

Is Your Weight Problem Actually a Spiritual Problem?

Information tells you the need to change. God's Word gives you the power, authority and grace to change through the transformation of renewing your mind. "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

You cannot fix a spiritual problem with natural means. We are surrounded with information about the obesity crisis yet we get fatter and fatter. We are intelligent people, but we can't control our appetite.

Obesity is fast overtaking smoking as the No. 1 preventable cause of death. This should tell us something! When will the church wake up and stop feeding the problem? 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.

I thank God that I had a 'divine interruption' one day. I saw a sign that said, "The devil wants you fat!" That hit home in the core of my being. I was stunned. The Holy Spirit brought to my remembrance, "The thief does not come, except to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). About the only thing I had in abundance at that time were fat cells.

How can this be? I pondered. I was ignorant. I did not read labels, I did not study nutrition, so I walked right into the food trap of the enemy. Satan has always used food to deceive people. It worked so well in the garden; why should he change?

Satan can only maintain what he can obtain, and when he has

control of our appetite it opens the door to steal, kill and destroy our health, our joy and our peace. There is a power greater than your taste buds.

Information shows us the need for change, but only transformation gives us the desire to change. The power to change comes from the One who created us. When I read those words, "The devil wants you fat," I had an immediate burning desire in my heart to change. It was a moment that brought repentance and an awareness that I was responsible and accountable for the care of my body.

True repentance is believing in your heart and confessing with your mouth. "Therefore repent and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). We need times of refreshing as we face the battles in our lives.

First, get rid of the word "diet" in your vocabulary. A diet is the sum total of what we eat every day. Your diet is the opportunity to supply your body each day with the needed nutrients for proper function. A lack of nutrients in your everyday diet from "a magic'" weight-loss source, leaves your body starving and constantly hungry.

The day I faced the truth, I was addicted to food, was very painful for me. The truth hurts, but it will set you free. I did not set out to become addicted to food and I didn't realize I was until the Holy Spirit showed me. I became addicted to certain food through ignorance. I was too busy to plan and prepare nutritional meals; I just grabbed anything to stop the craving. I didn't take time to read labels and take heed of the information about food. I was meditating on 1 Corinthians 10:13, which promised a way of escape, when the Lord whispered to my heart, "Planning and preparation is a way of escape."

Transformation power requires study of God's Word, prayer and

an honest assessment of your life. Your body is not your own; you have been bought with a price (see 1 Cor. 6:19-20). As a Christian, you are a steward of everything in your possession, including your body. You are an ambassador, a representative of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Surrender your diet failures, guilt, food addiction and your appetite to the Lord. Weight loss is a byproduct of obedience. Only the Holy Spirit can break the stronghold of habit and addiction in your life. As we learn the ways of the kingdom of God, we don't have to seek success; it will follow us as we follow Him. Live for eternity. Die to the flesh and represent your kingdom to the best of your ability.

My testimony and walk in this journey of freedom are in my book, Why Diets Don't Work—Food Is Not the Problem. A workbook is also available.

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