

Overeating

[Proverbs 23:20-21 HCSB](#) Don't associate with those who drink too much wine, or with those who gorge themselves on meat. (21) For the drunkard and the glutton will become poor, and gogginess will clothe *them* in rags.

Let's begin by defining three terms, shall we?

Compulsive overeating is:

- a. A seemingly irresistible urge to eat.
- b. Emotionally controlled eating.
- c. Often becomes an addiction that leads to physical disorders.

Gluttony is:

- a. Excessive eating and drinking.
- b. A loss of control and that yields to fleshly desires rather than to God.
- c. Typically results in obesity which is body fat that is 20% or more above your recommended weight.

Bingeing is:

- a. A period of unrestrained indulgence.
- b. Repeated bingeing can also become an addictive pattern.

- [Proverbs 25:27 HCSB](#) It is not good to eat too much honey, or to seek glory after glory.

Symptoms of compulsive overeating:

Physical:

- a. Cycles of excessive eating and severe dieting
- b. Chronic neck and joint pain
- c. High blood pressure
- d. Diabetes
- e. Kidney disorder
- f. Heart disease
- g. Limited range of motion and activity
- h. Shortness of breath after mild exertion
- i. Anorexia/bulimia
- j. Gall bladder problems

Emotional:

- a. Low self-esteem
- b. Anxiety
- c. Shame
- d. Irritability
- e. Depression
- f. Passivity
- g. Guilt
- h. Powerlessness
- i. Anger
- j. Hopelessness

- **1 Corinthians 3:16-17 HCSB** Don't you know that you are God's sanctuary and that the Spirit of God lives in you? **(17)** If anyone ruins God's sanctuary, God will ruin him; for God's sanctuary is holy, and that is what you are.

Are you a compulsive eater?

- Do you spend a lot of time thinking about food?
- Do you look forward to an event because of the food that will be there?
- Do you eat when you are sad, angry, or depressed?
- Do you eat when you are bored or under stress?
- Do you eat certain foods as a personal reward?
- Do you eat even when you are not hungry?
- Do you ever feel ashamed of how much you eat?
- Do you fear not being able to stop eating once you start?
- Do you ever feel embarrassed about your personal appearance?
- Do you ever secretly eat to avoid someone's knowing what you eat?
- Do you lose weight on diets, then gain weight (and more) back again?
- Do you feel you **HAVE** to eat everything on your plate or you're wasteful?

Ecclesiastes 7:16-17 warns us of the dangers of excess in anything. It even warns against excessive righteousness or wisdom! Obviously, this doesn't mean true righteousness or wisdom because both are moderate. As 1 Timothy 3 tells us, an elder must be self-controlled, and not addicted.

What can lead to compulsive eating?

- Overweight parents who establish poor eating habits in childhood.
- Overcoming other habits by self-will; substituting one bad habit for another so (for instance) replacing smoking with eating.
- Childbirth – gaining weight during pregnancy then staying in that habit afterwards.
- Mild depression – eating for emotional comfort.
- Change to a less physically active lifestyle yet not adjusting our caloric intake.
- Specific drugs: antidepressants, steroids, hormones.
- Underactive thyroid gland, which decreases production of fat-burning hormones.
- Hormonal – changing metabolism affects the rate the body burns fat.
- High-calorie eating patterns – preferring fried foods, sweets, and starches.
- Protection from sexual attraction, fearing attention, fearing being attractive.

However the **root causes** are usually one of the following three issues:

- a. Unconditional love – eating to feel nurtured.
- b. Significance – eating to feel a sense of control.
- c. Security – eating and hoarding food in fear of deprivation.

When you are trying to overcome the sin of overeating you need to remember that, like all addicts, you do not have sufficient will-power to do this on your own. It is not YOUR power that you need but the power of your GOD. If you are a child of God the Spirit of God's power, the same one that resurrected the Messiah from the dead, resides within you. The moment you choose to believe and obey the Spirit, the Spirit gives you the power you need to work God's will in your life.

- **Romans 8:1-5 HCSB** Therefore, no condemnation now exists for those in Christ Jesus, (2) because the Spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (3) What the law could not do since it was limited by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending His own Son in flesh like ours under sin's domain, and as a sin offering, (4) in order that the law's requirement would be accomplished in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (5) For those whose lives are according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those whose lives are according to the Spirit, about the things of the Spirit.

Obedience to God brings physical and spiritual strength. Consider the case of the prophet Daniel.

- a. Daniel made a commitment to obey God. (Daniel 1:8)
- b. God backed up Daniel's resolve with supernatural support. (Daniel 1:9)
- c. Daniel requested only vegetables and water for his meals. (Daniel 1:12)
- d. Daniel became noticeably healthier and better nourished. (Daniel 1:15)
- e. God also blessed Daniel with great knowledge and understanding. (Daniel 1:17)

Fakes and fads don't bring lasting results:

- Acupuncture
- Hypnotism
- Diet pills
- Fad diets
- Fasting
- Laxatives
- "Reducing" machines
- Special clothing that melt fat calories
- Shots
- Surgery
- Starvation
- Vomiting

All I can say to all of you who are susceptible to the infomercials that prey on you is:

- **Romans 12:2 HCSB** Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Turn if you would to

- **Proverbs 22:3 HCSB** A sensible person sees danger and takes cover, but the inexperienced keep going and are punished.

Do's and Don'ts of Dieting

- Don't say you are dieting.
 - Do say you are learning to eat healthy foods.
- Don't keep unhealthy food around you.
 - Do keep healthy food prepared for snacks.
- Don't weigh yourself every day.
 - Do record your weight once a week.
- Don't eat fast.

- Do chew slowly.
- Don't reward yourself with food.
 - Do enjoy the rewards and blessings of the Lord.
- Don't eat at restaurants without planning.
 - Do predetermine which foods to order.
- Don't keep your new plan a secret.
 - Do share with a friend or support group.
- Don't shop for groceries on impulse or when you are hungry.
 - Do shop with a prepared list.
- Don't get caught off guard by temptation.
 - Do have an alternate plan, something healthy to fulfill that urge to snack.
- Don't fail to set goals.
 - Do set a target weight and realistic short-term goals.
- Don't start a new eating plan during a crisis, illness, holiday, or high stress situation.
 - Do consult a doctor before beginning any new eating plan.
- Don't adopt a plan just because it worked for someone else.
 - Do adopt a personalized plan that will work for your individual lifestyle.

Think of yourself as the person God created you to be.

- [2 Peter 1:3-4 HCSB](#) For His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. (4) By these He has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.

God has given you a new nature in Jesus and He has given you all you need to live a self-controlled life.

Have the correct motive for losing weight.

- [2 Corinthians 5:9 HCSB](#) Therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to be pleasing to Him.

Take good care of your physical body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Want to be free from the bondage of self-indulgence. Be healthy and live the life that God has planned for you.

Identify the real reasons for overeating.

- [Psalms 139:23 HCSB](#) Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns.

Are you responding to a lack of love? Are you responding to feelings of insignificance? Are you fearful and insecure? Deal with the real reasons with real solutions that won't hurt your health!

Commit yourself to obey God in ALL areas of your life.

- [1 John 3:24 HCSB](#) The one who keeps His commands remains in Him, and He in him. And the way we know that He remains in us is from the Spirit He has given us.

Acknowledge your need for change. Acknowledge God's power to change you. Request His constant presence within you to empower the needed changes.

Learn to listen to the Lord.

- [Psalms 32:8 HCSB](#) I will instruct you and show you the way to go; with My eye on you, I will give counsel.

Listen to His Holy Scriptures. Listen for divine leading from the Holy Spirit. Learn to recognize and reject Satan's lies to you.

Turn your focus on to things you should eat.

- **Romans 14:20 HCSB** Do not tear down God's work because of food. Everything is clean, but it is wrong for a man to cause stumbling by what he eats.

Develop a solid working knowledge of good nutrition. Choose to enjoy healthy food.

Choose to hate unhealthy food. Don't give up if you fall off the wagon.

Have an exercise plan that will increase your metabolic rate and vary that plan from time to time.

- **1 Corinthians 9:27 HCSB** Instead, I discipline my body and bring it under strict control, so that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified.
- **1 Timothy 4:8 HCSB** for, the training of the body has a limited benefit, but godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

Discipline of the body doesn't mean we beat and starve it. It means that we bring it under the control of our will and the will of the Holy Spirit. As long as it is for that purpose, body discipline is good. In fact, if we can discipline our body to get out of bed and go jogging, then maybe we can discipline our body to resist that tantalizing chocolate chip cookie or that sexual urge!

However, training the body not only has limited benefit to godliness but it has only limited benefit in physical health as well. It can only be one piece of the ultimate solution.

However, it is an **important** piece. Get some cardiovascular exercise for about 30 minutes a day four or five times a week. Vary between aerobics, the bike, the treadmill, swimming or jogging outside. Keep your body guessing and your mind interested. Make it fun!

Start a daily journal.

- **Proverbs 21:29 HCSB** A wicked man puts on a bold face, but the upright man considers his way.

You need to keep a small notebook with you. Choose a scripture to memorize each day or each week. Write down when and what you eat. Record your weight loss for personal encouragement. Record your weight gains and try to determine their cause. Record your thoughts and feelings as you go through this transformation.

Nurture your relationship with the Lord.

- **Philippians 1:6 HCSB** I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Pray throughout the day. Keep yourself closely tied to the Lord and acknowledge your dependence upon His Spirit. Meditate on the Scriptures, particularly those passages that describe overcomers or reflect the self-control of the Messiah. Ask God to remind you of His protection and power over temptation and thank Him regularly for His faithfulness. Remind yourself that God will not give up on you. If you blow it – confess the sin, repent of it and start over again. At least you don't have as far to go this time as the last time you started!