

Weight Loss, Sin and the Metal Lawn Chair

One minute I am sitting in the green metal lawn chair in my uncle's front yard, talking and laughing with my aunt while cousins and our children play hide and go seek.

The next minute I feel the collapse of the rounded legs as they slowly lower me to the ground.

Even though I'm sure the sight of a 430-pound woman sitting atop a pile of metal is funny, all laughter stops. My uncle jumps to help me.

Being super morbidly obese I always try to blend into the wallpaper and not make more of a spectacle of myself than I already am.

This day, the proverbial cat has been let out of the bag.

I'm fat, really fat. I break lawn chairs like twigs. I can't be trusted to sit anywhere.

My uncle brings me a sturdy dining room chair, which I eye suspiciously. My aunt pats my arm and tells me it's fine. She never liked that old chair anyway.

I am embarrassed for the rest of the day. I don't dare eat the three platefuls I would normally eat at lunch. I take only one piece of cake though I'd love to pile my plate with the four other desserts as well.

I know I have a problem. I deny it constantly. I try to push it under the rug. This day I cannot ignore the obvious.

I am a really good Christian. I have never tasted an alcoholic beverage except that one time a "friend" put a little vodka in my orange juice just so I couldn't say I'd never drank alcohol

before. I've never done drugs, smoked cigarettes, had sex before marriage, gone to an x-rated movie, watched or listened to pornography. I go to church every Sunday. I teach Sunday School and small groups. I work in ministry. And I am a glutton.

Pastors don't talk about such things because they like their sweets and breads as much as I do. Mine is the sanctified sin I don't have to worry about.

Until I begin to break chairs and the cardiac surgeon tells me my body is too big for my heart and I will be dead in five years if I don't lose a minimum of 100 pounds and keep it off.

This was my life 10 years ago. Today, I've lost more than 260 pounds.

For years when I would pray about my weight issue God would give me a plan. Stop eating sugar. Eat more lean meat, vegetables and fruit. Stop eating so much bread.

I could never get past step one. I thought I would die without sugar. Truth is, I was dying with sugar.

The light bulb moment came listening to a former alcoholic tell his story. He mentioned that alcohol is liquid sugar. Then it hit me, if an alcoholic can get free by not drinking alcohol, maybe I can get free by not eating sugar.

All my life I had wished my problem was alcohol instead of food. My reasoning was an alcoholic could stop drinking alcohol because it is not necessary to survival. However, I can't stop eating because I have to eat to survive.

Understanding that processed sugar is my nemesis gave me the final motivation to follow what God had been telling me for 30 years.

So I did. I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt I was a sugar addict. There wasn't a question in my mind.

There also was not a question as to whether this was God's direction. As I looked back through my journals, I saw the same plan. God had given it to me at least five times in three decades. I had heard God. I just hadn't followed Him.

When I began to walk out what I knew was His plan, I felt His wind at my back propelling me forward to health and wholeness. It's from this place I can minister. It's from this place I can complete my assignment here on earth. It's from this place I can live.

Although I have had situations where I have strayed, I always come back to what I know is right for me.

In this place of obedience, there is freedom, real freedom. It's not just flowery words. It is real honest-to-goodness, I-feel-it-down-in-the-tips-of-my-toes freedom.

When I go to a family gathering today, I am not pulled towards the desserts. I eat fruit and salad and meat. I make sure there are those choices because I bring them myself. Honestly, processed sugar is not something I want to eat today.

Sanctified sin enslaves the same as any other lifestyle that is contrary to God's best for us here on earth. And it certainly never tastes as good as freedom feels.

Teresa Shields Parker is an author, blogger, editor, business owner, wife and mother. Her book, *Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds and Stopped Trying to Earn God's Favor* is available on Amazon in print, Kindle and Audible [HERE](#). This story is from her blog, .