

Home Altitude Tied to Obesity Risk

Americans who live where the air is thinnest are less likely to be obese than those in low-lying areas, according to a new study.

The results don't mean people should move to higher altitudes to lose weight, said study lead author Dr. Jameson Voss. But the work suggests that elevation may be part of obesity puzzle.

Based on data for more than 400,000 people in the U.S., researchers found Americans living closest to sea level were four to five times more likely to be obese, compared to people who live well above sea level in Colorado.

"I was surprised by the magnitude of the effect... I wasn't expecting such a consistent pattern as what was emerging," said Voss, from Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland.

About 36 percent of American adults are obese, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Rates vary across the country, however, with a higher percentage of obese adults in southern states. Western states, such as Nevada and Colorado, report the fewest obese adults.

The reasons behind the difference in obesity prevalence between states are unclear, according to Voss and his colleagues, who published their findings in the *International Journal of Obesity*.

One possible explanation, they write, is differences in elevation, which can affect appetite hormones, growth and how many calories the body burns.

Cynthia Beall, who researches how the body adapts to high altitudes but was not involved with the new study, said it's common for travelers to high elevations to burn more calories in their first few weeks.

"That person would probably lose some weight during the course of a three week vacation ... It would in fact be an interesting question whether that would sustain," said Beall, a professor of anthropology at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland.

To examine obesity rates at different altitudes, the researchers combined information from several databases, including a telephone health survey of 422,603 Americans from 2011.

The researchers had information on 236 people who lived at the highest altitude of at least 3,000 meters (about 9,800 feet) above sea level. Those people all lived in Colorado and tended to smoke less, eat healthier and exercise more.

The researchers also had information on 322,681 people who lived in the lowest altitude range—less than 500 m (about 1,600 ft) above sea level.

After taking into account other factors that could influence the results, the researchers found adults living in the lowest altitude range had a Body Mass Index (BMI)—a measurement of weight in relation to height — of 26.6.

That compared to people who lived in the highest altitude range, who had a BMI of 24.2.

A healthy BMI falls between 18.5 and 24.9, and obesity is a score of 30 or more, according to the CDC.

Voss and his colleagues also found a drop in the risk of a person being obese was tied to every 200 m (about 660 ft) increase in elevation.

“It provides some evidence that these associations persist over the long term,” Voss said.

Retirement Plays a Role?

But Beall cautioned that the new findings don't prove the higher altitude prevented people from being obese.

For example, she said that other researchers have found that people living in Colorado's higher altitudes move to lower altitudes when they get sick with chronic diseases.

Voss said that he and his colleagues tried to adjust for retirement and population loss, but they write that they were not able to see how long each person actually lived at a certain elevation.

Beall told Reuters Health that it would be interesting to take a closer look at the people living in Colorado, and to see whether their obesity prevalence would change if they move to a lower altitude.

“I know from my own self that when I come back to my own activities and diet, I come back to my own weight too,” she said.

Single Friendships: Don't Cheat Yourself

Every single guy reading this can recite with one voice the most hated phrase to hear: “Let's be just friends.” When I was dating, I hated hearing it too.

I didn't want to be “just friends.” If I had wanted to be

“just friends,” I wouldn’t have asked her out in the first place!

But I realize now that I made some big mistakes with that attitude. Most importantly, I cheated myself out of several good friendships. I want to encourage you single men to cultivate friendships with single women. Such friendships will benefit you in multiple areas of your life.

Women have spiritual insights that men have to work at (and vice-versa). They are instinctively more relational. She can make suggestions for how to tastefully decorate your home.

At the same time, you can be a benefit to your women friends. You can be the guy they talk to when they can’t talk to their women friends. You can be the protector. You can work on her car or computer. And just as she can help you understand the depths of the female mind, you can help her navigate the maze of how men think.

Because men and women are so different, these relationships can be full of land mines. In your single friendships, consider these several dos and don’ts of the territory.

Most importantly to this discussion, don’t cultivate a friendship with the idea of turning it into more than friends. Women are smart enough to see right through that. A friendship that becomes something more can be the best relationship of your life, but it won’t happen if you are trying for it. Do the friendship thing for the sake of friendship. That way, you’ll win—whether it becomes something more or not.

When you agree to be friends, don’t try to ratchet it up a notch later. You’ve made an agreement and should stick to it.

What you do now will affect other friendships, also. If other women hear how you have acted (and they will), there go any friendships with them, too. They will feel you are trying for more. Being a man of your word in all matters improves your

reception at work, school, and in other relationships (it goes without saying that this last part is a serious do).

I'm speaking from experience with this one—don't flirt for fun. One of you might get the wrong idea. She might conclude that you weren't honest earlier (and would she be right?).

If she flirts back, you might think that she has changed her mind. If you're wrong, there goes everything you've worked for. What she probably thinks is that flirting with you is safe because you are just friends. (And suggesting non-committal lip is the kiss of death, pun very much intended.)

Do remember that she is not a guy friend and won't be interested in the same things that your buds are. The whole point is to make friends with a woman, not women that you treat like men.

Whether female friends are new to you or you already have several, I hope these suggestions help you. You can learn a lot from women. And you can teach them, too. Just remember—this is a friendship—not a “dating-lite” relationship.

Frank Luke and his wife are associate pastors in Iowa. They hold MDivs from Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (Springfield, Missouri).

Number of Israeli Single New Moms Rises Significantly

Some five thousand never-married single women became mothers in the last decade, the Central Bureau of Statistics revealed

in a survey of the country's families and households, increasing the number of never-married single women raising children under 17 by themselves by 60 percent between 2000-2011. There were 8,400 never-married single mothers in 2000, and 13,500 in 2011.

Some 5,050 single Jewish women gave birth in 2011, compared to 2,600 in 2000. Thus 4.2 percent of women giving birth in 2011 were single and unmarried, as compared to 2.8 percent in 2000.

In addition, the number of single parent households increased between 2000 and 2011. A single parent household is one where one adult lives with one or more children under the age of 17, whether that adult be divorced, separated or never married. In 2011, Haifa was the city with the largest number of single-parent households, followed by Jerusalem and then Tel Aviv. Petach Tikva, which is located in the Gush Dan area, had the smallest number of single-parent households.

A single-parent household as defined by the CBS can include a divorced parent, and 60 percent of the single-parent households with a child under 17 fall into that bracket. Some 15 percent of single parents households consist of adults who remained married but live apart from their spouse. A total of 13 percent are single parents who have never been married (nearly all of whom are Jewish women), and the rest (12 percent) are widows and widowers.

Ninety-five percent of couples in Israel are married and the remaining five percent live together without being married. The number of Jewish couples living together out of wedlock went up by a factor of 2.5 percent compared to 2000. The percentage of cohabiting couples in Italy is 6 percent, in the U.S. it is 11 percent, in Holland 20 percent, in Denmark 23 percent and in Norway it is 26 percent.

The study also revealed that Israeli families with four or more children were largely concentrated in the Arab

population, which had more than twice as many such families as the Jewish population. Some 16 percent of Israeli families in 2011 were raising more than four children under the age of 17, but this constituted 29.6 percent of Arab families as opposed to 13.5 percent of Jewish families.

The average Israeli household has 3.7 family members, roughly the same number as in 2000 (3.8).

Some 520,000 of Israel's 1.8 million families (29 percent) were registered for social services in 2011, and 15 percent of those families were defined as single-parent households.

The survey also broke down food items purchased in Israeli households for households both with (one, two, three and more) children and without children. As could be expected, households raising at least one child spent considerably more money monthly on breakfast cereals, perhaps the fastest and easiest way to feed children in the morning.

Households with children also spent considerably more on junk food and snacks than households without. Interestingly, households with three or more children ate out less often, or at least spent less money on restaurant food, than families with two children or one child. Households with children also spent more money on cigarettes and tobacco products.

[Click here for the original article at .](#)

Freed By the Holy Spirit: Part III

Part I Part II

Testimony 3: A Restored Life

I was normal just like every other boy, sneaking down into the basement of my friend's house to look at his father's Playboy collection. I loved being normal when the swim coach asked me if I wanted to look at that month's Penthouse with him.

I thought I was normal when someone asked me go into a private room while on the Internet and started "talking" to me. Wanting to be normal and having an addictive personality, each of the above activities led me further into my desire to be addicted to pornography.

Sneaking over to my friend's house was not enough. The newspaper lingerie ads, Sports Illustrated, and especially my job as teenage lifeguard all filled my desire to lust to a certain point. But the desire kept drawing me further, it was not enough. Even though I would pray for the Lord to forgive me every morning, I would fall asleep reading my favorite magazine that I had stolen, because I was too embarrassed to buy it.

The desire to want more as a young teenage boy allowed me to be caught up in sexual abuse that, at that time, I thought was normal. The swim coach showing me magazines and then wanting to do "things" with me in the shower or in his "special place" in the basement of the local recreational center. Thinking I was normal, I continued with this behavior. Being normal also meant asking God to forgive me for actions that were wrong.

One day while at the firehouse, a young firefighter asked me if I had ever chatted online before. Innocently telling him no, I ventured into a realm of pornography so easy, so normal and yet so destructive. After asking some private questions in a private room while chatting and clicking on an appealing Internet site, I spent the next several years being "normal" while online. Once again, wanting to be normal. I would ask God to forgive and strengthen me each morning during my quiet time, and go back that night and chat.

Then it happened, I was more normal than before: divorced and alone. God why don't you do anything?

Being alone, and obviously looking upset and distraught, an acquaintance of mine suggested I go talk to their pastor. The church I was attending had basically abandoned me to my sin and during the separation/divorce no one contacted me.

Then God allowed me to come into contact with this man of integrity and we just had breakfast and talked. For the next several months, we met every week and had breakfast, I mostly talked and—thank God—he mostly listened and prayed. Somewhere in there, God instilled in me the desire to say no, while the exact moment of change is unknown to me, I know that I am changed. I started looking at women differently. My desire to lust and disappear into my fantasies was not an ongoing problem that occurred every day, like in the past.

While lust is still a temptation, I have the power to put away the temptation before it becomes sin. During this time frame, I desired to help someone in the same situation I was in. Never again will a man in pain and alone be in that position around me.

I saw a man who invested time and energy in my life, and decided that I would do [that] for the rest of my life. That has become my addiction—that God does heal and he does love us.

Several years later, I remarried and have been blessed with another little girl. I have reconciled with my other girls and they visit quite often. I really overcame and really became normal. Thank you, Lord. God does restore what the locusts had eaten.—*Anonymous*

Top 10 Principles to Sexual Purity

We live in a sex-crazed culture where sexual temptation is every man's battle! Men, how can you learn to say "no" to

sexual temptation? How can you gain and maintain sexual purity? How can you teach sexual purity to your children?

The following principles go beyond describing what not to do by detailing what you can do positively. I periodically return to these principles and renew my resolutions. May I challenge you to make the following resolutions to maintain sexual purity?

1. Maintain sexual purity through the power of Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:3; Rom. 7:24–25). Exercise self-restraint by bringing my body, mind, will and emotions under complete control through Christ (Gal. 5:16).
2. Never look lustfully at a woman, entertain lustful thoughts or commit adultery (Job 31:1; Matt. 5:28; Exod. 20:14, 17; Rev. 2:22).
3. Never make sexual or seductive advances toward another woman (Prov. 6:27–29) and resist any sexual advances from another woman (Prov. 2:16; 6:24–26).
4. Never allow my mind to pursue stimulation through sensual advertising, obscene or perverse material, nudity, indecent television programs, computer images, the Internet, movies or visit a place of sexual promiscuity (; Rom. 12:2).
5. Hate evil and put to death earthly desires at work in me for sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil passions and greed. Run from sexual immortality (1 Cor. 6:18; Ps. 97:10; Col. 3:5; 2 Tim. 2:22).
6. Fill my mind with things that are pure (Phil. 4:8).
7. Use my body to serve the Lord and keep my body clean and pure as a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:13, 19–20). Obey the desires and commands of God in all that I do (1 Pet. 1:14–16).
8. Always treat my wife with godliness and humility, honor and respect, dignity and purity (Eph. 5:25–28) and always have my needs for sexual intimacy met by her alone (Gen. 2:24; Prov. 5:18–19; Song 1:2; 1 Cor.

7:3–5).

9. Live as a Spirit-filled Christian in expressing value and worth to all people (John 3:16; Rom. 13:9, 15:7).
10. Quickly and fully repent of any moral failure and trust the Lord for full deliverance (1 John 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:10).

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Eagles' Wings to Honor A.R. Bernard

Dr. A.R. Bernard, founder of the Christian Cultural Center, one of the largest churches in the nation, will be honored at the upcoming Jerusalem Banquet sponsored by Eagles' Wings.

The Jerusalem Banquet, to be held at the historic Essex House Hotel in New York City on May 23, 2013, is a strategic gathering of Jewish and Christian leadership from across the nation.

"The purpose of this gathering is to celebrate Jerusalem and the shared values of the Jewish and Christian communities," said Robert Stearns, executive director of Eagles' Wings. "Eagles' Wings has strived over the past two decades to defend and support Israel and the Jewish people, and work for the common good of all in the region. We also have brought thousands of people to Israel, including top Christian college students for 30-day intensive study. This gala event will serve to strengthen that mission."

Bernard, 59, grew up in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of

Brooklyn. In 1979, he and his wife, Karen, started a Bible study in the kitchen of their Brooklyn apartment. The following year he left his 10-year banking career and, with their savings, started a full-time ministry in a rented storefront.

Today, Dr. Bernard's church, the Christian Cultural Center, draws tens of thousands of worshipers each week, and he is an internationally known teacher, speaker and community leader. In addition to his pastoral duties, he has been very influential in education and civic life, serving on several community development boards for the city of New York. *The New York Daily News* recently reported that Dr. Bernard is considering running for mayor of New York.

"We consider it a great honor to be able to celebrate the life and contribution of Dr. Bernard to New York City and to faith communities," Stearns said.

Dr. Bernard will join a growing list of Christian and Jewish leaders of influence who have been honored, including the late Gen. Shimon Erem, Dr. Jack Hayford, Irwin Hochberg, Pat Robertson, Ron Plotkin, Frederick K.C. and Betty Price, and Harvey Krueger.

For more information on the event visit or .

Teen Births Continue to Decline in US

The number of U.S. babies born to teen mothers dropped to record lows in 2011, according to new data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Fewer women also gave birth in their 20s than in prior years, researchers found – but the birth rate increased for those in their late 30s and early 40s.

“The economy has declined, and that certainly is a factor that goes into people’s decisions about having a child,” said CDC statistician Brady Hamilton, lead author of the new report.

“Women may say to themselves, ‘It’s not a particularly good time right now ... let’s wait a little bit,’” he told Reuters Health.

Older women, however, are typically more secure in their employment, he said—and understand that they don’t have as long to wait if they want to get pregnant.

The new data were published Monday in the journal *Pediatrics*. They showed an eight-percent drop in teen births between 2010 and 2011. Just over three percent of 15- to 19-year-olds had babies during that period.

Hamilton and his colleagues calculated that 3.6 million more babies would have been born to women in that age group over the last two decades had the teen birth rate not been falling since a peak in 1991.

On the other end of the spectrum, the birth rate among 35- to 39-year-olds increased by three percent over 2010 figures. In 2011, 4.7 percent of women in their late 30s and just over one percent in their early 40s had a baby, the CDC team found.

Other results from the vital statistics report showed a continued decline in babies born prematurely or small, and an unchanged rate of infant deaths.

Black and Hispanic mothers continued to be more likely to have a premature baby than white women, but rates declined among all races. Infant mortality was more than twice as high among babies born to black mothers as in babies of white moms, death

records showed.

Hamilton said the decline in teen births, in particular, is especially “welcome news” and reflects the efforts of programs and policies targeting that age group.

“It’s definitely consistent with the trends that we’ve seen, and it’s obviously good news overall,” said Dr. Krishna Upadhy, who studies teen pregnancy at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore.

“I think the main thing behind this is increased contraceptive use, and better contraceptive use,” Upadhy, who wasn’t involved in the new research, told Reuters Health.

However, she added, there are still some parts of the country where both condoms and long-acting forms of contraception, such as intrauterine devices (IUDs), are harder for teens to access.

Fill'er Up...With Fiber

Does the phrase “dietary fiber” make you think of wood pulp, bran cereal, and celery strings? Fiber-rich foods can be way more appetizing than that: creamy oatmeal, crunchy popcorn, fresh fruit salad. High-fiber foods not only taste good, they’re also major contributors to good health and disease prevention.

What is Fiber?

Fiber is the component of cell walls that gives plants their shape and stiffness. Even though fiber is a type of carbohydrate, our bodies cannot fully digest it, so it

provides no calories. Cows have digestive enzymes that can break down fiber, which is why they can survive on grass.

Two Kinds of Fiber

There are two main types of fiber: soluble and insoluble. Most plant foods contain both kinds in varied amounts. Since both types are indigestible, they are not absorbed into the bloodstream, but stay in the digestive tract to be excreted. Even though fiber cannot be used for energy or nutrition, both types have unique functions.

Soluble fiber dissolves in water and becomes gel-like during digestion. It promotes proper absorption of nutrients by slowing digestion in the stomach and intestines. Foods that contain soluble fiber include fruits, oats, barley, dried beans and peas, nuts, seeds and some vegetables. Soluble fibers like pectin, mucilage, or gum are added to some foods during manufacturing.

Insoluble fiber, often called roughage, does not dissolve in water. It provides bulk to help move foods through the intestines. Insoluble fiber is found in whole wheat products, fruit and vegetable skins, corn bran, seeds, and nuts.

Health Benefits of Fiber

Fiber is good for digestion and bowel health and is often used to treat constipation and irritable bowel syndrome. Some food fibers function as natural prebiotics in the colon, encouraging the growth of good bacteria. Fiber helps prevent colon cancer by moving toxins through quickly and by promoting a healthy intestinal pH level.

Another benefit of fiber is its role in reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. Soluble fiber works against heart disease by binding with fatty acids in the intestines and lowering blood cholesterol

levels. It also plays a role in regulating blood sugar. Fiber-rich foods can help with weight loss because they are usually lower in fat and calories, plus the added bulk helps us feel full longer.

How Much Fiber Do I Need?

The recommended intake for dietary fiber is 21-25 grams per day for women and 30-38 grams per day for men. According to the American Dietetic Association, most Americans get only about half the recommended amount.

The nutrition label provides the total grams of fiber in a serving of food. Don't worry about whether you're eating soluble or insoluble fiber. Just try to consume more plant foods and you will boost both kinds.

When increasing your fiber intake, be sure to drink plenty of liquids. Add more fiber to your diet gradually so your digestive system gets used to it without side effects like gas and bloating.

What About Whole Grains?

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans define a whole grain as a food made from the entire grain seed, which consists of the bran, germ, and endosperm. The word "wheat" or "multigrain" on the label does not always mean whole grain. To get real whole grains, look for "100% whole wheat," "whole oats" or other whole grains as the first or second ingredient.

The labeling has become more complicated with the advent of "whole grain health claims" found on the front of food packages. An "excellent" source of whole grains contains 16 grams of whole grain per serving. A "good" source contains 8 grams of whole grain per serving.

But here's the tricky part: grams of whole grains are NOT the same as grams of fiber. Your best bet for comparing the fiber

content of food products is to look at the grams of fiber on the nutrition panel. A “high-fiber” food contains 5 grams of fiber (or more) per serving. A “good” source of fiber contains grams of fiber per serving.

Tips for Getting Enough Fiber

- 1) Eat several high-fiber foods at every meal.
- 2) Snack on veggies, fruit, nuts, or popcorn.
- 3) Use whole grain breads, whole wheat pastas, and brown rice instead white.
- 4) Eat beans a few times each week.
- 5) Aim for at least 2 cups of fruit and 2-1/2 cups of veggies each day.
- 6) Add oat bran, oatmeal, or wheat bran to muffins, bread, meatloaf, casseroles, or sauces.

Beth Bence Reinke is a registered dietitian who writes about food, nutrition, and health topics. She is a mom of two sons and the author of numerous magazine articles for adults and children. Beth and her husband have been CBN partners since 1998. Visit her at .

Freed By the Holy Spirit: Part II

Part I

Testimony 2: Rescued from Satan’s Clutch

I cannot explain how it began, but I found myself viewing pornography on the Internet. A little was not enough. At the same time, I knew without a doubt that it was wrong. I made no excuses. I wanted to stop; yet I found myself going back again

and again. My self-discipline went down the drain, and no amount of resolve worked.

The pornographic images flooded my mind even when I was not in front of the computer. I continued to visit the forbidden sites, despite ongoing repentance and prayer for discipline.

The cycle repeated itself many times: inappropriate behavior, repentance and prayer. The threat of being discovered was not enough to strengthen my determination to stop. I realized I was addicted to pornography, but I felt powerless over my behavior.

I began to notice that I looked at women differently. It terrified me that I couldn't make a distinction between the women I saw on the screen and the women around me. At the time I was confident I would not act on my fantasies. Yet I wondered, *how long would it be before I did?*

I was desperate. I was in agony and felt totally helpless. Nothing worked until finally, I got serious with the Lord. I told Him that my behavior was not glorifying Him and it was undermining my testimony—I needed help!

Several days after my prayer, I realized that I had not visited a single pornographic site. I was set free! I was astounded! I praised the Lord that He had closed the door on my addiction.

I use the Internet daily in my work. I am aware that pornography is only a click away, but the Lord has constrained me. I have learned the warning signs. When I am tired, emotionally drained and lonely, the “old me” is more than ready to return. But I know that through the power of the Holy Spirit, Satan is held at bay.—*Anonymous*

Shameful Addiction

The confession was on the tip of my tongue, and I trembled at the thought of revealing it. It was 1997, and I was about to

tell the woman I wanted to marry that I had a long-term addiction. Not to drugs or to alcohol, but to photos. The term is “pornography addiction,” and the shame and fear it visits on so many men in and out of the church is staggering.

As a young boy, I came across an adult magazine in my father’s sock drawer. It was captivating. It was stimulating. It was humiliating. I didn’t really understand why there would be pictures of women in my daddy’s drawer, yet even at six or seven years of age I knew that it was wrong that I had seen them. The pictures captured my young imagination.

Sleeping Giant

I didn’t give it much thought until I was in art school. The beast that had been dormant was about to awaken. I was attending Allegheny Center C&MA Church in Pittsburgh, Pa., and had recently recommitted my life to Jesus, being baptized at a college retreat. Coming off this high point, I entered a “desert place,” and at a point of weakness and deep loneliness, I walked through a part of town known for its pornographic materials and movie houses. I knew that I needed to honor my newfound commitment to Jesus, but I threw it aside—for just a moment. The regret of that choice still lingers.

With my heart racing, I ducked into one of the bookstores and began to look at the magazine racks. My pulse quickened as I flipped through the pages and filled the screen of my mind with these dark images. I repressed any sense of decency and plowed ahead, stopping at each photo to indulge my obscene thoughts. I bought one of the magazines and concealed it in my backpack as I walked to my apartment.

After a few hours of filling the darkness in my mind, I tossed the magazine in the trash. I justified that it couldn’t really be that bad—after all I had thrown it away. But something had begun. It has been said that a rut is a grave with the ends knocked out, and I dug for myself a monstrous rut. I continued

with this broken pattern of pain, guilt, indulgence, regret and back to pain. I was medicating my pain with pornography.

I've Got a Secret

Years later, my girlfriend and I were talking about getting married. I knew she would be completely appalled at the secret I kept, but I continued to live the lie. I was working for a prominent national Christian ministry, attending church every week and frequenting my newfound source for pornography—the Internet. With anonymity assured on the Web, I was able to satisfy the raging lust in my heart while living outwardly as a Christian.

But like the Pharisees, I was a whitewashed tomb. The weight of this lie was too difficult to carry, so I broke down to a coworker. He shared his life story of how the Lord had freed him from homosexuality. We had a meaningful conversation about admitting my problem to my girlfriend as well as shining the light of truth on this shameful offense. So at the next opportunity—during a team chapel—I let the light of truth shine on this dark corner of my life.

The most difficult part was telling my girlfriend. She sat across from me at a shopping mall food court, and I was about to unload my shame on her. “I’ve got a secret,” I said. “And I’m not at all sure how to let you know.” I went into the details about my addiction. I revealed that just a few days earlier I had indulged my fantasies and told her I was sorry.

“Phew, am I glad to get that off my chest,” I said.

Her hands grew cold as she pulled them from mine. The tears that flowed down her cheeks were an absolute surprise, and the pain in her eyes told me everything. She got up to leave, and I thought that I was going to be stranded at this shopping mall 30 miles from home. All the while I was still thinking about myself.

Help and Healing

She began to tell me what this revelation had done to her—how my choice to sin was a smack in the face of our love. It hit me—my choices affected not only me but also her. I began to pour out my heart and from the deepest places ask for her forgiveness. To my surprise she forgave me. She was and is the hand of Jesus to me. The cleansing of God washed over me as I cried all the way back to my apartment.

I would love to say that this was the end of my addiction and I no longer wrestled with the deep longings I was trying to fill with pornography. However, I had other failures. After we had been married and while she was on a retreat for young mothers, I ventured to another pornographic Web site. The rush of shame covered me. I knew that on her return I must again confess and ask her forgiveness. I did so. She graciously granted it to me and gently said I needed counseling.

The thought of asking for help was appalling. It meant admitting I was broken. It meant revealing that I needed help. It meant putting myself in a position of vulnerability and humility. What man in his right mind would want to appear weak? This one needed to. We found a local Christian counselor and began weekly meetings. For approximately two months I received godly counsel.

During this time, I came clean to the group of men I was meeting with every Friday. Another member of the group was dealing with the same issue and was attending a Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) group. From that moment of honest confession, our group of men became a band of brothers committed to wholeness in Christ.

We read books, set up accountability time and knew we could call each other whenever we needed to ensure personal purity and holiness. I am no theologian, but I feel like brokenness is the beginning of restoration. Being broken in the hands of a loving Creator is the epitome of grace, and being in a community of grace is extremely helpful to experience the

redemption of God.

Moving from regret to remorse to godly repentance is a daily journey. I regret my decision to have “ducked into” that bookstore. Yet, I have seen the grace of God in ways that I would have never known were it not for that choice. I don’t recommend this path, but I do know that He can take a bad choice and work it for His good plan.

I intend to share this story with my son, and anyone else God puts in my path. I want everyone to know that God is a God of restoration and redemption—He showers us lavishly with His mercy and grace. This journey is made easier knowing that we are not alone in our struggles. To God alone be the glory.

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The following principles go beyond describing what not to do by detailing what you can do positively. I periodically return to these principles and renew my resolutions. May I challenge you to make the following resolutions to maintain sexual purity?

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3. Never make sexual or seductive advances toward another woman (Prov. 6:27–29) and resist any sexual advances from another woman (Prov. 2:16, 6:24–26).
4. Never allow my mind to pursue stimulation through

sensual advertising, obscene or perverse material, nudity, indecent television programs, computer images, the Internet, movies or visit a place of sexual promiscuity (; Rom. 12:2).

5. Hate evil and put to death earthly desires at work in me for sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil passions and greed. Run from sexual immortality (1 Cor. 6:18; Ps. 97:10; Col. 3:5; 2 Tim. 2:22).
6. Fill my mind with things that are pure (Phil. 4:8).
7. Use my body to serve the Lord and keep my body clean and pure as a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:13, 19–20). Obey the desires and commands of God in all that I do (1 Pet. 1:14–16).
8. Always treat my wife with godliness and humility, honor and respect, dignity and purity (Eph. 5:25–28) and always have my needs for sexual intimacy met by her alone (Gen. 2:24; Prov. 5:18–19; Song 1:2; 1 Cor. 7:3–5).
9. Live as a Spirit-filled Christian in expressing value and worth to all people (John 3:16; Rom. 13:9, 15:7).
10. Quickly and fully repent of any moral failure and trust the Lord for full deliverance (1 John 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:10).

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Study: Older Women Can Wait

Longer Between Mammograms

Screening women over 65 each year for breast cancer doesn't catch any more early tumors—but it does lead to more false positives—than screening every other year, according to a new study.

The findings are based on more than 140,000 older women included in five mammography registries across the United States.

“This study clearly tells us that screening every two years may be more appropriate than screening women every year,” said Dr. Otis Brawley, chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society (ACS).

However, he noted, there are other studies that contradict that finding and do suggest annual mammograms are the way to go, even among older women.

One in eight U.S. women will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point in her life.

Mammography guidelines from the ACS call for women to be screened for breast cancer every year they are in good health, starting at age 40.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, on the other hand, recommends biennial screening for women ages 50 to 74, saying there's not enough evidence to recommend for or against mammograms for those aged 75 and older.

For the new study, Dejana Braithwaite from the University of California, San Francisco and her colleagues followed women ages 66 through 89 for seven years. During that time, about 3,000 were diagnosed with breast cancer and 138,000 remained cancer-free.

Among women with breast cancer, a similar proportion had

invasive or advanced stage tumors, regardless of whether they had been screened every year or every other year leading up to their diagnosis. About two-thirds of those women were screened annually.

However, between 47 and 50 percent of women who were screened annually had a false positive mammogram at some point during the study period, compared to 26 to 30 percent of those screened biennially, according to the findings published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

“Just having a false positive result means having the potential anxiety and inconvenience of having to undergo additional procedures,” Braithwaite told Reuters Health.

In older women in particular, biopsies and other procedures may exacerbate underlying health conditions, she added.

According to Brawley, who wasn't involved in the new study, there are three types of cancers.

“There are the cancers that grow so slowly they would have never killed the patients, there are the cancers that grow slow enough that we can find them and save the patients' lives and then there are the cancers that grow so fast that no matter what screening we do, we're never going to be able to save the patient's life,” he told Reuters Health.

“This study says... screening every year is not going to find any more of these cancers that are growing slow enough to be detected, but fast enough if they weren't detected they would kill.”

Braithwaite's team calculated that nationwide, screening older women annually rather than biennially would lead to almost four million additional false positive exams in that age group.

“Our study shows that it really does very little benefit, in

fact there is no benefit, with annual mammograms and there's this additional harm of having an increased probability of a false positive result," Braithwaite said.

Remember That God Takes Center Stage in Worship

Let's be honest. How often do you really feel like worshipping in church? Don't worry; it's just you and me here; there is nobody to impress.

What kinds of messages typically fly unabated through your mind when, at 10:30 on Sunday morning, your church's worship leader utters those two fateful words: "Let's stand"?

Thus, the war begins within us each week. Our sedentary frame suddenly feels about as easy to raise as the Titanic. Amidst groaning and grunting and proper wardrobe adjustments, we assume the worship position, singing and clapping appropriately. We do our best to appear enthusiastic.

However, most of song No. 1 is spent regretting our delay in going to sleep the night before. At midnight we rationalized we just had to get the scores before we went to bed. Or we just had to catch the first half hour of the sketch comedy show.

Now, *Saturday Night Live* has given way to Sunday Morning Lifeless. Our spastic mind doesn't help. The cerebral cortex switches channels on us by the millisecond, challenging our spiritual focus. On paper, our worship appears thus:

"Beautiful win 6 to this is their show hasn't been funny since

the writing especially 's for lunch?...my soul must sing."

To those of you who regularly fight the good fight of corporate worship, I have good news; you're not alone. While we may think that enduring such challenges should relegate us to the spiritual bleachers, our Father understands. More than anyone, He knows the battle for our hearts and minds because He fought it centuries ago. And He will fight it for us if we let Him.

We live in a "feeling" generation. Have you ever noticed how the words "think" and "believe" have been replaced by "feel" in sentences?

For instance, "I feel it's important that we table this issue," or "It's my feeling that the Lord would have us ...," and so on. In our world, if it can't be felt, it isn't real.

I see it in youth ministry all the time. Last summer, a high school student came up to me during an altar service at youth camp. He said, "I can so easily feel God here at camp, but when I get home I don't feel Him as much. What's wrong with me?"

I think this beautiful and courageous kid expresses the hidden thoughts of many believers today. I looked into his face and said, "It's not about feeling; it's about believing." I told him that our emotions are certainly God-designed but can't be relied upon to determine our spiritual aptitude.

We have to believe that He is with us. Faith must kick in where feelings end so we can remind ourselves of what is eternally true, no matter what our mood or circumstance. No wonder the Lord said, *"Be still, and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10).

Whenever I enter into a congregational worship experience, there's a checklist I run through to get my mind in the right direction. Maybe it will help you.

1. I remember that worship is about Him, not me. Too often, we allow our personal spiritual performance to determine the level at which we will sing or engage the Lord. But God never changes, and if my heart's desire is to love Him, my own failures and successes shouldn't affect that. I shouldn't cower in self-pity and withhold praise because I sinned; neither should I become self-righteous and arrogantly boisterous when I follow all the rules. He's the object of worship, not me.
2. I remember that I can run to Him with my sin. Much like the prophet Isaiah ("I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips" – Isaiah 6:5), when we're in God's presence, we will inevitably be confronted with how un-God-like we are. That's healthy. It is the whole point of worship—to remind us that there is a God, and I am not Him. However, when the realization hits, I must run to Him, not away from Him. True worship brings relational restoration between us and our Savior.
3. I remember that I'm a worshipper, not a consumer. Such much of our world is built around pleasing customers and "satisfaction guaranteed," but I have to shed that when I walk into the house of God. Worship is not what I get out of it; it's what I eternally invest in my adoration and service to Christ. With that in mind, I can get past misspelled words on the screen, a loud bass amp, or inadequate room temperature. It's all for His satisfaction
4. I remember that He's more anxious to be with me than I with Him. How I wish I could say the opposite, but it would run counter to His character. He is so anxious to have that time with me, not just on Sunday, but daily, even hourly. When I realize how faithful He is and how He is pleased by my mere existence, I can lay aside everything and picture His face in my mind.

Don't get me wrong. Our sinful nature won't allow us to do it without a fight. Just keep trying. Believe me, He is worth the

effort.

Matt Anderson serves as youth director for the Ohio District of the Assemblies of God.