

2 Ways You Can Be Transformed, Healed and Empowered as a Man

In my previous post on Authentic Manhood, I wrote about four things that typify the story of Jesus: it is unique, beautiful, heart-centered and opposite to our fallen stories.

It is surely important to understand that story, but when Jesus asks us to follow Him, He asks us to enter that story. This is how we are transformed, healed and empowered as men. But how do we leave our stories and enter His?

There are two words that form the core of this critical movement in our lives: *surrender* and *contemplation*.

1. Surrender. *Chariots of Fire* is the epic film about Eric Liddell, the Scottish runner who took the world by storm when he refused to run the 100m prelims on Sunday in the 1924 Olympics. Instead, he ran the 400m on another day—and in world record time!

What you may not know is the rest of the story. He hung up his track spikes after that race, went to China to be a missionary, and was eventually captured by the Japanese as they occupied China. After being put in a POW camp, he ministered to adults and children, inspiring and encouraging them, but died of a brain tumor before the Allies could rescue him. His last recorded words were these: *“Surrender, absolute surrender.”*

This surrender to Jesus’ story is what made Eric Liddell so great, a story that would become known around the world through the award-winning movie.

The story of Eric Liddell is so parallel to the story of the

disciples. When they chose to follow Jesus, they were choosing to leave their own self-constructed stories and enter a new one. Here they would face many trials and dangers, but they would also find out who they really were and what they were supposed to be doing in this life.

By entering the story of Jesus, they both changed the world and were forever changed as well. This is what happens when we surrender to Him, a surrender that happens when we first come to Him and then must continually happen each day. Here we find out who we are as men, what we are supposed to do in this life, and end up changing the world in ways we could not have imagined. This is the resurrection power of Jesus working in us and through us.

2. Contemplation. This is the second word that helps us enter His story. When I speak about contemplation, I mean the inward motion we experience as we focus on something outside of ourselves, letting it fill our hearts and minds. It is the opposite of self-absorption, something to which we are all prone to some extent. In our fallen modes of being, shame makes us painfully self-conscious, and we easily become narcissistic, constantly brooding about ourselves. Life becomes all about us, as reality is warped around our souls, similar to the way gravity warps around the sucking power of a black hole.

So what is the route out of self-absorption? It is contemplation. This may first happen when we contemplate God's creation: We are lifted up out of ourselves and into something lofty and wondrous. It is no surprise that men often feel that longing to connect to God first out in nature.

But contemplation deepens as we come to know God through Scripture, thinking and praying through verses that change our inner habits of being. We are no longer just thinking about ourselves, but about God's kingdom, His glory and His will. But a further step happens when we begin to contemplate how

Jesus is *already* working in our lives each day, trying to pull us further into His story. Each day we can either surrender more to Him or resist Him. Each day we can live more deeply in His love or turn away.

I have been practicing a simple discipline each morning for some time now: I walk back through the previous day, calling to mind both the moments I experienced His presence and the ones when I forgot Him and went my own way. This simple practice has opened my eyes to the ways Jesus is constantly working in me and around me.

So the door into His story is opened for us today and every day, and Jesus is always asking us to enter. To choose to walk through is choosing to walk the great adventure with Him.
{eoa}

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Husbands, Never Forget These Things Once You Are Married

Each day when I log onto Facebook, one of the first things I see is a Facebook Memory. Each memory is something I or someone else posted to Facebook in the past.

I then have the option to repost and share this memory. It's cool when I see a picture of our kids four or five years ago and relive the memory.

My first response to seeing the memory is usually, "I forgot all about that," whether it's a moment or a certain way our kids or even my wife used to look. Sometimes we forget pivotal things in our marriage, and it's not a good thing.

These are three things you should never forget once you are married:

1. What attracted you to her. I remember one of the first dates my wife and I had when I first got my own apartment. She and her girlfriends came by before me and my buddies all went out. She was a little nervous and sat in the chair closest to the door (I guess just in case she had to suddenly bolt). I remember it because even today when she's a little nervous she sits up very straight and has perfect posture. To this day when I see her sitting like that, it's cute to me (yes, I used the word cute), and I remind her, "That's the way you sat the first time you came to my apartment." Seeing her sitting like that attracted me then, and when I see her sitting like that today, it takes me right back to that moment—her look, her smile, her uncertainty, but also interest and trust in me.

2. What attracted her to you. Every once in a while, my wife will remind me how meticulous and organized I was when we were dating before marriage. She'll bring up the fact that I always had Kleenex in my bathroom, and that my car smelled so great, and every single thing in my car had a place and was always in its place.

She loved that about me. Remembering this helps me do some of those things that my wife finds attractive even 15 years later. Over the years, it's easy to relax and take things for granted.

Maybe you used to go above and beyond to attract her, but you

don't anymore. Maybe you just have become too comfortable and don't even do the basic things. I challenge you to look at yourself and no matter where you are, step it up—do the things today that attracted her to you yesterday with the same excitement and passion.

3. Your commitment to her. The commitment to love her “for better or for worse ... in sickness and in health ... till death do us part.” Remember those words? You made that commitment when you said, “I do.” But if you are honest, you don't always treat her with love during the worse. Maybe you've even considered ending your relationship before “death do you part.”

Your wife may have changed, some of which may not be for the better. It doesn't matter. You should never forget the commitment you made on your wedding day. That commitment wasn't a contract or an “if this ... then that” type of commitment. The commitment is unconditional.

Remembering these things will rekindle the fire, passion, and newness in your relationship you experienced early on. Those things made you take the steps to “I do” and will keep both of you and her saying “I do” over and over again. {eoa}

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For the original article, visit .

This Health Lie Comes 'Straight From the Pit of Hell'

I was shocked to find the following message on a website, in which a Christian man wrote about being overweight:

"The moment I looked in the mirror I realized I was insulting the God I love and who I'd pledged my life to serve ...The single moment of greatest shame, sorrow, rage, and self-loathing of my entire life ... 278 lbs."

The man's post made me wonder if there are other Christians who think the same way.

While I empathize with this man's feelings, the thought behind them is a lie straight from the pit of hell.

Forgive me if I sound angry about this, but the thought of Christians accepting the enemy's lies as the gospel truth makes me mad.

Sometimes we accept these lies out of ignorance because we don't know what God's Word says.

But other times, we accept the lies when we believe our feelings (which the enemy can manipulate) above God's word.

The only way to combat these lies is with the truth.

To prove that being overweight does not insult God, I must go to the Bible. In the Bible, I can only think of two individuals who were described as "fat." One of them was God's priest. Even though God rebuked him, the rebuke was not because he was "fat."

Having the proper perspective about the size issue is

essential to reaching your ideal weight permanently. While condemnation can motivate you to change temporarily, it won't last. You'll end up feeling hopeless ultimately.

Permanent changes must be motivated by love. God want us to bring every concern to Him—including weight issues.

Most of these originate from the heart, not the body.

Proverbs 4:23 advises, *“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.”*

I have read some quotes from older Christian weight-loss resources that said things like “Whenever you see a fat Christian, you're looking at one who is not walking with the Lord” and “Slim is how God meant us to be.”

The Bible supports neither of these statements. They promote the idea that your outward appearance is an indication of your spiritual condition. But appearances can be misleading.

For example, the religious leaders in Jesus' day looked good. But He said to them, *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness”* (Matt. 23:27).

God is always more concerned about the contents of a person's heart above what they show on the outside.

Another example is David's selection as Israel's future king. At first, the prophet Samuel assumed that David's older brother must be the one that the Lord had selected. After all, Eliab looked the part!

However, 1 Samuel 16:7 tells us differently: “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees. For man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.’”

In fact, I don't recall anywhere in the Bible where a person was rebuked about their weight. The only two stories I remember in which it was even noted that the person was obese was Eli the priest and Eglon, King of Moab in the Old Testament.

But the weight was just mentioned as a description of the person; it is not written that God Himself judged them for their excess weight.

In Eli's case, God rebuked him because he failed to control his corrupt sons. This was a heart issue on Eli's part—not an issue of the body.

Returning to the Christian man who posted that his appearance was insulting God, I found out in a later message that the man had gained weight in the first place because of a heart issue; he had learned that the woman he was to marry didn't really love him.

The man used food to smother his grief over the lost love. He used food to try to fulfill a role in his life that the Lord was supposed to fill. According to Psalm 147:3, "He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds."

Now, you may ask: Is there any situation in which your body's condition does matter, apart from its appearance?

I would say "yes." Here's a quick story:

Once there was an old, Southern church in disrepair. The members worshipped the Lord with all their hearts.

But there was one problem; the members neglected to pay the church's electric bill. Their electricity was disconnected during a heat wave with temperatures exceeding 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Would that scorching heat impact the people's ability to worship during the Sunday service? Highly likely! Although the

spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.

To me, the best reason to achieve and maintain your ideal weight is not for appearance sake; it is being able to fulfill your spiritual purpose with energy and vitality—free of physical distractions. Eating healthy and proper exercise are a key part of that goal, necessary body maintenance while you are here on this earth.

This is more important than maintaining your household dwelling. After all, you take your body with you wherever you go!

In summary, having excess fat on your body does not insult God. However, I do believe God is grieved when we don't trust Him with our concerns and instead trust in other things to comfort ourselves.

Hear the Lord's heart in this matter from Jeremiah 2:13:

"For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water."

Emotional eating is ultimately a broken cistern that can't hold water. But when you put your trust in the Lord, He will heal you emotionally and physically—the best of all worlds!
{eoa}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify of God's healing power to end binge eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

For the original article, visit .

R.W. Shambach's Daughter Explains How You Can Move in the Miraculous

Very few Christians these days are experiencing miracles as the first believers did nearly 2,000 years ago. That always bothered evangelist and healing minister R.W. Schambach, who passed on to glory in heaven in 2012.

Donna Schambach, R.W.'s daughter, is carrying on his ministry legacy and reminding Christ followers know they can have the same power Jesus carried in his time on Earth.

"My dad believed in the name of Jesus. It was his calling card to the miraculous," Donna said on a recent episode of Sid Roth's *It's Supernatural*. "When we have the Holy Spirit within us, we can do the same things Jesus did. So many people are wondering how they can have that operation in their lives. There's only one way: There is power in the name."

Watch this short video of the conversation between Roth and Donna Schambach and find out how you can have the healing power of Jesus. {eoa}

2 Ways to Make Christian Weight Loss Easier

Several months ago, a nice lady emailed me about her difficulty in losing weight. She mentioned that she had issues in turning to sweets whenever she was stressed.

In her message to me, she was beating herself up for her perceived lack of discipline.

She wrote, "Kim, right now I have some cookies in my cabinet and I'm tempted to go and eat them. Why doesn't God give me the discipline to resist them?"

After assuring her that I too would struggle under similar circumstances, I shared with her a principle I live by, which comes from the martial arts:

"The best way to win a fight is to avoid getting into one in the first place."

In her case, the best way to resist the cookies was to avoid bringing the cookies into the house in the first place.

Are you creating daily "fights" with yourself by surrounding yourself with food temptations? If so, you are making weight loss needlessly hard!

In setting yourself up for Christian weight-loss success, you must create a healthy "safety zone" around yourself. The fact is, people do what people see.

If you don't have healthy foods in your home, healthy snacks at the office for emergencies, or prepare before you visit restaurants, then you are pretty much at the mercy of whatever you see or smell.

Here are two tips to create a healthy safety zone around yourself and help yourself to Christian weight loss success:

1. Keep healthy foods available and within reach. Be sure that you have plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein in your home. One thing that helps me out is to batch cook on Saturdays. I cook vegetables, chicken breasts and oven-fry fish; bake sweet potatoes; and freeze it all in smaller containers. That way, when I'm busy during the week, I can just take something out of the freezer and maybe add a

side item for a quick meal.

This allows me to reach for food that satisfies me from the inside-out rather than surrounding myself with foods that just satisfy my tongue.

Another tip is to keep a fruit bowl on the counter or dining room table. Keeping it within sight and reach makes it more likely you will eat it. Whenever possible, avoid bringing the high-fat, high-sugar items into your home.

But if you must, make sure it is the smallest possible box or bag you can get. The principle is, if you can't (or don't want to) avoid the temptation, then minimize the damage by practicing wise portion control.

2. Be prepared whenever you eat away from home. While it is true that some fast food restaurants are offering healthy items on their menus today, most menu items are still either fatty, salty, sugary or a combination of the three.

Be honest: If you go into Burger King and smell the hamburgers and fries, how likely is it that you will order a salad? You don't want to lead yourself into temptation.

However if you must go to a fast-food restaurant, then I recommend that you check out the establishment's website beforehand. Usually, they will post the menu and provide nutritional statistics on the items they offer. You can decide ahead of time what you will have. Then, go to the drive-thru to get it. That way, you won't be tempted by the smells of the unhealthy stuff.

At work, keep a water bottle or jug on your desk that you sip on throughout the day. Many times, we eat food when our body is really crying for water.

Also, keep a few snacks with you so you aren't at the mercy of the vending machines. Apples, oranges, small packs of raisins,

almonds, pretzels, air-popped popcorn with Parmesan cheese, or low-sodium tomato soup or vegetable soup are some examples of food you can keep with you for emergencies.

Proper planning is good for your health and your waistline.
{eoa}

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The One Thing Self-Disciplined People Do Faithfully

Have you ever wondered what separates the self-disciplined person from the undisciplined person? See if you can recognize the difference in this story.

A man decided that he wanted to become a tightrope walker. He had been friends with an experienced tightrope walker for years. He admired his older friend's skill, fitness and grace.

He envied how the crowd "Oohed" and "Ahhed" as his friend navigated a thin rope several feet high in the air. He saw how his friend drank in the crowd's thunderous applause after he completed each dangerous stunt in triumph.

The man didn't feel good about himself and he thought the key to change was getting the crowd's approval. After all, he

thought, that's what his friend had and he was the most confident man he knew.

So one day, he told his tightrope-walker friend that he noticed a wire between two buildings downtown and he intended to walk across that. He was going to do it during the lunch hour when there would be lots of people around to see and applaud him.

"No!" The experienced tightrope walker said, "You've never even walked across a stick on the ground, never mind a tightrope. Let me train you. First, you'll begin with a beam on the ground. That will start to train your balance.

Once you master crossing that, then we'll raise the beam off the ground a few feet. We will keep raising the bar as you improve, giving you more complicated crossings to build up your skills. With time, you will learn to become an experienced tightrope walker too."

The man frowned. "That's too much work! It will take too long. Plus, there is no crowd around to see me practice. I want that love and approval you get."

The friend shook his head. "You are only seeing the end of my story. You didn't see the work it took to get here. I spent hours training—even when nobody was watching, even when nobody applauded me. I practiced every day. Sometimes, I even fell off the beam! But I got back up. If you want to become a tightrope walker, that is what you must do. Plus, I don't do this to get the crowd's approval. That only lasts a short while anyway. I am doing this because I love to do it. Friend, you need to approve yourself right now for who you are—not because of what you do."

But the man left the experienced tightrope walker, thinking he was going to do the stunt anyway. He wanted the shortcut to applause, not all that work and practice his friend talked about. Surely there was an easier way to becoming a

professional tightrope walker! He was going to find that easier way.

A few weeks later, the experienced tightrope walker was shocked to see the man's picture on the news. But it was not a happy news story. The man had attempted the tightrope walking stunt. However, he did not get the applause he was seeking. He only got the reaction of a horrified crowd as he fell to his death.

This man's story illustrates an important key to self discipline—one key that he ignored. Did you guess what it was?

You can find a clue to self-discipline in how God Himself operates:

“For I know the plans that I have for you, says the Lord, plans for peace and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11).

Our God is a thinking, planning God! He does not act on impulse. He works a plan.

That is the only difference between disciplined and undisciplined people. Self-disciplined people work a plan every day.

The word “discipline” comes from the word “disciple.” A disciple is a person who is trained, one who follows a plan of instruction.

While a disciplined person works a plan every day, an undisciplined person goes through each day without a plan. They spend the day wishing and hoping that things will work out. They allow life to “just happen” to them. Their moods rule them or else, they allow outside influences to pull them in different directions.

Subconsciously, they think success is just going to fall into their laps, like winning the lottery.

But for the disciplined person, it is a different story. They have a clear picture in their minds of what they want, seeing the end from the beginning. They see what they want in action, in living, breathing color.

Then, they develop a plan for getting there. They take on the attitude of a student. They may make mistakes, but they learn from them. They may have to adjust their plan, but they keep their picture before them mentally.

They are always working on a plan.

When someone tries to persuade the disciplined person to act contrary to what they want, they just say "I can't do that. I'm working a plan."

A disciplined person is usually a person of integrity. Most do the right thing, even when nobody is watching. They keep working their plan, even when no one else is around to applaud them for it.

Don't fool yourself; success is never an accident. Although you may not have seen it, that successful person you admire worked a plan to get where they are. If you want to become more successful, then you too must become a person who works a plan every day. Never start your day without a plan.

Remember: The main reason that people fail is because they never work a plan to succeed every day!

Today, decide to become a person who "works a plan." And you too will succeed. {eoa}

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Prophetic Word: 'The Winds of Heaven Are Now Entering the Earth'

I just finished ministering here in Middletown, Ohio, at Dutch Sheet's An Appeal to Heaven National Conference! Last night's session was just incredible. Dutch read a portion of the prophetic word I released at Passover describing how April 25-Oct. 20 would be the most tumultuous and confusing time this nation has seen in over 160 or 170 years ([click here to read on the Elijah List](#)).

The Spirit of God then led me to prophesy about the *Winds of Heaven* now entering the earth. We must understand that we are in a new season.

Read this prophetic word or watch the video, and join us in declaring:

"The winds of heaven are now entering the earth!"

"For the last eight years, I have been blowing winds in the heavens. Winds have been stirring and stirring and stirring in My heavens. But now those winds are released to come into the earth realm. What has been stirring in heaven will now blow in the earth.

"Brace yourself! Brace yourself! Brace yourself! Brace yourself! For the winds that will now blow are the winds I've been holding back over the last eight years. Because I've been holding them back and you've been asking for them to blow earlier—now I will release them. I am acting on how you have sought Me in the last eight years.

“These winds will begin to gather an army of those who have been faithful and those who will now gather into a place they didn’t even know they belonged. The winds of adversity will now produce an army (of which) people will say, ‘It is the LORD’s army that has changed the course of history!’”

“Tonight, and beginning this week, you will be bringing the turning point winds into the earth and rearranging the course of what is to become. Nations will begin now in their realignment with other nations, but I will blow off the façade that has been holding you captive.

“Because you have gathered here in this turning-point state (Ohio), now the turning point winds will come. What I’ve held back for eight years, I must now release. What goes on through May (as you begin to honor Me, and walk with Me, and gather with Me) will create a nation that has been covered over by the enemy’s hand.

“The winds that now blow in the earth will cause the hand of the enemy that has been controlling the movement of strategy in the earth in this nation to be seen. No longer will the enemy have an upper hand in this land!” {eoa}

Doing This Can Help You Stay in the Will of God

I think it is interesting that 2 Samuel 23:12 tells us exactly where Shammah strategically positioned himself. It says, “He took his stand in the midst of the plot of land.” He wasn’t standing out on the fringes, and he wasn’t in one of the corners. He was right in the very center of the field.

I have seen many people who were called to a particular field, but over the years they became distracted. They lost their focus and wandered to the fringes of their field and sometimes even drifted into other fields they were never called to serve. If you are going to remain in the center of God's will for your life, you must resolve to stand in the middle of the field to which He has called you and remain focused without allowing the enemy to distract you from that call.

Several years ago I preached in Madrid, Spain, in a stadium used for bullfights. Wanting to get the full cultural experience, the night before our campaign began, I went to see my first (and only) bullfight. I will never forget that experience because it became a powerful lesson for my life.

I witnessed the brutal death of a half-dozen bulls that night. Most of them had been raised far from civilization and had rarely seen human beings before. Once they were released into the noisy chaos of the bullfighting arena, they began to get angry, looking around for a target to attack. There, in the middle of the arena, stood the matador. He began to wave his cape, and the bull flew into a rage.

Now you must understand that for the matador, this is an extremely dangerous sport. These undomesticated bulls, essentially wild animals, are 1,000-pound killing machines. They could easily trample, crush or gorge the small, cape-waving man to death. But the bullfighter has a secret weapon—distraction.

The bull charges the matador over and over again, coming closer and closer to his opponent. But just when the bull is about to hit his target, suddenly another man rushes in from the side and stabs the bull with a lance and then runs away. The bull turns to see his surprise assailant and begins to move toward him when another man runs in from the opposite side and stabs him with another lance and runs away.

The lances dangle from the bull's thick hide. Although the stabs draw blood, they are far from mortal wounds—the bull is an extremely tough animal. But this peripheral assault serves a very important purpose. It effectively distracts the bull from his main target: the matador. If the bull could just stay focused on one target, he would almost certainly win every fight. But he is continually changing his target, going after one distraction and then another. What the bull doesn't realize is that he is in a race against time. The blood flowing out of the lance wounds begins to weaken him. Minute by minute the bull grows weaker, slower, and more faint. Finally he collapses in the sand, and this is when the matador moves in for the fatal blow.

Through the Holy Spirit we are equipped to live fruitful and effective lives, accomplishing all that God has for us to do. The devil is no match for the Spirit of God who lives within us. Greater is He who is in us than he that is in the world.

But like the bullfighter, the enemy has a secret weapon—distraction. If the devil can't stop us, he will attempt to derail us with one distraction and then another. The devil knows something we so often forget—that we are in a race against time.

As with the bull whose wounds are bleeding, time is running out for all of us. Every minute that we are distracted from what God has called us to do is a minute closer to the end of the fight. The devil will even use “good” things as distractions if he can to keep us from the best things that God has in store. {eoa}

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Finding Peace in a Fallen and Selfish World

Peace. We all want it. Politicians promise it, beauty pageant contestants promote it, and social scientists study it.

Is peace even possible while living in the sin-filled world of compromise, difficult people and selfish agendas? Is peace one of those commodities that you and I will only experience once we reach the glorious gates of heaven?

Peace. Where is it?

Perhaps the disconnect between humanity and that ever elusive treasure known as “peace” is that we have been looking for peace in all the wrong places. We have mistakenly believed that international treaties have the power to guarantee peace, that peace is found on the sun-soaked beaches of Hawaii or that financial success will assuredly deliver peace.

“For He Himself is our peace” (Eph. 2:14).

Jesus Christ is peace personified! There is no peace to be discovered in any location, in any event or in any tangible luxury apart from the person of Jesus.

The devil wants to steal your peace, but Jesus wants you to enjoy His peace and His presence! The enemy wants you to look for peace in all the wrong places. He wants to keep you on a never-ending scavenger hunt that only leads to one frustrating dead end after another.

Jesus has the gift of peace in the midst of every storm, in the center of every battle and in spite of every human disappointment.

I no longer pray for understanding when I am going through a difficult or confusing situation in life because I know that I have been given something infinitely more valuable and eternally more significant than the simple understanding that the human mind is able to deliver.

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7, MEV).

Peace trumps understanding every time! Peace has more power than mental processing or than human comprehension will ever deliver!

I have also learned not to pray for peace. Now, before you label me as a “heretic” of the very worst kind, let me explain this decision with a well-loved and oft-quoted scripture.

“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You” (Is. 26:3).

Peace is the result of trusting the good, good Father. If I don't have peace, it's not because He hasn't given it, but it is because I refuse to trust Him. When my mind is immovably set upon the One who is the Prince of all Peace, nothing will be able to destroy or diminish the peace that I have been given when I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior! He has promised never to leave me and never to forsake me, so I know that I am the beneficiary of His ever-present peace. Peace is Who He is!

“Seek peace and pursue it!” (Ps. 34:14).

When you decide to seek peace in every situation in life, you are actually deciding to seek Jesus because He is the One who is our peace in every storm, during every election and while traveling through every season in life. When you seek Jesus, you will find peace. When you look for peace, you will always find Jesus!

I have always wondered why we have religiously declared, “May he rest in peace,” after a loved one has died. I believe that God wants His children not just to rest in peace after dying, but He wants us to live in peace this side of eternity!

So today, my challenge is to live in a place of extravagant peace! Enjoy peace! Celebrate His peace and His presence in your life! Peace is the gift of His presence in your life.
{eoa}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women’s conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written five books, including No More Ordinary, Holy Estrogen!, The Rooms of a Woman’s Heart and Defiant Joy! Her most recent book, Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire, was released last August. Her teaching DVD, The Rooms of a Woman’s Heart, won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming. You can also listen to Carol’s “A Jolt of Joy” program daily on the Charisma Podcast Network. Connect with Carol or inquire about her speaking to your group at .

2 Ways to Protect Yourself Against the Enemy’s Attacks

Several weeks ago, thieves smashed the windows of eight cars in our church parking lot during the Sunday morning worship service.

It was devastating. When those members came out to their cars

after the service was over, they discovered shattered glass on the ground and found valuable property stolen.

How could such a thing happen on church grounds—on God's property?

But it happens all the time. I'm not talking about just the natural but in the supernatural.

Let me explain.

I've been meditating on John 10:10 lately in which Jesus called Satan a "thief":

"The thief does not come, except to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

In the natural, you would take safety precautions if you knew you lived among thieves, wouldn't you?

At our church, we normally have security guards patrolling the parking lot during our Sunday services.

But we found out later that no one was on guard that particular Sunday due to a scheduling mistake. It turned out to be a costly one.

Consider your life. Has the enemy destroyed or stolen something from you?

I can think of several things he is robbing Christians of right now:

- Health
- Relationships/marriages
- Children's futures
- Finances
- Peace of mind
- Joy

Are we doing everything we can to protect the territory that the Lord has given us? Your territory includes your body.

The Lord has made you a steward over it and it is your job to protect it. Scripture gives us another warning about the protection issue:

“Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8).

We cannot allow ourselves to get “drunk” off food (gluttony/bingeing) or anything else in the natural that keeps us bound.

Too often in the Christian community, we minimize eating issues. So while we are mentally impaired, the enemy is robbing us blind!

Isn't it time we sober up and start standing guard over our territory? The Lord is ready to help.

The following are two ways you can start protecting yourself better when it comes to your health:

1. Internal Protection. To me, this is the area where Christians fail to protect ourselves most. We allow the enemy to sow lying thoughts into our minds and let them grow.

In my Take Back Your Temple program ebook “Psalm Therapy” I define a lying thought as any pattern of thinking that contradicts God's Word.

When we don't take the time to find out what God's Word says and implement it, then all we have is what the devil says. That is the default programming of this world.

Many Christians are walking with the enemy in their daily lives without even knowing it. And of course, the devil is happy that they keep him close so that he can keep on

stealing!

A good question to ask yourself in your thought life is:

“Where are these thoughts taking me?”

Some thoughts lead you where you don't want to go! The enemy can deceive you into making darkness your closest friend.

2 Corinthians 10:5 gives us this guidance: “Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

Romans 12:2 also says that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds. So this is the main work that you must do if you want to take back what the devil is stealing from you.

If you are in bondage to negative thinking and mental strongholds, then I urge you to check out the Take Back Your Temple program because I show you how to get free in this area, using biblical wisdom.

2. External protection. Assess your environment to see what foods you keep close.

Here's a simple guideline: Keep close those things that help you to do good; keep away those things that lead you into doing bad.

Here's an example from many years ago: A lady wrote me about her weakness for cookie binges. She told me that she had cookies in her cabinet right then and was tempted to eat them.

She wrote that she didn't know why the Lord didn't remove the temptation from her.

Here's a question for you. Let's say you had a known thief who lived in your neighborhood. Would you leave the door to your house wide open for him to come in and steal what he wanted?

Of course not.

Would you expect the Lord to come down from heaven and shut the door for you?

I hope not—otherwise you'd be waiting a long time! You see, the Lord gives us wisdom on what to do. Our responsibility is to do what the Lord says.

I am sure that the Lord told the lady she needed to get rid of the cookies because they were a snare to her.

But here's an uncomfortable truth; sometimes people want to have an affair with the enemy while being married to Jesus.

They want to leave the door open just a crack so that the enemy can sneak in for what they think will be a short, midnight visit. But the enemy does not work like that. If we give him an inch of territory, he will eventually take it all!

In the lady's case, she wanted to keep the cookies close so that she could still eat them when she wanted. She was making provision for binge eating in her environment.

I understand this issue well. I've written about how I love the taste of Pepperidge Farms coconut cake. I used to buy a cake with the intention of just eating one slice a day.

But it never happened. I would always eat up eating the whole cake in one sitting.

Eventually, I faced the fact that this cake was a weakness of mine. Even though it's been over 13 years since I ate a whole cake by myself, I still don't tempt myself by bringing cake into our house.

I no longer make provision for binges/gluttony.

I live by a principle in the martial arts: "The best way to win a fight is to avoid getting into one in the first place."

It is wise to keep your food weakness far from you—at home, work, whatever territory you occupy.

Good planning beats great intentions every time!

If you are not willing to do this, then you need to confront the fear behind it. Ask yourself: “What do I fear will happen if I don’t keep my food weakness close to me?”

If you are not sure what specific internal and external protections you need to put in place, then seek the Lord in prayer about it. Ask Him for wisdom.

Seek Him with all your heart. Your heart is the “holy of holies” in your temple.

The Lord is your best defense because He is committed to seeing you finish well. He wants you to walk in freedom in Him, not in bondage to anything.

God will do His part in securing your protection. Will you do yours? {eoa}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify of God’s healing power to end binge eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

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