

Mountain-Tossing Faith Begins With This Small Step

The boxes, crumpled wrapping paper, bags and aluminum foil that once covered leftovers are out on the curb ready to be recycled or thrown in the dump. Once again, you're mad at yourself for too much money spent and too much food eaten. You know it's time to push the reset button on your life, if you just had the faith to believe it actually exists.

That reset button does exist, but it requires more than the simple push of a button. It requires acceptance, ownership and action regarding the changes required. It also requires faith. Without faith to begin the change process, nothing different will ever happen. I can give you a 100 percent guarantee that if you do nothing different, next year you will get the same results you did this year.

Change, though, is possible. Overspending and overeating seem to go together or they always did in my life. Right now, though, I am counting my blessings with over 260 pounds gone from my body, and as of this year, my husband and I are debt-free.

Debt

As most Americans do, we found ourselves deeply in debt. I wasn't too worried, though. It seemed everyone we knew also had a house payment, one or two car payments and too many credit card payments.

What's the big deal? I thought. *We can't take stuff with us and we can't take debt with us. Might as well enjoy it while we are here.*

The problem is, though, debt, like the excess pounds on my body, kept me in bondage. When I was in debt, I was in bondage

to the bank, the credit card companies and whatever job I had. If God said, "Move," or "Do this," it couldn't obey, because I was tied to the promise of paying off things I had bought.

Weight

In addition, I weighed 430 pounds. There were times I could barely move, and yet I couldn't seem to turn down desserts, pasta, potatoes or homemade breads. I was definitely in bondage to my indulgences on both fronts—food and stuff.

Weight comes off one pound at a time, just as debt comes off one dollar at a time. However, it's not a simple process. I didn't lose an extreme amount of weight overnight, and we did not get debt-free overnight.

Both processes, though, did start with a reset, a time of intentional surrender to the job ahead of me. Then the process to walk out my journey became acceptance, ownership and action.

Acceptance

Denial is the biggest enemy of change. I continued to live with my head buried in the sand until something major happened to jolt me out of the rut I'd made of my life.

My wakeup call came with being told by a cardiac surgeon I had five years to live if I didn't lose weight. That was the impetus to begin my change journey. For the first time, I was face-to-face with the reality of my situation.

In the same way, I lived in denial about debt, robbing Peter to pay Paul, paying one credit card off with the other. My wake-up call there came hearing Dave Ramsey say that debt is bondage. I realized we couldn't be free to fully serve God if we were in debt. Giving up things for God became an easy choice.

Using the money we saved to build a well in Kenya,

provide food for those less fortunate in our city, fund relief supplies to areas hit by disaster, provide monthly support to missionaries and be available to meet needs God shows us became more of a joy than buying a new outfit.

Ownership

Acceptance of my issues was the biggest step in overcoming them. Ownership, then, means identifying exactly how I contributed to the issue. I had to come to the point where I realized I am a sugar addict.

Not only that, I had to realize things and stuff do not define me. The car I drive doesn't define me. It just needs to be practical and get me where I need to go. The clothes I wear do not define me.

It was a huge reality check to go through my closet and realize how much money I'd spent on clothes I'd only worn once. I owned the fact that I am also a spendaholic. Then, I began the process of giving things away. Decluttering my life became a joy.

Action

The key, though, that got me out of debt and into a somewhat normal weight range is action. Without action, no change occurs. Without action, I am just a well-educated person who is still in bondage to food and money.

Action means I begin to act against my addictions. I begin to put plans in place to change my habits. It's more than talk; it's strategic daily steps to walk out of bondage to the things I have willfully allowed to capture me.

Faith

These days, the No. 1 question I'm asked is "How did you lose all that weight?" The answer is "One pound at a time." It starts, though, with faith in God's leadership.

Remember when the parents of a boy who was demon-possessed brought the child to the disciples to be cured? They tried to cast the demon out, but couldn't.

Then Jesus rebuked the demon and the boy was "cured instantly" (Matt. 17:18, AMPC). When the disciples asked why they couldn't drive out the demon, Jesus didn't mince words.

"'You don't have enough faith,'" Jesus told them. 'I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it would move. Nothing would be impossible'" (Matt. 17:20).

It takes just a little faith to know that when we grab hold of Jesus, He will lead us to take the right actions. He will show us how. He will teach us everything we need to know (see John 14:26). Our job then is to listen and follow (see John 10:27).

Mountain-Moving Faith

Mountains don't have to move in an instant, but they do need to begin moving at some point. My mountain of flesh started to move when I surrendered my sugar addiction to Jesus. Our debt began to move when I realized stuff money can buy no longer defines me.

I pushed reset on my life and it changed with God's help. Yours can, too. It only takes faith to believe He will not only help you but is waiting eagerly to help you move the mountains out of your life.

Don't wait to answer Him. His Sweet Grace is available to you right now. He will show you how to make that Sweet Change He so longs for you to make.

He wants you to step out of the prison you've created.

"In [this] freedom Christ has made us free [and completely liberated us]; stand fast then, and do not be hampered and held ensnared and submit again to a yoke of

slavery [which you have once put off]" (Gal. 5:1 AMPC). {eoa}

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