

# Overcoming Obesity by Exchanging Darkness for Light

Back when I was overweight, I also struggled with depression frequently. I had my “I am depressed” routine: Dark room, negative thoughts, messy house, ignored bills, neglected self-care.

But when God said to me, “It is not supposed to be this way,” I had a choice: Would I believe Him? Did I want God to teach me how it was supposed to be? My answer to both questions was “Yes!” I chose to believe God’s Word and that is when my whole life changed.

In John 6:63, Jesus says, “It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and are life.”

If you struggle with negative emotions and habits frequently, then you too can “come into the light.” What God has done for me, He can do for you.

Several years ago, I had a vision of how I used to be when I struggled with obesity, depression, and food addiction. I saw myself huddled in a dark corner and God bathed in light just behind me. I sensed He was calling me to Himself, yet voices were whispering to me that it was safer in the darkness. But God’s love was so strong that I felt compelled to follow Him.

God’s love is what drew me to change, not misery nor self condemnation. I decided I wanted a better life than the one I was living. God loves you too but just like me, you are the only one who can make the decision that you want to live differently.

No one else can do it for you.

In my years of coaching people, I have discovered that there are people who are perfectly happy being miserable. They may get attention and sympathy from others because of their misery. Misery gives them something to talk about even.

They have bought into the lie that they cannot change. And part of them does not want to change because misery is all they know. Deep down, they see misery as safe because they know what that feels like and they are afraid of the unknown.

But God did not create us to live in misery. He created us to live in joy, no matter what we experienced in our past or outward circumstances in the present. He has great plans for us, plans to prosper us and not to harm us, to give us hope and a future (see Jer. 29:11)

In fact, He gives us a promise and offers us an exchange for misery in Isaiah 61:3:

“to preserve those who mourn in Zion, to give to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.”

Here is the exchange:

- If you are mourning, God gives you Consolation and the Oil of Joy
- If your life is in ashes, God gives you Beauty
- If you have a spirit of heaviness, God gives you the garment of Praise

Are you willing to believe Him and make the exchange? Jesus did not die so that you could live preoccupied with your past, your shortcomings, and in the pursuit of gratifying your flesh. You are called to be a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He may be glorified.

Not only that, but 1 Peter 2:9 reminds you even more of who you really are and what you are called to do: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may declare the goodness of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Did you get that? According to God’s Word, you are:

- A chosen generation (you were created for such a time as this)
- A royal priesthood
- A holy nation
- God’s own special people

Because this is your identity through Jesus Christ, then you were called to proclaim His praises because He has called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

But how will you proclaim His praise when you continue to make darkness your friend? You are called to walk in the light as He is in the light.

So how do you do that? There are two guidelines from the scriptures:

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us take off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12).

The first step is to renounce your friendship with darkness. Repent of any wrong thinking that has set up a stronghold in your mind. Repentance starts with an attitude of your heart. It is agreeing with God that you believe His word above your feelings. You will no longer worship at the altar of your feelings. You will instead be diligent each day to meditate on His word and trust that in time, your feelings will have an extreme makeover!

Just as physical food is designed to give you physical strength, so God's Word is designed to give you Spiritual strength. With that Spiritual strength, you will be able to handle whatever the enemy tries to throw at you.

In addition, you spend time with God in prayer. His presence is like your water—you can't live Spiritually without that! Be honest with God and yourself through prayer. In doing so, you expose the works of darkness into the light. There is an old saying that the strength of sin is secrecy.

How well I know! I used to eat "normal" in front of others and binge in secret. To stop that, I needed to protect myself from those foods that trigger binges and eat foods that helped me feel emotionally stable. In that way, I could live with integrity—acting the same way whether I was with others or alone.

So be transparent about what you are doing, tell yourself the truth, and stop justifying why it is okay that you continue to live in darkness.

Luke 8:17 says, "For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and revealed." Your challenge today is to live in the light of God's love and order your thinking according to God's word.

1 John 1:5 declares: "This then is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." {eo}

**Kimberly Taylor** is the author of The Weight Loss Scriptures and many other books. Once 240 pounds and a size 22, she can testify to God's goodness and healing power. Visit and receive more free health and weight-loss tips.

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