

DOWN HOME: What's better than Wheel O'Meals?

March 3, 2007
Posted: 3/02/07

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"Where do you want to go for dinner," Joanna asked.

"I don't care," I replied. "Where do you want to go?"

"Doesn't matter. You pick."

"No, I picked last time. It's your turn."

If my wife and I had a nickel for every time we've had this conversation, we could dine at some mighty fine restaurants.

This gastronomical getalong actually began when our girls, Lindsay and Molly, still were home. But with four of us in the mix, including a couple of teenagers, it seemed like somebody had an opinion more often back then.

We didn't eat out as often, either.

Jo's a terrific cook and an attentive mother. So, our girls grew up eating plenty of home-cooked meals. The dinner table was our sanctuary, our forum, our theater. My favorite place in the world.

Now, however, the girls are out of the house. Lindsay graduated from

Hardin-Simmons University, got married and moved to Florida. Molly's a sophomore at Baylor University.

Before they left, I speculated that our "empty nest" kitchen would only need a coffee pot, microwave and mini-fridge. Fortunately, Jo still loves to cook, and we're even remembering recipes we enjoyed in the "old days," before children's range of tastes reduced our menu.

But with two jobs and no kids to feed, dinner sometimes becomes more an issue of logistics and timing than dietary demands or cuisine choices.

Which brings us back to our standing "you choose/no, you choose" debate.

I've been thinking we need a system to streamline our selections and diminish our dining discussion.

And that's why I'm thinking about inventing the Wheel O'Meals.

Imagine this: A wooden wheel with about a dozen or 15 pie-shaped sections. Each section would bear the name of a restaurant a short drive from our home. The wheel would have a needle that spins freely until it lands on one of the sections.

Of course, we'd need some groundrules. Each of us could veto one spin. And, upon mutual consent, we would declare a "spin again" if the arrow landed on a restaurant where we'd eaten in, oh, say the past two weeks. Other than that, wherever the arrow lands, that's where we'll eat.

As I figure it, the Wheel O'Meals will save time, promote marital harmony and potentially contribute to a more-balanced diet.

The Wheel O'Meals would help us select from among a range of wonderful options. Jo and I should count our blessings, since we live near scores of excellent places to eat.

And as we dine, we must remember people who don't have enough to eat. What if each time Texas Baptists ate out, we would set aside a dollar to contribute to the Texas Baptist Offering for World Hunger, which we're collecting this month?

We could feed millions of hungry people in Jesus' name.

—*Marv Knox*

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