.
2. Apple? Fruit, herb, or grass?—Fruit.
3. Corn? Fruit, herb, or grass?—Herb.
4. Blueberries? Does it grow on a "tree?" Does it have a woody trunk? Does it return year after year? Fruit, herb, or grass?—Fruit.
5. Strawberry? Does it grow on a "tree?" Does it have a woody trunk? Does it return year after year? Fruit, herb, or grass?—Fruit.

By the way, the strawberry is the only fruit with the seeds on the outside. Does that disqualify it from being a fruit?

6. Lettuce? Fruit, herb, or grass? Can I call this "grass?" We eat the green leaves. It does go to seed if left alone, just as the grass in our lawn does.

7. Pecans? Does it grow on a “tree?” Does it have a woody trunk? Does it return year after year? Fruit, herb, or grass? Fruit.

The creation story does not use the term “nut.” However, Genesis 43:11 does mention pistachio nuts and almonds. And in the Song of Solomon 6:11, the Shulamite woman mentions nuts also.

8. Peanuts? Does it grow on a “tree?” This one is just weird! Does it grow on a “tree?” Yes. Does it have a woody trunk? Yes. Does it return year after year? Yes. But, unlike most tree fruits, the flower forms a “peg” that descends into the ground and a pod forms below ground that contains the seeds that are peanuts. Fruit, herb, or grass?—Fruit.
9. The pineapple does not grow on a tree. Nor does it continue from year to year. Nor does it have a woody stem. The multiple flowers turn into berries that merge into one object that we see as a pineapple. Left alone, the pineapple remains green but, when exposed to ethylene one week prior to harvest, the fruit turns a bright yellow—the same process as is used for bananas after they are harvested, shipped and received by the grocery stores. Fruit, herb, or grass?—Herb or vegetable. Not a fruit.
10. Bananas that we buy in the store today are a mutated variety that does not naturally form seeds. Wild bananas have large hard seeds, but over time bananas cultivated by humans have been bred to have smaller and smaller seeds. A modern domesticated banana has tiny, infertile black specks where the seeds used to be. In a sense, this may be called genetically “engineered” through the process of mutation selection and encouragement by humans. Still, the original banana is—a fruit. Whether the modern seedless banana is still a fruit by God’s definition is for you to decide.
11. Navel orange. No seeds! Here is another mutation that has been selectively cultivated by humans to have no seeds. The anthers do not develop pollen. This orange tree cannot reproduce without our help. In other instances, the flowers are sprayed to prevent the formation of seeds. In either case, “And God said, ‘See, I have given you . . . every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.’” *Genesis 1:29 NKJV* And, yet, we would call this a fruit.

When faced with the conflicting definitions of food groups, we should consult the definitions that God, the Creator, gave to Adam and Eve both inside the Garden of Eden and, after the fall from grace, outside the Garden of Eden. The greatest benefit to our physical well being, our Spiritual well being, our ability to reason, and our long and happy life lies in seeking to always eat the best foods prescribed by God.

This is a chart of Adventist Church members and their diet according to the Seventh-day Adventist Global Membership Survey of 2018.

- 14% eat meat most days,
- 24% are pescatarian (vegetarian plus eat fish),
- 32% eat meat once a week or less,
- 11% eat meat a few times per week,
- 14% are vegetarian (eating fruit, vegetables, grains and nuts plus milk and eggs for some),
- Only 5% are vegan (eating only fruit, vegetables, grains and nuts).

Which target ring are you aiming for? Does this give you the maximum benefits? May God bless your efforts to aim for His perfect target—the food bullseye.