

Waging Successful Spiritual Warfare Over the 'God of Your Stomach'

To be truly free from strongholds of overeating, you must recognize that the grace that saved you from sin is the same grace that empowers you to live above sin, including the sin of unhealthy eating. Recognize that everything you need to overcome food addictions and to be free and to renew your mind and to change your palate is found in the Lord.

The Spirit living inside of you is more than enough to carry you to victory. I am a living witness!

As Paul wrote to Titus, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live *self-controlled*, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works" (Titus 2:11-14, ESV, emphasis mine).

Or, in the words of Peter, "His divine power has given to us *all things that pertain to life and godliness* through the knowledge of Him who has called us by his own glory and excellence, by which He has given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, so that through these things you might become partakers of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1:3-4, MEV, emphasis added).

When he speaks of "all things that pertain to life and godliness," he is including the very real issue of bad eating habits. And when he speaks of "exceedingly great and precious

promises," he is including those that help us change our relationship to food.

Freedom Through Obedience Is a Choice

If you realize that unhealthy eating is a sin, then this is not just a matter of victory and freedom. It's a matter of obedience. Will you obey your Lord when it comes to eating? Will you say no to the flesh and yes to your Savior?

Perhaps you need some spiritual backbone here. Perhaps rather than just excusing this as a weakness, you need to deal with this as a serious spiritual matter. I often hear obese believers (including pastors) joke about their bad food choices as if it's nothing, saying, "I love my ice cream!" Would they say just as freely, "I love my porn!"? I think not!

You might ask, "When does eating become a sin? Obviously, we all need to eat, and it's hard to imagine we can eat perfectly healthy foods in the perfect proportions all the time.

So how do we gauge what's sinful?"

Without trying to play the Holy Spirit in your life, I would suggest these guidelines:

1. If the way you're eating (or, specifically, what you're eating) is causing you to be seriously overweight or, worse still, making you physically ill, could it be sinful?
2. If you're eating foods the Lord has convicted you not to eat, could it be sinful?
3. If you're being a glutton, gorging yourself until you're totally stuffed, could it be sinful?
4. If you're eating foods to satisfy an unhealthy addiction, could it be sinful?
5. If you're eating in secret and hiding food, could it be sinful?

Spiritual Warfare Regarding Food Is Real

Recognize the reality of spiritual warfare when it comes to food. I don't want to overly spiritualize things here, but I don't want to leave out very real spiritual truths.

Of course Satan tempts us with food. Of course our bondage is both physical and spiritual. Of course we can break these strongholds in Jesus' name through prayer, leading to a changed lifestyle.

Prayer alone won't do the trick; it takes prayer and obedience. Why not attack demonic food strongholds the way you would attack a satanic stronghold that was trying to destroy one of your kids?

It's the same devil we're dealing with, and the same Jesus who triumphs over that devil. And we triumph in Him. {eoa}

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