

How Do We Fight the Battle of the Bulge?

It is obvious, looking around and seeing all the news about obesity, that there is something missing in the battle of the bulge.

In today's world we are bombarded in the news, books and billboards about obesity and its effects on our body and the high medical costs due to obesity. Diet books are a dime a dozen, all offering opinions and a quick fix to the problem. Yet, as a nation we grow fatter and fatter.

Another amazing fact is that many studies have shown that Christians are leading the pack. A 2001 Pulpit and Pew study of 2,500 clergy found that 76 percent were overweight or obese compared to 61 percent of the general population at the time of the study. Unfortunately, I was one of the statistics.

We are a nation of educated and intelligent people, so why can't we stop this problem of food addiction? After walking through this challenge in my own life, I know it is a spiritual problem.

The Word of God tells us, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1, NKJV). How can we present our bodies to God when we have no control over them? Can you hear Paul's heart? "I beseech you" indicates that he is strongly urging us to take care of our bodies.

It is obvious with all the information available and all the statistics of death-related disease due to obesity that something is missing. Obesity is fast overtaking smoking for being number one in preventable diseases.

We are more than a body. As a born-again Christian we are spirit, soul and body. We have an enemy that comes to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). Satan has used food since the beginning in the Garden, and he has not stopped using food to destroy mankind.

We are not alone. We have a Helper, and we have an advantage over the world. John 16:7 in the New King James Version tells us, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you."

The question is, do you really want help? Are you at a point of desperation and surrender? Most people want victory without surrender. One of the most convicting Scriptures for me was, "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it'" (Matt. 16:24-25, NKJV).

Jesus repeated this over and over; it was a major theme of His ministry. He wanted people to know, if you want a blessed life, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me.

When we do not have control in any area of our life—spirit, soul or body—we are not living; we are existing. It is time we turned to the Word of God for a permanent solution to the obesity crisis in the nation and recognize our enemy and surrender. After I surrendered my food addiction to the Lord, He gave me a battle plan that took 80 pounds from my body. Truthfully, I did not realize that I was addicted to food until the Holy Spirit revealed this to me.

How did I get addicted? "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." (Hosea 4:6, NKJV). I was totally ignorant to the world's plan to cause food addiction by the additives in foods

that we eat. The world is not interested in your best interest; they want to make money.

When I accepted my responsibility in this battle, surrendered my will, picked up my cross of bad eating habits and began to renew my mind with the Word of God, studying nutrition and what was good for my body, the weight issue was no longer a problem. I had one desire: to please God and to be able to present my body to Him.

As I allowed the Holy Spirit to minister to this challenge of my life, I was no longer obsessed with thinking about food. Pleasing God with the body that He had formed in my mother's womb became my reason to live.

Join the walk to honor God with your body. I have shared my journey in my book, *Why Diets Don't Work—Food Is Not the Problem*. Just like Eve, we have been given a free will to make choices. Choose life! Be encouraged, stand up and walk tall. You are a child of God, and you were born to overcome! (1 John 5:4).

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