

How to Slay the Giant of Obesity

Everyone, saint and sinner, knows that David, the shepherd boy, won the battle with the giant Goliath. We always love to cheer for the underdog!

As we walk in the light, living in a dark world, we are going to face many giants. Persecution, trials and the tribulations of life are guaranteed, so it is not a question of *if*, but *how* we face them.

There is a giant in the church today that is destroying health, killing dreams and stealing the potential of God's people. This giant, obesity and out-of-control appetites, has grown to epidemic levels, and everyone is talking, trying to find answers.

The enemy has not changed his tactics since the Garden. He is still tempting people to take one more bite! One more bite leads to food addictions that are very hard to break. The world is making money on "a new magic cure for weight loss" and making sure that as we eat their processed foods we become addicted to the taste and not the need for nutrition.

For years, I was on the roller coaster, riding the scales up and down, struggling with guilt and shame, feeling helpless to stay in control. After giving up and coming to the conclusion I would never try one of the world's new magic cures again, the Lord stepped in.

While visiting a friend, I looked up to see a sign and it simply stopped me in my tracks. It said, "The devil wants you fat!" This hit me right in my heart. I hate the devil, and the last thing I wanted to do was make him happy. I realized that I had a lot of emotional baggage from my weight problem. I had seen the devil try to kill and steal from my family with drugs

and alcohol, but I had not seen the truth: that I was addicted to food.

We are dependent on food. God not only created us to need food, but also that we would enjoy food. Eating should be pleasurable while we are benefiting from the nutrition we receive from it.

Food has served the devil well over the years. It started in the Garden, and we can see that for generations food has been a stumbling block. Esau sold his birthright for food. Psalm 78:18 tells us, "They [the children of Israel] willfully put God to the test by demanding the food they craved" (NIV).

Food is fast overtaking smoking as the No. 1 cause of preventable disease. The problem is when we become emotionally dependent on food to cope with everyday life. When food becomes our source of joy and comfort, it becomes an addiction that traps us and holds us in bondage.

Most Christians don't drink or smoke, so we feel we have the right to eat. The potluck has been one of our trademarks for fellowship. Unfortunately, the potluck has gotten out of hand and packed the pounds on our body to kill, steal and destroy our health, our mental strength and our emotional stability.

How did this young, unimpressive shepherd boy slay a giant whom everyone in the army was afraid of? He had confidence in the power and protection of God and fought with the strength of the Lord! We must understand that there is a power greater than our taste buds.

Food disorder, whether anorexia or obesity, brings disease to our body and soul—disease that is debilitating to our bodies and depression that clouds our minds, brings death and defeat, and is one of the chief weapons of the enemy. We pray for healing in our bodies but refuse to pick up our cross of out-of-control eating. We have refused to discipline ourselves and have filled our minds with the trash of the world.

I love the question that David asked when his brothers questioned why he was there: "Is there not a cause?" (1 Sam. 17:29, NKJV). I challenge you with this same question: Is there not a cause? If you are serious about the Great Commission, there is a cause. How can we go into all the world and preach the gospel when we are bound to a food addiction or any other addiction? All we can do is get to the refrigerator.

Please hear my heart. I know the struggle, the hurt and the heartache of overcoming an addiction.

I thank God that I had a shock of reality: "The devil wants you fat!" Now, three years later and 80 pounds lighter, I can enjoy my life and share the Good News of Jesus with the world. Truly, Jesus is the answer, He is the author and finisher of our faith, and only through the power of the Holy Spirit can we conquer the giants in our life.

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