

Why Diets Aren't the Answer to Your Weight Problem

I hate dieting, although when I weighed 430 pounds, following a diet was the only way presented to me that promised results. I'd get results because I can be very legalistic for defined periods of time, but I never in a million years planned on being on a diet for the rest of my life. In my mind, diets were just to get the weight off so I could go back to eating whatever, whenever and however much I wanted.

Grieving the Loss of Sugar

When God showed me that I was a sugar addict, it felt like my life had come to an end. I saw clearly that if I was addicted to sugar and high-carb foods, I was going to have to give them up.

I grieved just thinking about it. I loved desserts and carb-laden foods. I lived for them. It was what I looked forward to in life. Seeing the truth made me feel like I would have to be on a diet for the rest of my life, struggling every day to get the portions right. It seemed impossible, illogical and undoable.

Still, I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt I was a sugar addict. Sugar controlled me, mastered me. I was addicted to it. I had become physically and mentally dependent on it. So. How would I get free?

Why We Rebel Against Diets

Paul talks about a similar thing in Romans 7. A diet is a law or a rule and when there is a law that is imposed on us from the outside, it sets up rebellion.

Let's substitute the word "diet" in the place of the word

“law” in Romans 7:5-6 (NLT) and see if it brings some truth to light. “When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and a *diet* aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death. But now we have been released from a *diet*, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of a *diet*, but in the new way of living in the Spirit.”

Here we can see clearly that the alternative to living under the old regime of dieting (which is akin to legalism) doesn't work. Paul goes on to say that the law or a diet, in my case, is not bad, but it produces bad results because it arouses fleshly desires in me. It reminded me of what I could *not* have but still *wanted* because my mind had not changed.

New Way of the Spirit

What does work is the new way of living in the Spirit. So how do we make that happen? We have to realize three major truths: We have freedom to follow Christ; that freedom is not a burden; and our freedom must become a lifestyle.

Freedom to follow Christ means we have been set free from our natural inclinations to follow our selfish desires. We can choose what or whom we will follow. Our desires don't have to master or rule us.

Duet 30:19-20 (MEV) says, “I call heaven and earth to witnesses against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

This is how we choose life. We love God and we show we love Him by obeying him and committing firmly to Him. That means we

are free to follow what brings us life instead of what brings us death. We can go to Him to get our plan for living freely and lightly.

Freedom to Follow Christ Is Not A Burden

Jesus does not want us to live under regimented rules and laws that weigh us down and keep us in shame because we can't follow them perfectly.

Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG) expresses Christ's desire for us. "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on *diets*? Come to Me. Get away with Me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with Me and work with Me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with Me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

We've lived under the dieting rules for so long we don't know how to live under grace and be madly in love with Jesus. (And yes I substituted "diet" in place of "religion" in that passage.) He's not going to saddle us with something that is too hard for us. When we tap into what is best for us, He will lead us. He will guide us with His still, small voice.

Lifestyle of Freedom

Freedom in Christ is not a burden; it is a lifestyle of freedom to follow the right choice instead of our own desires. This doesn't mean we can do whatever we want. We are free to follow what Christ shows us to do to live in optimal health—body, soul and spirit.

It's not legalistically following a one-size-fits-all diet. It's exchanging our negative thoughts for positive, affirmative ones. It's changing our bad habits for good ones. It's incorporating what Christ wants for us and therefore, what we want for ourselves.

It's taking things slowly and incorporating new habits that will change our lives. These are good habits we want to start. Sometimes, though, the old habits seem to be too overwhelming to even try to stop.

To do this, we must focus on the good habit we want to start and dismantle the bad by tearing it apart as the liar it is. We will never have sustainable long term weight loss success until we lay everything at Jesus' feet, love Him supremely and trust Him with every fiber of our being to lead us out of food addictions and into His beautiful destiny for us.

We have freedom to follow Christ. That freedom is not a burden because freedom becomes our lifestyle. He works within us to change us and transform us into His image.

The Condundrum

The infamous conundrum verse, Romans 7:19-20 (TPT) says this: "My lofty desires to do what is good are dashed when I do the things I want to avoid. So if my behavior contradicts my desires to do good, I must conclude that it's not my true identity doing it, but the unwelcome intruder of sin hindering me from being who I really am."

Then, Paul gives us the answer in Romans 7:24-25 It's really the only answer we need. "What an agonizing situation I am in! Who has the power to rescue this miserable man from the unwelcome intruder of sin and death? I give all my thanks to God, for his mighty power has finally provided a way out through our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One! So if left to myself, the flesh is aligned with the law of sin, but now my renewed mind is fixed on and submitted to God's righteous principles."

We must work with Jesus to overcome the pull of the flesh. We need to learn how to allow Him to renew our minds so we can follow Him. My vision is to help Christian women overcome the stronghold they have allowed food to have over their lives so

they can step into their destinies. God wants this message spread far and wide because He wants His warriors solidly on mission for Him.

There are lessons we learn only when we follow Jesus in working out our fleshly issues. We learn the true freedom of listening to Him and following what He says. When He sees we are learning those lessons, He can trust us with anything! {eoa}

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