

“Pass the relish please”

By Roberto Bruno

The intensity in the air was so thick on that faithful day of July 4, 2009. The spirit of competition hung low like a thick cloud. The contestants, six time defending champion Takeru “Tsunami” Kobayashi of Japan. The opponent Joseph Christian “Jaws” Chestnut of San Jose California. This was definitely a David and Goliath story. The starting gun fires and the 94th annual Nathan’s Hotdog Eating Contest begins. It’s a flurry of hotdogs and buns being grabbed and shoved. For the contestants it seemed like an eternity but to the spectators the test lasted only a few moments. Finally the judges emerge with the count. The suspense builds in the fans. Then the call is made, Joseph Christian “Jaws” Chestnut is crowned the hotdog eating champion of the world and on top of that sets the new world record for consuming 68 hotdogs and buns in 10 minutes. Who said American heroes are dead? ☺

Unfortunately the satisfaction of winning and/or eating is temporary. But our human nature seems to always want to be satisfied with temporary things. Romans 14:17 tells us, *“For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”*. If we rely on the gift of the Holy Spirit we won’t need to seek satisfaction from the temporary because eternal things (*righteousness and peace and joy*) will fill those voids. The difficult thing is that we live in a temporal world in temporal bodies that crave temporal things (*“Help us Lord!”*). We need to hold our human nature in check. *“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another”*. Romans 14:19. We need to make this conscious effort to go after God. Our nature won’t want to do it but if we do the rewards are great. *“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life”*. Matthew 19:29. 100 times more will the Lord give back to us if we make the temporary secondary and pursue Him first. Wow! What a trade.

I have to admit I am craving a soy hotdog right about now but it must not be our life mission to try to satisfy ourselves because it will never happen. *“...seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these **things** shall be added unto you”*. Matthew 6:33. What *“things”*? All the material things we need to live and sustain us.



Joseph Christian “Jaws” Chestnut world champion hotdog eater.

