

How to Stop Overeating—God's Way

Is your tongue writing checks that your body can't cash?

God once led me to do a study on the Scriptures about gluttony (overeating), and this is the unusual definition He gave me for it: "Overeating is your tongue writing checks that your body cannot cash."

That certainly makes me understand how this habit can bankrupt you in mind, body and spirit.

In this article, I'll show you how to stop it.

But first, let me explain why you should work to eliminate this habit as soon as possible.

The reason comes from Proverbs 23:21: "For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags."

Did you notice the Scripture puts a person who habitually consumes too much alcohol and too much food in the *same category*?

Both mean that the substance has more control over you than you have over it. The Scripture also explains why this is a serious issue. It says both the glutton and the drunkard will come to poverty.

Money is a God-given resource that takes care of your living expenses and helps to build up God's kingdom. If your money is not managed wisely (and spending more than is needful on food and alcohol is unwise), then you have less money for giving to your church, charity and investments that can grow wealth.

I once read that regular overeating costs the average family

nearly \$500 a year—about \$42 a month.

What if instead, you were able to donate that money to your church, to hunger relief, your child's college education or financial vehicle?

Many of us are eating our futures away—literally.

The second consequence of eating too much is that the Scripture says it makes you drowsy.

That makes you unaware of what is going on around you ; you can't think with clarity and do just enough to get by.

You aren't able to be sober and vigilant as the Scripture commands you (1 Pet. 5:8) and so are wide open to the enemy's attacks.

Proverbs 25:28 says, "Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls."

In ancient times, enemy hordes frequently invaded cities, plundering its possessions and carrying the people off into slavery. Having a wall around the city was an essential part of ensuring the city's protection.

It was the first line of defense.

Unfortunately, many people are tearing down their own walls with poor health choices. Growing statistics of obesity and all the diseases that go with it like diabetes, heart disease, stroke and others are the evidence.

The Scripture also says that drowsiness ends up clothing a man in rags. We assign little value to rags; they are typically used and thrown away.

Remember: You cannot reign in life if you live unrestrained.

Wisdom requires that you set boundaries as to the behavior you will or will not accept in yourself.

I'm going to introduce you to a word you may or may not have heard before: "Temperance."

It's an old-fashioned word that means "self-control" or "moderation."

When you think of a climate that has temperate weather, pleasant images come to mind—clear skies and gentle breezes. There are no extremes of heat or cold. Such an environment is optimal to live in.

Concerning your spirit (lower-case "spirit" typically means your mind, will and emotions), you also want your thoughts to be temperate so your outward habits are temperate.

Whenever you do not submit your thoughts, will and emotions to the obedience of Christ, you leave yourself vulnerable to temptations such as overeating.

Changing the overeating habit starts with a decision. Ask yourself, "Do I control this behavior or does it control me?"

An easy way to tell is to imagine giving up the habit of excess eating from this day forward. Did a feeling of deprivation come over you?

If your feelings are neutral or indifferent to it, then you have control over the habit.

I ask you to eliminate the habit for the sake of others who may be watching you. This is especially true if you appear to be fit and healthy, but eat to excess when you are around friends or family.

They may get a false idea that you overeat all the time when you likely don't.

However, if the vision of giving up the habit makes you feel deprived, uneasy or fearful, then the habit controls you. You are in danger and need to give up the habit for your own sake.

Compulsive overeating can cost you your health or even your life.

So a change of heart and mind is required. This is the attitude you need: "I must change this habit. It is no longer acceptable to me. I must change it now. I am committed to changing, no matter how long it takes."

Do you hear the resolve in this statement? It naturally leads to repentance. If you need help in this area, then take it to the Lord in prayer.

After you've made the decision that you will no longer accept the behavior in yourself, speak the previous words out loud with as much conviction as you can.

I mentioned that another word for "temperance" is "moderation." When I read that word, I immediately thought about a moderator in a debate.

Did you know that there is always a debate going on inside of you as to which choices you are going to make each day?

You as the moderator get to choose who wins each debate. And your actions show you which side won.

Here are the actions to take to ensure that you are eating only to satisfy your body's needs and that the right side wins. The concept is called SANE eating. The acronym stands for:

- Start when you are hungry.
- Appreciate every bite.
- No food is forbidden.
- End when signaled.

A word of warning before you start eating SANely (in your right mind): When you practice eating with temperance (moderation), it is going to feel weird and wrong at the beginning.

You will be amazed at how much you eat when your body is not hungry and how often you are tempted to eat past the signal point. However, the more you practice this in faith, it will start to feel normal and right. So stick with it until your change comes.

In addition, 1 Corinthians 10:13 promises you:

No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, and He will not permit you to be tempted above what you can endure, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

So be humble; **ASK** for God's help in prayer when you are tempted to go back to your overeating behaviors and ask Him to show you the way of escape. He will do it as you wait upon him. {eo}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify to God's healing power to end binge-eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

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