

The Prophetic Word That Helped This Woman Lose Over 250 Pounds

The speaker asked, "Where do you want to be in five years?" This was not a new question for me. I've asked this question, or a version of it, to myself and those I coach many times. The question wasn't new, but the timing was different. When I heard him ask that question, it was shortly before my birthday.

All of a sudden, it hit me. In five years, I will be close to celebrating my 71st birthday. That made an answer to that question even more crucial.

Who Am I?

The real question we have to answer first is who am I. and how can I continually work on that part of me? Years ago. I claimed a prophetic statement over my life. I said, "I am a whole, healthy, happy woman." It was prophetic because to look at me, my human container was far from that.

I was even more aware of that this last weekend, when my only living biological aunt was visiting and brought a box of pictures. Back when I weighed 430 pounds, I didn't allow pictures of myself to be taken, but she had several that I had never seen. One was with my husband and me at a family reunion probably around 1998. Put it side by side with the two of us today, and the change is dramatic.

Back then it wasn't just how I looked, although that was a big part of it. I had congestive heart failure, diabetes, sleep apnea, high blood pressure, arthritis and many other aches and pains. A doctor had given me five years to live. So my five-year plan had to be to lose weight. I wanted to be around for

my children and husband. I wanted to write books that mattered. Change had to happen for that to be a reality.

I had to come to a point of total desperation before I would step into the fullness of who He said I was. If I had been able to lose weight on my own and keep it off, applying my own self-effort, I would have taken credit for it. Now, though, I give all the credit for losing more than 250 pounds to Him, even though it did take more than five years.

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, I know that it is God and God alone who gave me the strength to overcome sugar's addictive pull. By His strength I continue to say no to sugar every moment of every day. I give it up as unto Him.

Doing that flows out of who God says I am. I am a whole, healthy, happy woman. I am His beloved daughter. I am a child of the King.

What Do You Want to Accomplish?

Once we figure out who we are, we are then ready to answer the next part of the question. What you want to do with your life? I have accomplished many of my life goals and some I didn't even know God had for me, but looking forward to when I am over 70 and beyond seems different, more weighty.

The older I get the more I am aware that I cannot purchase more time here on earth. I've come to terms with that by acknowledging that even though my days are numbered, I will be here as long as God has something to teach me that I can only learn in this earthbound suit of clay.

We all have only a certain amount of time on this earth. "Help me to know how fleeting my time on earth is. Help me to know how limited is my life and that I'm only here but for a moment more. What a brief time you've given me to live! Compared to You my lifetime is nothing at all! Nothing more than a puff of air, I'm gone so swiftly. So too are the grandest of men; they

are nothing but a fleeting shadow, at best, each of us is but a breath" (Ps. 39:4-5, TPT).

God has a purpose for each of us and has instilled that purpose as a deep desire within us. We have to strip away all the things covering up that purpose to get to what more there is that He has for us. For me, 250 of those things looked like extra pounds of fat.

Risky Step

I don't know all of what my next season will hold except that I know I have a deep, urgent motivation to write the kind of transformation stories I've always dreamed of writing.

From the time I was a child, I have wanted to write stories that help people cope with life. I saw what an armload of library books could do to help my emotionally ill mother get through her days. Whatever was bothering her would fade away when she got lost in a book. For hours, she would be normal. It was coming back into everyday life that caused her angst.

It was as if God whispered in my ear, "One day you will write stories that help people." Now He's making it clear that no matter what else I do with the next five years, it must involve writing stories that center around transformation.

For any transformation to happen, there must be a change from dark to light. Without the shadows, there is no depth to a painting. We can't know what happiness is until we have experienced the depths of despair. Since 2014, I have had characters and a story living in my heart and mind. It's time for that story to be poured out on the pages of a book.

Anything new we attempt feels scary and hard. Once we've allowed God to help us accomplish that, though, it becomes easy almost graceful. That's because when we step out in faith that we are doing what God is calling us to do, His grace-strength kicks in. His power carries us. It happened when I

lost weight. It happened when I started writing nonfiction. It happened when I started coaching, doing videos and speaking.

“When I am weak [in human strength], then I am strong [truly able, truly powerful, truly drawing from God’s strength],” (2 Cor. 12:10b, AMP). I am counting on His strength and anointing to be the force that propels me and guides as I launch out into the deep to write as many transformational fiction books as I can in the next five years and beyond.

What Is Your Five-Year Plan?

What about you? What is the desire that is burning in your heart? Who are you, and what is your five-year plan? {eo}

Teresa Shields Parker is the author of five books and two study guides, including her latest, *Sweet Journey to Transformation: Practical Steps to Lose Weight and Live Healthy*, and her No. 1 best-seller, *Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds*. She is also a blogger, spiritual weight loss coach (check out her coaching group, *Overcomers Academy*) and speaker at .

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