

How Confessing and Forsaking This 'Acceptable Sin' Transformed This Woman's Life

It's the acceptable, condoned, even sanctified sin because that crafty, wily old wolf in sheep's clothing has made it appear to be so. We joke about it from the pulpit. We even encourage it with our doughnuts, cookies and lollipops every Sunday and at every committee meeting and small-group get-together.

Satan's fingerprints are all over this because it is something far more deadly than any of the things we ordinarily think of as sin, and yet it is one of the seven deadly sins. I am talking about the thing I've never heard even one pastor preach about and the one we never want to admit—gluttony. Yet this is the one sin that's eating Christians alive.

What Is Gluttony?

Several times, the Bible mentions those who are gluttons and advises people not to associate with someone who is a glutton. The Weymouth New Testament translates one of the "acts of the flesh" listed in Galatians 5:19-21 as "riotous feasting," while the Wycliffe Bible calls it "unmeasurable eatings." Other versions translate it as "orgies, wild parties, revelries." These are all words for gluttonous behaviors.

The definition of a glutton is "one given habitually to greedy and voracious eating." Synonyms are overeater, hog and stuffer. I will admit, this was my rebellion of choice. I saw it as the acceptable sin because no Christian I had ever met said it was wrong to eat until you were stuffed.

As a matter of fact, most joked about the upcoming church carry-in supper as one where everyone would have to wear

expandable clothes. Don't get me wrong. I'm not against church dinners, but as a sugar- and comfort-food addict and a glutton, the emphasis on eating unlimited quantities of food just justified my chosen sin.

I Wore My Rebellion

I wore my rebellion where all could see it. At 430 pounds, there was no hiding my sin. It was always with me, but then no one dared mention it to me lest I point out their third piece of pie.

Yet my sin, like many others God lovingly tries to steer us away from, was killing me. I thank God for a rude cardiac surgeon who bluntly told me I'd be dead in five years if I didn't lose at least 100 pounds and keep it off. That was a wake-up call. However, it took several more years and many more circumstances before I owned my addiction.

Acting Against My Addiction

As any addict knows, to recover I had to do a 180-degree turnaround. I had to give up those things I craved, the things that if I ate them, I couldn't stop. I had to face my emotional demons and recognize how they impacted my relationship with God.

I changed physically. To date, I've lost over 250 pounds. I changed emotionally. I fully embrace my emotions, learn from them and work to know better how to handle them instead of allowing them to handle me.

I changed mentally. My mindset has been totally renewed to include taking care of myself before I even attempt to help anyone else. I changed spiritually. I accept the glorious grace, strength, mercy and mystery of who God is and how He works in my life.

I stay away from foods with sugar and flour or that combination. This is true any place I am, even when others are

eating them. I stay true to my commitment because obedience to what God has instructed me to do is more important to me than the things I crave.

I am aware that my life is a testimony. People are watching me to see if I stay true to the journey to which God has called me. That is even more motivation to be obedient.

Destruction of Food Addiction

I pray for divine encounters with people who suffered like I did for years because I know they want a way out of the destructive pit of food addiction. Satan has gripped them by the stomach and won't let go. The way out is not easy, but it is possible when we submit totally to God and desire to be transformed and changed from the inside out. (See Rom. 12:2, MSG.)

I have immeasurable compassion for those who are where I was. It's why I write books. When I was super morbidly obese, I wouldn't ask for help, but I would read a book. I just couldn't find one written by someone who had been where I was and had overcome.

It's why I speak, share blog posts, post on social media and go to the trouble of delivering a weekly podcast message. God has given me a platform. I use every opportunity to make the church aware that they must wake up to Satan's tactics before it is too late.

Walking Out of the Pit

Food addiction is a true addiction, and it takes someone who has been there to walk beside you to help you walk out of the pit of where you are. That's the reason God called me to do weight loss coaching when I could just be spending my retirement years writing novels and dabbling in painting.

It is my greatest joy to work with individuals in my group or one-on-one and help them discover the root issues behind their

addiction, put those to rest in the hands of Jesus and begin to trust Him completely, especially with what they eat, how they move and how they navigate everyday life.

It's in the everydayness of our lives that change happens.

God changed me as I gave up sugar and flour. I came out of food addiction by clinging so tightly to Jesus, there is no reason to want anything else. His presence has become food and drink in the best meal I've ever eaten, as it says in Matthew 5:6 (MSG).

I am well aware the problem is that most of us want to overindulge in the foods we desire instead of Him. We must make it our mission to find the "why" hidden in that statement. Our very lives depend upon it.

Does He Have Your Stomach?

Paul told the church at Philippi, "Many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:18-20, NIV).

Does the serpent have hold of you by your stomach? Have you willingly allowed him to make your overeating, gluttonous ways a stronghold in your life when the only stronghold should be occupied by God Himself?

I'm concerned about this sneaky, deadly path he's led us down. Obesity and excess sugar have been linked to so many deadly diseases—congestive heart failure, diabetes, high blood pressure, many different stomach and colon ailments, and even cancers. Yet I know those who would rather continue eating themselves to death than give up the foods that are killing them.

Winning the War With Gluttony

We must do everything we can to win this food fight with gluttony. We must embrace transformation with everything that is in us. Transformation only comes when we hang on tight to Jesus and do exactly what He tells us to do.

I'm not talking about a diet. I'm talking about a total lifestyle change—body, soul and spirit. Are you ready? What's holding you back? {eoa}

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