

Will You Worship God or a Cookie?

Sounds ridiculous to even ask the question, but I'm a coach at heart, so I have to ask. During this holiday season, will it be God or a cookie? Will you worship your Creator or cave to living for the next decadent dessert, dinner spread or favorite treat?

I know your answer. Christmas only comes once a year. I can eat these things every once in awhile. It wouldn't be Christmas without Grandma's oatmeal cake. I'll go on a diet in January.

I lived my life this way for years, and it didn't work. It's probably not working for you either.

What Does God Want?

Food is necessary to live. The right kinds of foods fuel our bodies. Food also creates a communal bound as we "break bread together." Somewhere along the way, though, for some of us, certain foods have become what we live for. It's a spot which should be reserved for God and God alone.

How does it happen? How do we go from eating to live to living to eat? For me, certain foods, especially those foods my grandmother made with sugar and flour and oozing with love, became my source to assuage any emotional angst. Upset? Eat. Angry? Eat. Overworked? Eat. Frustrated? Eat. Lonely? Eat. Tired? Eat.

On a limited basis, high carbohydrate-laden foods worked to anesthetize any emotional pain or discomfort I felt. Just like any drug, though, the next time I feel upset and reach for the comfort food, I need more to get the same feeling. More and more and more sugary, bready, starchy foods lead to more and

more and more pounds.

What God wants for us is reflected in John's words: "Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, even as your soul is well" (3 John 2).

Why does God care about the health of our bodies? We have work to do, folks, kingdom work. We're here for a limited time. His desire is for us to make the best of our time. We can't do that when we are bogged down by the weight we have piled on ourselves.

Diets Don't Work

I'm not talking about dieting. Diets don't work for the long haul. Diets are only an excuse to overindulge whenever I want because I tell myself, I can diet later. To be successful at losing weight, I must transform my mind to understand I am damaging the body God gave me to steward. My body is the dwelling place of God (1 Cor. 6:19-20). I am a walking house of God. So are you.

Paul's discussion on this topic wasn't referring to food specifically. However, the essence of what he says shouts loudly to those of us who tend to do intentional harm to God's home, our bodies.

"What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own? You were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

Easy and Hard

It's simple and it's so very difficult at the same time. "Therefore, since we are encompassed with such a great cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance

the race that is set before us. Let us look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:1-2).

When I lived in the land of super morbid obesity, at 430 pounds, God was always talking to me about what I was worshipping. Was I worshipping Him or food? I lived for the next wonderful meal I could cook or dinner I could attend. I would go if I knew there was going to be great food.

The bottom line for me is that it always boiled down to a choice—do I eat this cookie when I know it will lead to many more or do I surrender that desire and allow God to lead me?

Surrender—The Key to Lifestyle Change

I am so glad food is no longer my focus. How did I change? I had to face the fact I am addicted to certain foods. After grieving the loss of sugar and gluten, God began to lead me step-by-step to experience the abundance of healthy foods He created which fuel my body. This was necessary for me to step into the destiny He had planned for me all along (Eph. 2:10).

I surrendered everything, even the foods I craved, to God. It is possible to live without sugar and flour. Our “cross” may just be saying no to the foods we crave, those we actually worship. It all depends on how we want to finish. Do we want to finish well? The only way to do that is the worship God with everything, even the foods we eat. Can we worship Him while we know we are overindulging?

I don’t know about you, but I no longer can. I spent way too much of my life doing that. {eo}

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