

Crushing the Vicious Source of Sluggishness and Disease

Years ago, a friend borrowed my small Ford Ranger pickup truck. When he brought it back, the bed was sagging.

“I went to a marble show at the convention center, and they gave me lots of free samples,” he said. “But the weight was too much for my pickup. It messed up the shocks and cost me some money to replace them.”

Millions of people do to their bodies what my friend did to my truck. They load up their bodies with extra weight, more than their frames were designed to carry. Then they wonder why their knees and hips are wearing out and they’re developing arthritis, ankle problems, heel spurs, lower back pain, bunions, degenerated disks and more. That’s their body’s way of saying, “Quit putting so much weight on me!”

Why can’t Americans lose weight and keep it off? There are some basic reasons.

Bad foods are a habit. Bad foods are convenient. Bad foods are a vicious cycle. Hormones make bad foods look good. Bad foods give comfort.

Starchy and sugary foods raise serotonin, one of the brain’s feel-good chemicals. Chocolate raises dopamine levels, another feel-good chemical. Generally, when people are depressed, anxious or just low in serotonin or dopamine, they reach for a food that pumps up these feel-good chemicals.

Food Cravings

The main reason many Americans are obese is simply gluttony, and Christians are no exception. Christians often think that because they don’t smoke, drink or party, they can eat all

they want! Then they reap what they sow in obesity, heart disease, cancer, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, reflux disease, sleep apnea and loss of quality of life.

Webster's dictionary defines *gluttony* as "excess in eating and drinking." The Bible equates it with drunkenness: "Do not be among winebibbers, among riotous eaters of meat; for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags" (Prov. 23:20-21).

The word "glutton" in this passage is defined as "ravenous eater of meat." This describes a lot of men in particular. If you want to experience the harsh reality of some people's lack of restraint, simply go to a buffet and watch how they load up their plates. Many will eat as if they've never seen food before. Food is not at the root of the overeating issue; it actually goes much deeper than that.

The Mind-Body-Spirit Connection

Many times people who struggle with a weight problem experience self-loathing, loneliness, low self-esteem, depression, guilt and shame—especially the latter two. I have treated numerous patients with weight problems, and almost always the root cause is emotional. The moment they mess up, they feel guilty and ashamed, and they feel like quitting. In my medical office, we treat the patient's body, mind (emotions) and spirit.

We give them Scriptures to confess daily aloud and meditate upon so that they begin to change their mindset. The Word gives them hope.

I take them through forgiveness therapy, which enables them to forgive themselves and others. This breaks the vicious cycle of negative feelings and emotions. Then we address the physical by making lifestyle changes—eating living foods and exercising.

Our bodies are precious and were created as a dwelling place for their Creator. Start practicing temperance, moderation, portion control and self-restraint when it comes to food. Then, when you make positive changes to your diet, it will have a real and lasting effect on your health. {eo}

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