

When Being Overweight Makes You Into a Recluse

According to one story about singer George Michael, who died recently at age 53, “He became a recluse because he couldn’t bear people to see him,” and, as a “perfectionist,” he “hated the way he looked after gaining weight.”

But this is not only true of celebrities like Michael, who was famous for his looks and his flashy attire. Ordinary men and women, moms and dads, singles, young people and old people are often held captive by their weight, hating the way they look and feel, sometimes to the point of not wanting to go out in public.

Although I hated being overweight and felt embarrassed by it since it was not reflective of my disciplined lifestyle, my weight never stopped me for a moment from being totally active in life and ministry. And since I was almost 6’ 3” and worked out a lot, many people just thought I was a big guy.

And when it came to doing the work of ministry, I never thought twice about my weight. I was focused on the Lord and on those I was ministering to, and whether I was 25 or 95 pounds overweight, being obese wasn’t on my mind when I ministered.

Still, I was getting more and more tired the closer I got to 60. I was feeling run-down all the time, and I had high blood pressure, which was nothing to trivialize.

But for others, being overweight and obese is much worse.

There is a constant sense of shame and embarrassment, since you are literally wearing the results of your unhealthy eating habits. (In contrast, a person who struggles with pornography might do so in private with no one else aware. But when we

struggle with overeating, the whole world can see.)

Some people have aches and pains from head to toe, making for a general feeling of un-wellness.

Others experience a severe lack of energy, drive and vision. When you are constantly tired, when you get out of breath walking up the stairs, when just moving around is a burden, it's difficult to feel excited about life.

For all these reasons, being overweight or obese can be totally crippling, not to mention downright deadly, and that's why my wife Nancy and I wrote *Breaking the Stronghold of Food*.

We know how terribly challenging food addictions can be (most of us are food addicts and don't even realize it) and how difficult it can be to break with unhealthy eating patterns, but if the Lord could help us make radical, dramatic, lasting changes in our lives, He can help you, too.

In our book, we tell our full stories—with humor and candor and inspiration, but without any condemnation—laying out scriptural and practical guidelines for lasting transformation, knowing that developing a healthy, disciplined lifestyle is literally the difference between life and death.

It feels wonderful to be free. {eoa}

(Special note from the publisher: *Breaking the Stronghold of Food* releases on January 3, but if you order your copy of the paperback version of the book today—the offer ends January 7—using the website, you will also get the e-book absolutely free, plus the first three chapters will be sent to you in PDF form to start reading immediately.)