

Why This Innocent Pleasure Can Quickly Become Your Idol

Is food occupying your mind where God should be?

It was a hard question I had to ask myself when I struggled with emotional eating.

“Food is not the fix for everything” was the lesson I had to learn.

You see, if I was mad, I ate; if I was sad, I ate; if I was bored, I ate; if I was tired, I ate.

Eventually, I ate my way up to 240 pounds.

But God showed me that He is the fix for everything!

He could give me the daily answers I needed to glorify Him in every situation, including my eating habits.

I once counted how many times I thought about food in a single day.

I counted 77 times!

No wonder I wanted to eat all the time back then.

In Matthew 22:37, Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

I had a problem loving the Lord with all my mind when food occupied so much of it.

Because I did not know or practice biblical wisdom to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (see 2 Cor. 10:5), food grew into an obsession.

In fact, my food obsession became idol worship for me. Idol worship is simply investing a person, inanimate object, or activity with powers it does not have.

To see what I mean, imagine how some oft-quoted Bible verses would sound if you replaced God/Lord with the word “food”:

- “The joy of *food* is my strength.”
- “*Food* heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”
- “Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in *food*.”
- “Trust in *food* with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.”
- “The righteous man will be glad in *food* and will take refuge in it; and all the upright in heart will glory.”

I used to live as if I believed that.

It is estimated that 10 million people in the United States suffer from eating disorders.

So clearly, this is not a small problem. From my experience, Christians are vulnerable to this issue as much as anyone else. Perhaps even more.

Here is why:

We have a real enemy who hates us because of the God we love.

Ephesians 6:12 says, “For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

What better way can the enemy destroy us than through food obsession and food abuse? He exploits our need for food to survive.

So rather than suggesting we grab a Bible (whose words we can use to spiritually defeat him), he suggests that we instead grab a bag, box, plate, knife or fork.

The apostle Paul wrote about people who elevated filling their stomachs above God in Philippians 3:18-19:

For many are walking in such a way that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. I have told you of them often and tell you again, even weeping. Their destination is destruction, their god is their appetite, their glory is in their shame, their minds are set on earthly things.

I am so thankful to Jesus that He sets us free from sin's dominion. Oh, how He loves us! He traded His own life to redeem us.

In Luke 4:18, Jesus said what He came to do: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

If you are suffering from emotional hurts (brokenhearted), captive to food obsession, blind to the destruction this habit is causing you and oppressed by food abuse, then you qualify for Jesus' help.

We need to ensure that we incline our hearts to the Lord every day and fill up with love for Him as He loves us.

Invite Jesus into this issue through prayer and then start renewing your mind to His living Word daily. Psalm 27:11 is a simple prayer: "Teach me Your way, O Lord, And lead me in an upright path, because of my enemies."

The book of John is also a great place to start to get to know how your Savior lived. As you study the Bible more, you will learn to recognize thoughts that exalt themselves above God.

Cast those lies down with the truth. Only by taking every thought captive will you be free from captivity to food obsession.

In addition, recognize that the emotional eating habit has a biological basis as well.

So pay attention to those foods that you have difficulty with self-control with you eat them. They are likely foods that have hijacked your brain.

God has provided many food choices for us. Focus on the foods that help you, not hurt you.

In that way, you can devote your energy to fulfilling your God-given calling.

You can lay aside every weight that hinders you and finish your race well. {eo}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify to God's healing power to end binge-eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

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