

# Becoming Vegetarian



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# Why Worry About What You Eat?



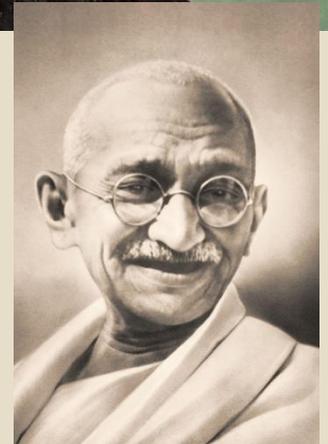
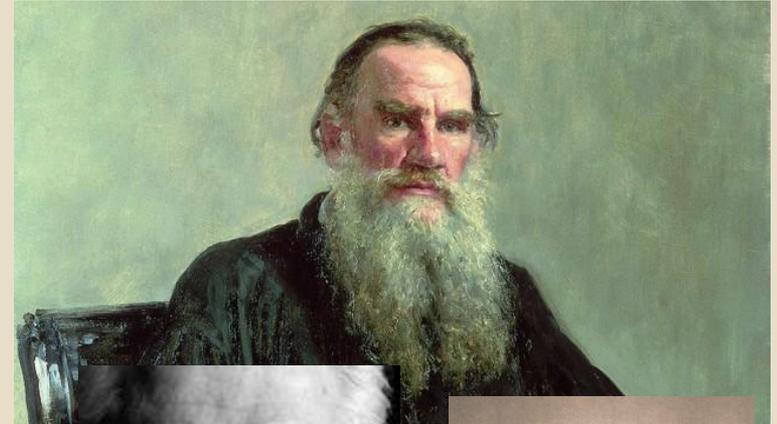
“... do you not know that your body is a **temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? --**1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20**

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only **do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence**, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. **Live by the Spirit**, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. **For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.**  
—**Galatians 5:13-17**

# Great Vegetarianism Thinkers



- Leonardo da Vinci
- Nikola Tesla
- Mahatma Gandhi
- George Bernard Shaw
- Franz Kafka
- Rosa Parks
- Bill Clinton



- “If a [hu]man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals.”- ***The First Step, Leo Tolstoy***
- “A man can live and be healthy without killing animals for food; therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite.”  
—***Leo Tolstoy***

# My Vegetarian Journey



- Began at ...

- **But, prior to that:**

- Poverty and food choice

- Picky eater! ☹️

- Weight challenges



- Met Fred on eHarmony in December of 2008

- Vegetarian dates

- Engagement

- Hinduism = kitchen religion

- “Kosher” kitchen of Hindu household

- Writing about Christian vegetarianism  
(*The Christian Century*, February 2015)



# Journey Continued ...

## From *Saffron Cross*, Chapter 7



- Shrove Tuesday 2010 (last meat meal)
- Meat-free 2010
- Spiritual commitment and discipline
- Wedding day: oops!
- Other slip-ups
- **Shift:** July 2012 when I began to *study* why Hindus were vegetarian
- Theology of the soul; modes of ignorance, passion, and goodness (*Saffron Cross*, Chapter 7, pages 97-108)

# Christian Vegetarianism?



- Christ's practice of **non-violence and material minimalism.**
- Christ's practice of **advocating** for the poor, the marginalized, the "other," (adults, children, animals).
- Paul's writings on flesh vs. spirit; fruits of the Spirit; **eliminating that which distracts us from God.**
- Apply the *Gita's* modes of **goodness, ignorance, and passion to Christian practice.**

# No, really. Why should I become a Christian Vegetarian? The Scary Stuff!



**SPIRITUAL/ETHICAL  
ISSUES**

**HEALTH ISSUES**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

# The Scary Stuff:

## Issues with Animal Consumption



- **Spiritual/ethical:** violence, unnecessary indulgence, materialism, consumerism, participating in poor treatment of animals and workers.
- **Health:** WHO and *The Journal of Cancer Research* recent publications on all red meat (including beef and pork), processed meat (deli meat/hot dogs/sausage), and barbequed meat linked to cancer. The risk is possibly as high as smoking cigarettes or asbestos exposure.
- **Environmental :** methane gas emissions; global warming is increasing at an exponential rate.

# Factory Farming Effects on the Environment

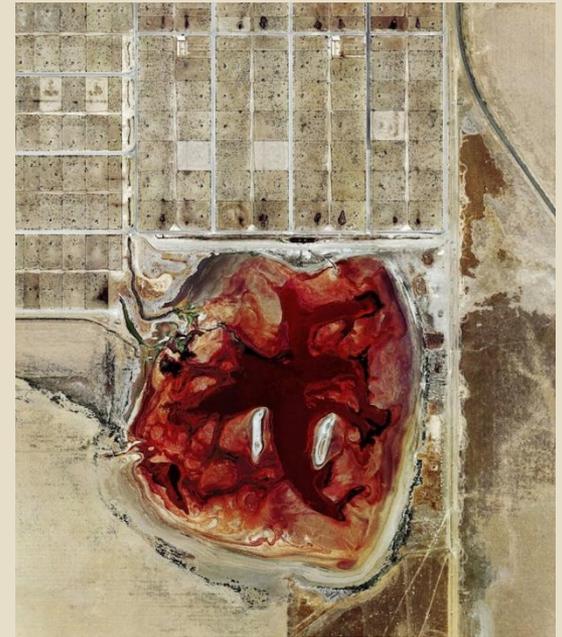
## From DoSomething.Org



- About **10 billion land animals** in the United States are raised for dairy, meat, and eggs each year.
- Factory farming accounts for **37% of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) emissions, which has more than 20 times the global warming potential of CO<sub>2</sub>.**
- **Manure** can end up in **bodies of water** and **accumulate in the sediment**, affecting clean drinking water.
- Burning fossil fuels to produce fertilizers for animal feed crops may emit **41 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.**

# The Ag Industry's Dirty Secret

- Contract Farmers
- Factory farms
- Waste lagoons
- Feed lots
- Bacteria



(e-coli) in water supply of poor communities

- No federal oversight; public is unaware and depends upon uncover investigation
- Leads to ag-gag laws

# Guess What?!

## NC's Ag-Gag Law Effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016!



- **NC is one of the U.S.'s leading producers of hogs and pigs** (Duplin and Sampson are leading county producers; average of 4,300 hogs per farm)
- **\$2.9 billion industry in NC**, but ... what do you do with the waste? Contaminated water supplies in poor areas of eastern NC.
- NC contract farmers for Purdue and Pilgrim Corporations (chicken) under investigation for **buried alive practices.**
- Even “cage-free” “humanely raised,” “organic,” and “cage free” has its issues, as they are free to roam, but with very limited space due to volume of chickens. **Their “freedom” is typically *inside* barns with artificial ventilation.**



# Repercussions of Whistle Blowing



- “Every time that I've spoke out against the poultry companies and the wrongdoings, they retaliate by cutting my pay, cutting my chickens back, cutting the quality of my chickens.”  
- **Anonymous Farmer**
- **Contract farmers and workers will be silenced by ag-gag laws**

# NOW: The Good Stuff!



**SPIRITUAL BENEFITS**

**HEALTH BENEFITS**

**ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

**ETHICAL BENEFITS**

# Benefits of Vegetarianism

## The Power of Choice



IF YOU THINK YOU'RE TOO  
SMALL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
YOU HAVEN'T SPENT A NIGHT  
WITH A MOSQUITO.  
- AFRICAN PROVERB

- **Spiritual benefits:** theology of the soul (Hinduism); practice of non-violence (Christianity).
- **Health benefits:** lower cholesterol and fat intake; feeling better. Caring for the body as a temple.
- **Environmental benefits:** if you reduce or stop your meat consumption, you lower methane gas emissions and global warming. All it takes is one somebody to turn into a lot of everybody.
- **Ethical benefits (the power of your pocketbook):** treatment of farmers, factory farm workers, animals, and poor communities where these farms are located.

# Be Inspired!



ONE PERSON  
CAN MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE,  
AND EVERYONE  
SHOULD TRY.

-JOHN F. KENNEDY-

**ONE  
vegetarian  
human saves  
between 371  
and 582  
animals per  
year (land and  
water).**

# Practical Tips!



- **Meatless Monday!**
- **Eliminate one or two kinds of animals** from your diet (example: take a break from pork and red meat).
- Try a **Lenten spiritual practice** of reducing meat (Shrove Tuesday is February 9<sup>th</sup> this coming year!)
- **Read, educate yourself** (resources on next slide); educate others.
- **Pray about it;** reflect on it; listen to God.
- The Millennials are watching! 😊 **Will you be an effective, Gospel-led Christian who embodies the teachings of Christ—both in your speech and your action?**

# Resources



## Writing on Vegetarian Journey:

- <http://www.christiancentury.org/blogs/archive/2015-01/how-lenten-fast-strengthened-my-interfaith-marriage>
- <http://fredeaker.com/4-important-reasons-to-be-vegetarian/>
- <http://jdanatrent.com/2012/02/lenten-vegetarianism/>
- **Animals Saved by Vegetarianism:**
- <http://www.countinganimals.com/how-many-animals-does-a-vegetarian-save/>
- **WHO on Red Meat, Processed Meats, and Cancer:**  
[http://cancerres.aacrjournals.org/content/75/15\\_Supplement/836.short](http://cancerres.aacrjournals.org/content/75/15_Supplement/836.short)
- [http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2015/pdfs/pr240\\_E.pdf](http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2015/pdfs/pr240_E.pdf)
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25600418%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20>

# Resources Continued



- **Factory Farming:**
- <http://www.wired.com/2013/09/mishka-henner-factory-farms/>
- <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2015/06/07/3666617/north-carolina-ag-gag-environmental-impacts/>
- <http://interactive.fusion.net/cock-fight/>
- <https://www.dosomething.org/facts/11-facts-about-factory-farms-and-environment>
- [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/undercover-slaughterhouse-video-pigs\\_5643995be4b08cda348724c3](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/undercover-slaughterhouse-video-pigs_5643995be4b08cda348724c3)