

## I LIKE KETCHUP ON MY MEATLOAF by Carl McMurray

I like ketchup on my meatloaf. I really do. I like ketchup and I like my wife's meatloaf and I like them together, but I don't always put the two together. This fact of life came home to me this past week because, you guessed it, we had meatloaf.

Now, when I eat at someone else's house and they serve meatloaf (I usually can't help myself) I look around for the ketchup. Invariably I try to not show it, but if it's not on the table I'm disappointed. I'm not necessarily disappointed because I need ketchup. I'm usually disappointed because the meatloaf needs ketchup! Which brings me back to my conundrum with my wife's meatloaf. You see I like ketchup on my meatloaf. But my wife's meatloaf is usually so good that it doesn't need ketchup. A few days ago I sat at the table and had her meatloaf with a ketchup bottle by my plate and never opened the bottle. Sigh. When this happens, i.e. that the meatloaf is so good that to ketchup-ize it would be to do it damage, then I have to go to plan "B." I have to wait till the next day for leftover meatloaf or maybe even a meatloaf sandwich to join the two together for a taste treat.

Are you wondering by now what in the world my meatloaf fancy is doing in this small article? It is only this. In 1 Peter 2:2-3, the apostle writes about longing for the word like a babe longs for pure milk, in order to grow, "if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." I would submit that although we like many things that may seem to go well together, when one really has a taste for the Lord's direction and guidance and kindness, then nothing else seems to suit it and to add our own ideas to His is to do His directions damage.

I like organization and efficiency and simplicity. I see that in the church and its autonomous congregational nature. And I see that damaged when men try to centralize congregations through any form of arrangement. I see it damaged when Christians meddle in the affairs of other congregations. I like instrumental music. I find it exciting and stimulating. But I see it do damage to any worship where the words become covered by melody and congregations have an excuse to sing quieter, with less joy, less praise, less outpouring of emotion because some keyboard will do it for them. I have seen the sweet taste of melody made in the heart and played on the chords of individual praise givers whether we are well tuned instruments, growlers, or squeakers. When will we learn that God's directions are always going to be the sweetest and best for us, and any additions are just going to do damage?

Maybe next time I'll tell you about Heinz 57 sauce.