

If You Want To Live in Good Health, It All Starts With This Spiritual Discipline

Losing an extreme amount of weight isn't just a physical issue. I've lost 250 pounds but it was, and still is, a very spiritual issue. I wanted to lose weight, eat healthy and exercise but no matter what diet I went on, even if I lost weight, I couldn't seem to keep it off. I didn't want to go back to eating whatever I wanted to eat whenever I wanted it, but I always did.

What was so confusing to me is why I did this when I really, really, really wanted to lose weight. It was because I really, really, really wanted to eat what I wanted as well. No matter what I did, I still found ways to eat what I wanted. My foundational lie that I needed sugar to survive was stubbornly in place.

The Search for Truth

In Romans 7:22-25 (NLT), Paul recognizes there is another power operating inside him, fighting against what he knows is right. This other power is an unwelcome intruder in his humanity, his flesh, his body. This is an agonizing or miserable situation. If left to himself, he will align with things that lead to sin or disobedience to God.

I had accepted Christ when I was seven, so I couldn't understand why I couldn't access His mighty power to triumph over the weight and sin, which so easily seemed to entangle me as Hebrews 12:1 (NIV) says. I had Jesus, but I hadn't grabbed hold of the total breadth of what living for Him meant.

Jesus overcame sin and death, a very unwelcome intruder in my life, but I still have to make the choice every day. I can

follow Christ and live by the power of the Holy Spirit or I can choose to live according to my selfish, fleshly desires.

Living By the Flesh

Our flesh is the default pattern of our lives. "If left to myself, my flesh is aligned with the law of sin," (Rom. 7:25, TPT). Satisfying our desires is what we will always go back to, even if we have accepted Christ.

When we accept Christ, we receive the Holy Spirit, the power which raised Christ from the dead (Rom. 8:11, NLT). We have to activate our desire to live for Him by committing ourselves to live according to the Holy Spirit's power. Until we commit to doing that, we will still be back in the confusion and conundrum of Romans 7:19: "The good I want to do, I don't do. The wrong I don't want to do, I do."

I was stuck there for many years, but I also desperately wanted to activate the full power of the Holy Spirit in my life. To do this, I was going to have to surrender everything to God, even the foods I loved.

The Profound Experience

Russ Hardesty was holding an informational meeting for a new group he was forming for individuals with harmful life patterns. He shared his story of being sober from alcohol for over 20 years.

All of a sudden, I heard Russ say something that felt like it was meant just for me. The words seemed to come out of the blue and unattached to his story. He said, "Alcohol is one molecule away from sugar. Alcohol is liquid sugar." Those words grabbed me and wouldn't let go. He had my total attention.

The truth hit me square in the face. I am like an alcoholic, only with sugar. I crave it all the time. I can't stop eating

foods that have processed sugar in them, even though I know a cardiac surgeon has told me I will die if I don't keep the weight off. I am a bona fide, die-hard sugar addict.

Sugar Controlled Me

At this time, I hadn't heard anything about sugar addiction. However, right then, I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt I was a sugar addict, even if it wasn't something any experts recognized as an issue. At the end of the meeting, I asked, "Can a person be addicted to sugar?"

He said, "You can be addicted to anything which controls you."

Those words sealed it for me. Sugar controlled me. It mastered me. It called the shots in my life. It told me what to eat, when to eat, how much to eat and never to stop eating.

I had willingly allowed sugar to put me in bondage. It started as something fun to do like baking cookies with Grandma. I saw how sugar had cozied up to me and made me feel like I couldn't live without it, just like a manipulative lover might. All the time, sugar was a tool of evil out to destroy me.

Time for Surrender

I was driving home after the meeting, but I was crying so hard I had to pull off to the side of the road. I said, "God, I have believed the lie that said I have to have sugar to survive. I have set sugar, the foods I crave and my appetite up as my god instead of You. Right now, in this minute and this place, I surrender sugar to you. I no longer want sugar to be my god. I want to follow only You."

This was my come-to-Jesus moment. It was as real or even more real than my salvation experience. I was a grown woman facing the results of my sin and rebellion against God. It was the start of my journey toward transformation. It was the start of my weight-loss journey, but also of a closer walk with my God

that fills my soul with His sweetness. {eoa}

This article first appeared on .

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