

How Christians Can Solve the Obesity Crisis

We are eating ourselves to death. Over 70 percent of Americans over age 20 are in the category of overweight, obese and beyond, according to the Associated Press.

It's an issue that has not left the church untouched. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't be surprised to find that Christians top the list. Yet, Christians have the answer right in their heart.

If something doesn't happen to turn the tide, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention projects 42 percent of adults will be obese by 2030. It reported 12 states currently have an adult obesity rate of over 30 percent. My state happens to be one of them.

Hard Facts

The hard facts should be sobering. They should make us stop and think about what we are doing to ourselves and what we are teaching our children. Statistics, though, can change. It starts by first changing our own relationship with food.

As one of the wealthy nations, food is readily available. Fast food is on every corner. Statistics say Americans eat out over four times a week. Not only is that more expensive, but when we eat out, we don't know how the food is prepared or what has been added. In other words, we have little control over what has we eat unless we ask questions before we order or check the meal on one of several fitness apps available.

What's in It?

When I began checking before ordering, I found abnormally high calorie content foods that should be healthy like a lean steak

or grilled chicken breast. When I asked each was grilled with, the answer was a glaze or a sauce with high sugar content.

There is something in the food industry called the “bliss” factor. That’s the point at which sugar can be added to a food making it taste better, but not so sweet that the average person can taste that it’s there. It makes us want more without asking questions.

Sugar-Free Benefits

Since I’ve cut processed sugar and high-carbohydrate-content foods from my life, I can tell with the first bite I take of anything if sugar has been added. I wasn’t mindful of it when I weighed 430 pounds and was guzzling sugar like water. My senses had definitely been dulled by years of enormous intake.

Today, though, I can tell. Without the added sugar or sauces, I can also taste the delicious flavor of real food. I have more energy, my mind is clearer and more focused, and I’ve lost over 260 pounds.

With the weight loss, my co-morbidities of high blood pressure, congestive heart failure and diabetes are a thing of the past. I am no longer afraid to get involved with people in a real way. I am willing to risk feeling my emotions instead of stuffing them with food.

I Give Up!

It all started when I gave up sugar. So how do we do that? There are a lot of answers running around out there. I’ve even got a free resource on my website to help you. However, the best answer is found in Paul’s words.

“For the good I desire to do, I do not do, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who does it, but sin that lives in me. ... O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of

this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ... For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 7:19-20, 24-25; Rom. 8:2).

Jesus has the answer for us. It is found in His freedom. We want diets, plans and rules. Yet, in this passage, Jesus tells us plainly that the harsh taskmaster of the law doesn't work. We must get our marching orders straight from Him.

Personal Plan

Back in 1977 when I started gaining weight and cried out to Him about it, He impressed upon me, "Stop eating sugar. Eat more meat, fruits and vegetables and stop eating so much bread."

It took me 30 years to understand that when He said, "Stop," He meant "Stop." It's a plan I have embraced fully. It may not be your plan, but then again, it may be. You have to ask Him, "What do You want me to do to make sure my body is in good health?" (3 John 2).

The next step is probably the hardest. You have to do what He says (John 10:27). {eoa}

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